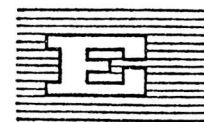


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PROGRESS MADE IN THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Paper presented by the Republic of the Philippines

REPORT PRESENTED BY THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
ON
PROGRESS MADE IN THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

The task of establishing uniform usage in regard to geographical nomenclature throughout the executive departments of the Philippine Government has always been the responsibility of the Philippine Committee on Geographical Names (PCGN) since 1903. However, in 1973, when a major revamp in the Executive Branch of the Government was carried out, the PCGN was adversely affected. Most of the member agencies were re-structured and the Office of the ex-officio chairman was abolished. Since then the Committee has become dormant. Steps have been taken to initiate its reactivation but the proposal remains under study.

Meanwhile another Government body which is tasked with coordinating and standardizing surveying and mapping activities in the country has taken steps to help resolve problems on geographical names which are brought to its attention, pending the reactivation of the PCGN.

After the Second United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names held in London in 1972, significant progress has been accomplished by some government agencies involved either in mapping or data collection. For instance, the National Census and Statistics Office published a listing of Philippine Geographical Names of Political Divisions and Subdivisions and another volume on the Geographical Names of Topographical and Hydrographical Features. At the same time, the Bureau of Coast and Geodetic Survey (BCGS) is in the process of updating and revising the Gazetteer of the Philippines, a publication which was originally published by the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey in Washington D. C. in 1945. Field verification of geographical names shown on existing maps has been accelerated. The Bureau of Coast and Geodetic Survey is taking the lead in the gathering of information for editing of geographical names appearing in the 1:50,000 topographic map series which was adopted as the basic reference series map for use on other series maps.

An Inter-Agency Committee on Geographical Classification completed its studies on a standard coding for municipalities and barangays (formerly referred to as barrios). The Standard Geographic Code, consisting of two parts, has been prepared and submitted for approval of higher authority. The Municipality Code Book is a listing in alphabetical order and coding of all municipalities and cities in each province while the Barangay Code Book contains all barangays (barrios) in each municipality and city. There are 13 volumes of the Barangay Code Book covering each of the 13 administrative regions in the Philippines.

It is expected that such geographic classification coding system would be adopted by all government agencies concerned with the compilation and use of statistics referring to geographic areas in the country.

The Philippines, through the Bureau of Coast and Geodetic Survey, and the Bureau of Lands participated in the activities of the U. N. Divisional Group of Experts on Geographical Names, South-East Asia Division, for the past two years. During the 3rd Divisional Meeting held in Manila on 10-14 June 1976, it was agreed that the newsletter "GEONAMES" will be published periodically as the official publication of the Division. It aims to convey timely and relevant information on current activities of the Division in regard to standardization of geographical names and other aspects of map making. It hopes to serve as a forum for the presentation of divergent regional viewpoints leading to a better understanding among nations.