



FINEX FOCUS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF FINEX

7th General Membership Meeting



Despite worries about the weather, the event was a resounding success, drawing a full house.



(L-R) Jon Salang, Janeth De los Reyes, Cynthia del Castillo, and Jason Briones

NEW MEMBERS INDUCTED [HERE](#)



**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:
EJ QUA HIANSEN**

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



"Our people deserve better, much better. Our people deserve systems that work for them and that improves their quality of life. And that is why we are here today, so that we can identify, as FINEX and as leaders, our role in the quest for good governance."

- EJ Qua Hiansen

Good day, thank you for taking the effort to be here today for our 7th General Membership Meeting, on a topic of pressing importance, the Quest for Good Governance.

As we gather, many of our fellow Filipinos are facing yet another natural disaster. Non-stop torrential rains have flooded large parts of the Philippines—submerging homes, displacing families, destroying livelihoods, and, most tragically, costing lives. Our hearts go out to all the victims of this crisis. We stand in solidarity with every person battling the rising waters, those seeking shelter, and those grieving unimaginable loss. Let us never forget that behind the statistics are real people—our kababayan—who deserve safety, dignity, and justice.

And yet, as we observe this disaster unfold, we are forced to ask: Why does this keep happening? Year after year, flood after flood, the story stays the same—except now the floods are worsening. Every year, we hear that billions upon billions are allocated for flood control, drainage systems, and disaster resilience, including climate change adaptation. Hundreds of billions of pesos are set aside in the national budget for flood mitigation projects. Although the peso amount is substantial, this would be a valuable investment if it effectively reduces flooding.

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COURTESY VISIT TO MANILA BULLETIN

On June 26, FINEX visited its long-standing media partner, Manila Bulletin. President EJ Qua Hiansen was joined by writers Dr. George Chua, Albert Gamboa, Earvin Salangsang and FINEX Media Affairs & Communications Committee Chairman Carlos Cervantes.



The partnership between FINEX and Manila Bulletin spans more than two decades, originating under the leadership of the late Don Emilio Yap and spearheaded by George Chua. This enduring collaboration has been built on a foundation of mutual respect rather than a formal Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). The relationship emphasizes business matters, steering clear of political involvement.



Currently, Manila Bulletin is led by Chairman Basilio Yap, President Emil Yap, and Publisher Sonny Coloma.

FINEX has consistently written articles to Manila Bulletin since year 2000, on a twice a week basis by 11 FINEX members-writers.

The delegation was given a tour of the building, at the newsroom where they had the opportunity to meet with the Editor-in-Chief. A notable highlight of the visit was the showcase of the spacious and grandiose conference room, recognized as one of the largest in the Philippines which can seat over 50 people.



FINEX also awarded a plaque of appreciation to Chairman Basilio Yap for his unwavering support and enduring partnership as FINEX's trusted media partner throughout the years. Manila Bulletin's contribution has been instrumental in amplifying the FINEX mission and strengthening the voice of the finance industry.

MESSAGE OF THE SPEAKER

“Silence is not neutrality. It is complicity, it is tolerance.”

These powerful words from Mayor Benjamin B. Magalong during the recent FINEX forum on good governance cut through the usual politeness of civic discussions and demanded real reflection.

The message was clear: when we choose to stay silent in the face of corruption, we become part of the problem.

Mayor Magalong shared that he entered public service to answer the public’s call for a better Baguio. But as the forum unfolded, it became clear that his message extended far beyond his city. In a country long desensitized by systemic abuse, where corruption is rewarded and honesty often feels like a sacrifice, it served as a wake-up call.

Magalong laid out alarming numbers: overpriced equipment, inflated infrastructure costs, and kickbacks hiding in plain sight. Behind these figures are real consequences—underfunded schools, crumbling hospitals, and a growing public debt now at ₱145,000 per Filipino.

Refuse to play the game. Protect the integrity of our organization/occupation.

Support leaders who walk the talk. Speak up. And most importantly, start with your own house.

Good governance, as the event reminded everyone, isn’t just a government issue, it’s a personal responsibility. The call isn’t for perfection, but for courage. And today, courage begins with speaking up.



Benjamin “Benjie” B. Magalong is the Mayor of the City of Baguio. Read his profile [HERE](#) and his presentation [HERE](#)



But the forum didn’t just expose the problems, it challenged the audience to act. What can we do?

Some of the Q &A during the GMM

Q: Corruption is often seen as a governance failure, implying our national leader should spearhead the fight. Studies indicate we are under 'dynastic governance,' with political dynasties controlling two-thirds of key government posts. Although the 1987 Constitution prohibits political dynasties as defined by law, neither the Senate nor Congress has legislated this definition in 38 years. How will we finally define and curb the influence of political dynasties in our government?

A: Our comprehensive study clearly shows a direct and well-established link between dynasties, corruption, and poverty. To combat this, an alliance, including retired military, religious figures, diverse business groups, employees, and farmers, is drafting a petition. This petition will target the Supreme Court, Senate, and Congress. We anticipate a favorable response from the Supreme Court, hope for a change of heart in the Senate, but expect the

most resistance from Congress. Retired generals are set to lead this campaign. A recent briefing on the 2025 budget left many of them in tears, as they expressed profound hopelessness and helplessness.

Q: Entrepreneurs often find themselves forced to choose: either accept corruption and become complicit, or face insurmountable bureaucratic hurdles for materials, clearances, and permits. Their immediate survival dictates this reality. What do you say to those who suggest merely moderating official greed? How should one act?

A: Effective change in combating corruption must start with leadership and the government. Leaders directly influence organizational behavior; a mayor lacking integrity in fighting corruption will not inspire public compliance, whereas a strong leader who consistently acts on their words empowers citizens to demand accountability.



Check out more photos [HERE](#)