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Making Cars Safer: AAP Joins ASEAN New Car Assessment Program

Last month, two directors of the Automobile Association Philippines (AAP) and an executive of the University of the Philippines National Center for Transportation Studies (UP-NCTS) attended the 1st ASEAN NCAP Meeting in Kuala Lumpur on the invitation of HH Tunku Mudzaffar Tunku Mustapha, chair of the Automobile Association Malaysia (AAM). Representing the Philippines at this precedent-setting regional road safety event held September 12-16 in Kuala Lumpur were AAP Vice President and Road Safety Committee Chair Juan B. Angeles, Jr., AAP Director and Government Liaison Committee Chair David L. Arcenas and UP-NCTS University Extension Specialist Aileen Mappala.

Together with AAM, the Malaysian Institute of Road Safety Research (MIROS) is proposing a pilot project to improve motor vehicle safety standards and encourage a market for safer vehicles through the development of a New Car Assessment Program (NCAP) for the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) region. The ASEAN members are Brunei Darussalam, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

The project is consistent with the Global Plan of the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020 and as part of ASEAN's emerging regional strategy for road safety. At the Draft of the ASEAN NCAP Protocol seminar preceding the meeting, the speakers were the Technical Manager of the Australian NCAP, the Secretary General of Euro NCAP and the Director General of MIROS. On the last day, the participants made a technical tour of MIROS and other facilities.

Rapid Motorization

The project proponents pointed out that in common with the rest of Asia, the 10 countries of the ASEAN region are facing a growing burden of road death and injury. From 2003 to 2007, fatalities rose by over 23 percent to reach a total of 53,366 and while the majority of these deaths are accounted for by vulnerable road users especially motorcyclists, the ASEAN countries are also experiencing record levels of motorization. Motor vehicle sales in 2010 increased by 32 percent, reaching a new high of 2.5 million units. The rapid growth of the motor car population in the ASEAN region and the road safety concerns they bring call for an aggressive road safety action involved with motoring.

The pilot project will run for two years, starting in 2012 and will consist of a two-phase series of frontal impact tests to assess the crashworthiness of selected popular passenger cars on the market in ASEAN countries. The objective is to evaluate the potential for consumer crash test information to contribute to vehicle safety across the region by building customer awareness of the safety features of the cars they buy. If the car market accepts the value of the pilot project's ratings, a permanent ASEAN NCAP could then be established.

The Test Program

NCAPs rate new car models according to their road safety capabilities through crash tests and an evaluation of their road safety equipment. The ratings serve as a guide to consumers regarding the road safety worthiness of the cars they intend to buy and offer an incentive to carmakers to produce safer cars.

The pilot project's test procedure, to be carried out at the new test facility being developed by MIROS, will be based on the 40 percent front impact crash test regulation of the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (ECE: Reg. 94) but at a speed of 65 kph. The test protocol and procedures would follow that of the European NCAP covering the protection of both adult and child.

The proponents are aware of the different safety features between the specific models car manufacturers sell in their region and those exported to or assembled in the ASEAN countries. The test results of the Euro NCAP are not applicable to the same model cars sold in the ASEAN since cars sold in ASEAN have fewer safety features in order to attain a lower selling price. So they see the need for an ASEAN NCAP.

The project partners are tasked to independently select the vehicles for testing based on the least expensive – and usually less well-equipped – variant of the model available on the major markets of the ASEAN region. Preference in selecting will be given to top-selling vehicles and those of special interest. If manufacturers wish to nominate additional vehicles to be tested during the pilot program, this must conform to the established procedures of similar programs such as Euro NCAP and the Latin NCAP.

The deadline for completion of the first phase in the pilot project would be May 2012.

Project Partners

MIROS and the Global New Car Assessment Program (GNCAP) will be the project leaders with MIROS as the host organization for the ASEAN NCAP pilot project. Additional partners to represent key stakeholder groups such as automobile clubs like AAP, consumer

organizations, insurers, road safety research institutes like UP-NCTS and government road safety agencies will form a Steering Committee and work together through a mutually agreed

Memorandum of Understanding

To ensure its complete independence, car manufacturers are not eligible for participation in the stakeholder group. Test results will be communicated to the car buying public via a website and launch events in the region organized by stakeholders such as automobile clubs and consumer groups.

Funding and Technical Support

Initial funding for the pilot project will be provided by a grant from Global NCAP for the purchase of the test cars and testing program. In partnership with GNCAP, the Euro NCAP and Australian NCAP can provide necessary technical support. Additional sources of funding will be explored from possible partners such as the Asian Development Bank, World Bank and automobile clubs affiliated with the FIA.

AAP and BPI Family Savings Bank team up to promote Road Safety Pledge

BPI Family Savings Bank (BFSB) has found a cause worthy of its employees' voluntary effort: Road Safety, the primary advocacy of the Automobile Association Philippines (AAP).

The BFSB has taken note that the World Health Organization (WHO) is concerned about the rapid increase of road traffic casualties and injuries worldwide. According to the WHO, over 1.2 million people die each year on the world's roads, and between 20 and 50 million are injured. The WHO warns that unless immediate action is taken, road crashes will soar to become the fifth leading cause of death by 2030, resulting in an estimated 2.4 million fatalities per year.

Last May 11, the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020 campaign was launched worldwide by the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) Foundation together with the WHO under a resolution approved by the United Nations with the aim of reducing road fatalities globally by 50 percent by 2020. AAP, as the only FIA member club in the Philippines and chair of the Philippine Global Road Safety Partnership (PGRSP) is leading the Decade of Action campaign in the country.

United by this common cause, a new alliance between AAP and the BFSB through BPI Bayan, its volunteerism arm, was signed recently. The partnership will strengthen the two organizations' efforts to make our roads safe in the years to come through their "Spread the Pledge Campaign." The campaign will gather signatures of people who pledge to be responsible road users as an effective reminder that road discipline is important. Upon signing the pledge, they will receive a Decade of Action on Road Safety tag which is expected to become a globally recognized icon.



UPHOLDING ROAD SAFETY. BFSB VP and Head of Product Marketing Herbert Tuason, BFSB SVP and Head of Auto and Motorcycle Loans Division David Sarmiento Jr., BFSB President Jose Teodoro Limcaoco, AAP President Augusto Lagman, AAP Treasurer Jacinto Mantaring, AAP VP and Chairman of the AAP Road Safety Committee Juan B. Angeles take the Decade of Action for Road Safety pledge.

MAKING MOTORING FUN

A real no-brainer

By Gus Lagman, AAP President



It's such a great feeling when you know you're able to contribute to the improvement of the way we do things or the way things are. This is exactly how we feel at AAP when we work on our advocacies, especially those related to road safety. I'd like to name a few of them in the hope that the non-AAP members who read this might become interested enough to join us in our quest for safer roads, more disciplined drivers, and more enjoyable driving experiences for all every day.

Training of PUV drivers. In cooperation with the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), U.P.'s National Center for Transportation Studies (UP-NCTS), and Toyota Motor Corporation, AAP has been conducting 3-day seminars for public utility vehicle drivers for some five years now. Thousands of bus, truck, jeepney, and taxi drivers have attended this training program. The 12-module course includes driving and vehicle maintenance tips, administering first aid, avoiding road rage, passenger (customer) relations, and even proper grooming, among others.

DVD version of training. Aware that using traditional training methods, we won't be able to train enough of the hundreds of thousands of PUV drivers to really make a difference, AAP produced a DVD version of the program, in ten-minute modules. These are now being distributed to PUV operators for viewing by their drivers.

U.P. Diliman campus: a model traffic zone. Unless you're currently a student there, you'd hardly notice that AAP installed/replaced more than 200 new road signs inside the campus. But if you regularly pass through U.P., you'd surely know that the oval is now a one-way road, going counter-clockwise. Part of the road has been converted into a bike lane and the intersections have been channelized for safer and more orderly entry into and exit from the oval. Common sights today, especially on weekends, are joggers along this bike lane.

Decade of Action for Road Safety. AAP, as the Philippine affiliate of the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), is a local catalyst in efforts to reduce road crash casualties (deaths and injuries) by half in the next ten years (2011-2020). AAP chairs and handles the secretariat of the Philippine Global Road Safety Partnerships (PGRSP), an organization

composed of large corporations and NGOs which are deeply concerned with making our roads safe. The international road safety assessment program, or iRAP, implemented through the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), is one of the programs that helped initiate and bring to completion. A fully-equipped van ran through more than 3,000 kilometers of Philippine roads to measure their “road safety-ness”. The report will be released very soon, which report will serve as the DPWH’s guide in mitigating the risks in our roads.

The “flash cards” project that teaches Grade 5 students on traffic rules and the H2O project for motorcycle riders, that promotes the “Helmets and Headlights On” always, are two other very laudable activities of the PGRSP.

In the AAP pipeline. The Children’s Traffic Park project has been in readiness for some time, but has been delayed by the “on-off” availability of the property on which we have been planning to build it. This planned mini-road-network system is a park where students can go to for field trips to learn traffic rules and regulations by actually experiencing “driving” through roads using pedaled vehicles. They have been effective in instilling driving discipline in the minds of the youth in countries with such parks.

But it’s not all advocacy work at AAP. There are also a lot of fun activities. We have been organizing one-day caravans the last three years those families who have joined enjoyed thoroughly. Soon, AAP will be building campsites at popular tourist spots so AAP members can experience drive tours that will bring them closer to nature. So tune up those RVs that you have been keeping in your garage for years.

Oh, and by the way, AAP has other offerings: free emergency roadside service (towing) and car registration assistance, discounts in car repairs, tires, batteries, non-life insurance, car accessories, hotels (even abroad), international driving permit, and a long list of other goodies.

What will all these cost you? Don’t laugh ... its P1, 200 a year! Happy motoring!

AAP Caravan to Explore Attractions of Ilocos Norte in November



The Automobile Association Philippines (AAP) Caravan hits the road again on November 25-27, 2011, this time with Ilocos Norte as its ultimate destination. Following the success of the first two caravans, AAP Director and Tourism Committee Chair Mina Gabor will lead the sojourn to the Solid North, AAP's first two nights-three days drive tourism project. The AAP conducts caravans regularly to promote drive tourism in the country and at the same time serve as a family-bonding weekend activity for AAP members and friends.

AAP caravan participants will get to explore the scenic and historic attractions of the province, which is known for its majestic beauty, rich culture and sturdy heritage. In Laoag, they will stay in the storied, old-world Plaza del Norte hotel which is near popular tourist spots. The first stop will be the astonishing geological formation of Kapurpurawan White Rocks which have smooth, flowing curves like ocean waves. Then the caravan travels south to Currimao, whose rock formations resemble dried up coral beds stretching along the coastline of the South China Sea.

Nature lovers, beachcombers and bird watchers will enjoy the serenity of Pagudpud beach where they can watch the exotic birds frequenting the place. The long, creamy-white sand beach lined with coconut palms is the favorite roost of some of the local avian species.

Caravan participants out for an extreme outdoor adventure can grab a board and surf on the La Paz Sand Dunes, A.k.a. The Desert of the North is a popular movie setting for local and foreign films due to its dramatic landscape.

Camera bugs can have a holiday photographing the Bangui windmills which form Southeast Asia's first wind farm. Another photogenic structure in the province is the Paoay Church. Built of coral blocks and stucco-plastered bricks, the architecture of this historic old church uniquely combines Baroque and Oriental traditions.

Those interested in Philippine history and politics can learn more about the late strongman, President Ferdinand Marcos, through the memorabilia exhibited at the Marcos Mausoleum & Museum where his waxed corpse lies in a vacuum-sealed glass coffin embellished with military medals and surrounded by faux flowers.

Caravan participants will savor sumptuous Ilocano dishes served at the famous Malacañang of the North.

AAP members, friends and other motorists are invited to join the AAP caravan with their families to discover the beauty and rich cultural heritage of Ilocos Norte. The registration fee includes meals, hotel and entrance fees to tourist attractions.

For more information, call the AAP main office 655 5889 and look for Alrose Plata. Slots are limited, so call AAP now!



The windmills of Bangui, Ilocos Norte



The Paoay Church.

AAP attends UNESCAP meeting on the Asian Highway network

The Automobile Association Philippines was among the participants in the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) Expert Group Meeting on the Asian Highway and Progress in Road Safety in Asia and the Pacific last month. A total of 30 countries, 10 international organizations and private sector representatives gathered at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok on September 27 to 29, 2011 for the meeting.

AAP was represented by AAP Vice President and Road Safety Committee Chair Juan B. Angeles, Jr. and Advocacies Executive Assistant Cynthia Reyes.

The participants discussed and explored investment opportunities in member countries and different approaches to financing the Asian Highway in compliance with the Agreement on the Asian Highway Network. Signed by 29 countries of which 21 have ratified it, the Agreement was enforced last July 4, 2005 to bring the sections of the Highway in their territories into conformity with the classification and design standards defined by the Agreement. Also, a Working Group on the Asian Highway was established to discuss progress in development policies and issues relating to international road transport.

The Asian Highway network consists of highway routes of international importance within Asia. It includes highway routes substantially crossing more than one sub region, highway routes in sub-regions that are connected to neighboring sub-regions; and highway routes located within member States.

According to the 2008 Asian Highway database, at least 10,000 kilometers of the Asian Highway were upgraded to higher standards during 2007 and 2008 including around 1,000 km upgraded to minimum standards. Meanwhile, approximately 11,000 km or 8 percent of the network need to be upgraded to Class III or higher standards. So far, all sections of the Asian Highway in 13 countries meet the minimum standards set by the Agreement. These countries are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Georgia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Turkey and Uzbekistan.

In the Philippines, 2,950 km of the Asian Highway were upgraded to Class III while 260 were upgraded to Class 1 as of June 2011. Fifty-eight percent of these roads are made of asphalts, while 41 percent are concrete and one percent is still covered with gravel. To improve the safety of these roads, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) issued an order back in March 2009 to install route markers and directional signs.

At the end of the meeting, the group agreed that the National Road Safety plans may include the development and continuous improvement of a comprehensive road accident data system, to facilitate the development of effective national road safety interventions, policies and programs and to monitor their implementation. A Quality Assurance System will also be established to link and compare road crash data collected by the police with hospital records, especially with regard to serious injury crashes. The delegates also agreed to adopt the standard definitions of road traffic crashes and fatal and non-fatal road traffic injuries.

Further discussion of the progress of the Asian Highway and the Trans-Asian Railway networks will be conducted in the next Ministerial Conference on Transport in Bangkok scheduled on November 14 to 18, 2011.



AAP Vice President Johnny Angeles with Lee Wai Mun, CEO of AA Singapore

Oman Automobile Association Director visits AAP

On a trip to Manila recently, Oman Automobile Association (OAA) Director Salim Ali Khalifa Al-Maskiry dropped by the Automobile Association Philippines (AAP) main office at 28 EDSA, Greenhills.

During his brief visit, Al-Maskiry was entertained by AAP Treasurer Jacinto Mantaring who told him about some of AAP's advocacy campaigns and projects, particularly the Decade of Action for Road Safety pledge. He was pleased to sign the pledge and put on the Decade of Action tag. Al-Maskira was given copies of AAP's publications and the coffee table book on the history of Philippine motorsports which he said he would treasure for a lifetime.

The OAA office is located at CPO Seeb, Sultanate of Oman and is also affiliated with the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA).



AAP Treasurer Jacinto Mantring (left) and Cynthia Reyes of the AAP road safety committee with OAA Director Salim Ali Khalifa Al-Maskiry

AAP governs four-wheel motorsport events only

After the tragic death of the young motorcycle racing champion Maico Buncio in a freak accident during a race last May 15 at the Clark Speedway Racing Circuit, speculation arose as to who was to blame.

In a joint statement, the Buncio family and his team Suzuki Philippines said that Bunvio's death was due to a steel bar protruding from a still-unfinished barrier on the Clark Speedway. The steel bar punctured his body and damaged his kidney and liver. His colleagues and fans blamed the lack of safety measures at the race track for Buncio's untimely demise. They contended that the race organizer should have inspected the safety of the race track before conducting the event and that if the track was under renovation, the organizer should not have held the race in the first place.

Since the Automobile Association Philippines is known to govern and sanction motor sports nationwide, many jumped to the conclusion that AAP was to blame and some even commented to that effect in AAP's Facebook page. The cover story "Death in the Morning" in the July 3 issue of the Sunday Inquirer Magazine fueled the speculation further since Johnny Tan, operator of the Clark Speedway and organizer of the motorcycle race, was quoted by the writer, Dennis U. Eroa, as saying that the race "was sanctioned by the ruling National Motorcycling Sports and Safety Association (NAMSSA) and AAP."

AAP Director and Motorsport Committee Chair Mandy Eduque promptly issued a statement to the Philippine Daily Inquirer to rebut Tan. "What Tan said about AAP is simply and completely untrue," Eduque said in his statement which appeared in the PDI Letters to the Editor section last July 13. "As the representative of the Federation International de l'Automobile (FIA) in the Philippines, AAP is mandated to exercise governance over four-wheel motorsport events only. In its 80-year history, AAP has never been involved in two-wheel (motorcycle) events and certainly did not sanction the motorcycle race in which Buncio was fatally injured' Tan should know better than to make a statement that he knows very well to be untrue. AAP will take whatever action is necessary to protect AAP's name and reputation."

Following the publication of Eduque's statement, Nelson A. Gayola of the Batangas Racing Circuit's Corporate Communications Department wrote to the PDI that "Tan might have said this during the interview, and we would like to make a correction and make this clear: The AAP is not the governing body for motorcycle races but for four-wheel races only. It was not involved or connected in any way to the incident."

The issues of race track safety, track maintenance and improved medical facilities at the tracks are now being addressed by sports authorities. New rules that would increase the safety of the competitors and of the game's environment are being discussed.

AAP members can still avail of AAA complimentary services in North America

Since the American Automobile Association (AAA) is no longer affiliated with the Federation International de l'Automobile (FIA), it has provided a bilateral agreement with FIA-affiliated clubs including the Automobile Association Philippines (AAP) so that AAP members can still avail of AAA's complimentary services when visiting the United States and/or Canada.

AAP members who visit and drive in the United States and/or Canada can avail of the following complimentary services courtesy of AAA:

- Basic Roadside Assistance (as defined for AAA's classic membership)
- Access to AAA online travel tools, including TripTik® Travel Planner which includes digital maps, personalized itineraries, and all the contents of AAA's TourBooks®, as well as car and hotel reservations. If desired, AAA will also provide AAP with a link where AAP can place its website. AAA will be offering this service to members of interested clubs by January 2012.

The Basic Road Assistance that AAA offers consists of Emergency Road Service (if not in a rental car) for towing up to three miles, lock-out service, and battery service if the visitor is in an AAA territory that offers the service to its own members. If the visitor is driving a rental car, the rental car company is supposed to provide emergency road service. Visitors are advised to verify the rental company's road service policy at the time of rental. Recreation vehicles (RVs) and motorcycles are not covered by AAA's Basic Road Assistance.

The phone number to call within the US and Canada for AAA's Emergency Road Service is 1-800-AAA-HELP (1-800-222-4357). The visiting member's call will be routed to the appropriate territory based on where the call is coming from or where the visitor is located. Visiting AAP members must have their current AAP membership card with them at all times in order to obtain assistance from AAA.

AAP Makati Satellite Office moving to Malugay, Bel Air

The Automobile Association Philippines (AAP) is moving its Makati Satellite Office to Bel-Air, Makati City for the greater convenience of its members. The new address and contact details are:

201 Makati Golf Club, 7232 Malugay Street, Bel Air, Makati City

Tel: (632) 814 0584

Telefax: (632) 817 9758

AAP expects to complete the transfer on November 30, 2011. But members can already visit the new office as it is open and accepting transactions such as Philippine International Driving Permit (PIDP), AAP membership, LTO car registration assistance and others.

The new office is slightly larger and provides a better working environment that would encourage productivity and efficiency among AAP employees. It is also more accessible to motorists and offers a bigger parking space for their vehicles.