

An introduction to the philippines



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The Republic of the Philippines, an island nation located in the Malay archipelago in Southeast Asia, comprising of 7, 107 islands, collectively known as Philippine Archipelago, has a total area of nearly 300, 000 square kilometers to it's credit. The country, named " Las Islas Felipinas" after King Philip II of Spain, fell prey to Spanish colonialism in 1565. The colonial rule lasted for three long centuries and ended after Philippine Revolution of 1896. But independence, the most prized political ambition of modern times, was not forthcoming for it yet. It was ceded to the US in 1898 in the wake of the Spanish-American War, and it was only in 1946 that they saw the run of independence rise after Japanese occupation in World War II. However, it was as late as in 1992 that the US finally closed its last military bases on the islands and left the Philippine soil for good.

Manila is now the capital of Philippines. The people of the Philippines are supposed to be the direct descendants of the Austronesian-speaking peoples. Still, some of the Filipinos are of mixed descent from the intermarriages with other nationalities like the Chines and the Spanish. They are, therefore, known as mestizos. Roman Catholicism is the predominant religion, and English, along with Tagalog, is the official language. The Philippines is a presidential-unitary republic with the President at the apex, as the head of state, the head of government, and the commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

He is elected by popular vote, every 6 years. During his term in the office, he or she appoints and presides over the cabinet of secretaries. The bicameral Congress is the primary legislative body comprising the Senate and the

House of Representatives. There are 24 senators in all, who serve a 6-year term each with the half retiring every three years.

The House of Representatives houses 250 members with a 3-year term each. The judiciary is headed by the Supreme Court, presided over by the Chief Justice as its head and 14 associate justices. All the appointments are made by the President from the nominations submitted by the Judiciary itself and the Bar Council. Besides, the Supreme Court, other courts include the Court of Appeals, the Regional Trial Courts and the Metropolitan Trial Courts.

The economy of the Philippines is largely agricultural with light industry and service-sector economy lending a helping hand. In the recent past the Philippines has emerged as one of the most happening places for Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) in Asia, and houses numerous call centers. The advent of what might be called ‘ BPO revolution’ has given immense impetus to the Philippine market generating a great number of jobs and business opportunities. The Philippine economy has shown a great degree of resilience, which is generally attributed to low foreign inflows and the fact that Philippines’ is a largely agriculture-based economy.

Economic set backs could not throw the Philippine economy out of gear when it struck the nation in 1999. The growth rate came down to 3 percent in 1999 but rose remarkably to 4 percent in 2000, and by 2004 the Philippine had registered an admirable 6 percent growth recovering from the East Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s. Government policies are carefully designed to assist and promote industrial development. The Philippine middle class, being essential to economic prosperity, is taken special care of.

Strategies for streamlining the economy include improvements of infrastructure, more efficient tax systems, furthering deregulation and privatization of the economy. As of 2006, The US and Japan are Philippines' biggest trading partners, which means that the country's economic prosperity also depends upon the economic performance of these nations.