

Editor's Notes

Barely a year after the historic EDSA Revolution, the Aquino Government's purportedly populist character has come under scrutiny, mainly due to the mounting clamor from various social sectors for their share in the decision-making process of government.

This development has naturally spawned innumerable debates and public discussions on the issues of decentralization and local autonomy as well as which structural arrangement is most ideal or relevant to the current situation.

Our April-June issue primarily responds to the need to clarify, or at least ventilate the major issues mentioned previously. Alex Bello Brillantes, author of the first article, provides an overview of the concept of decentralization with specific emphasis on the Philippine experience.

The second article entitled "Governing Metropolitan Regions: Some Approaches for Metro Manila" deserves particular attention because it was written by Felipe V. Oamar in 1974 as part of his doctoral dissertation. We have reproduced it in the light of present proposals to abolish the Metro Manila Commission primarily because of the latter's being intensely associated with the previous regime.

Rollie Buendia wrote the third article entitled "The Case of the Cordillera: An Unresolved National Question." While addressing the issue of local autonomy, this article proposes the reorganization of the Philippine government along federal lines, thereby effectively transferring the seat of political power to the local base.

Nizam Ahmed brings this issue to a close with "Bangladesh Decentralization: Background and Issues" which examines the experience of an authoritarian state at decentralization, and concludes that the policy has provided support for the state rather than a framework for actual public participation.

As is usual, our News and Notes Section underlines the latest developments in the field, while the Documents Section features pertinent provisions of the new Constitution on local government and two executive orders creating the Cordillera Administration Region and the Kalinga Special Development Authority. The Editor realizes that said executive orders were issued in July but as they are of more relevance to the contents of this issue, they have been included here.