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# PPA clarifies Pascual column

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Allow us to clarify, correct and disprove the article written by Mr. Federico Pascual Jr., in his column *Postscript* dated 14 August 2003.

The 1.9 kilometer (not 3kms. as indicated in the column) Batangas Access Road will not be demolished soon nor affected by the on-going port expansion and development works.

Mr. Pascual presumably based his piece from an information on a website of a maritime industry personality with questionable intentions, known for his half-truth revelations and malicious imputations against offi-

cials of the PPA.

Our assistant general manager for engineering Medardo Melicor will attest that contrary to the columnist's feature, the Batangas Access Road will not be demolished nor affected by the ongoing works of a private contractor presently undertaking port expansion works. Further, the F.F. Cruz-Shimizu port expansion project will not encroach into any portion of the existing Batangas Access Road. The road will not be demolished.

The Batangas Access Road which is a four-lane concrete stretch is not only an alternate access

but the main thoroughfare taken by trucks and passenger buses to the Port of Batangas bypassing the city proper. The road which used to be only a two-lane gravel based access would be regularly pockmarked by huge craters and potholes especially during the rainy season. The clamor of end-users and the local government prompted PPA to take immediate steps to improve the road.

The original plan was to construct a four-lane 20 cm. thick concrete road. This project was bid out and awarded during the previous ad-

ministration. However, the road was meant to be used by big trucks with heavy cargo.

To date, the access road has not only benefited the people of Batangas but also the travelers and shippers of faraway Mindanao islands, using the Strong Republic Nautical Highway.

The PPA, under the leadership of General Manager Alfonso Cusi, has continuously been under similar attacks since it implemented reforms to ensure that all biddings the agency undertakes are above board and conducted in ways consistent with existing rules and regulations for public biddings.

