

BIYAHENG SCTEX

The official publication of the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway

SCTEX ENSURES SAFE NIGHT DRIVING

story on page 2

IN THIS ISSUE:

Day tours via SCTEX: Quick access
to emerging tourist destinations

BCDA awards SCTEX O&M contract to MNTC

Scenes from an Expressway

SCTEX ensures safe night driving

by the BCDA Public Affairs Department

As the number of vehicles using the SCTEX continues to increase steadily, the BCDA—the tollway's owner and builder, is stepping up its campaign to keep the SCTEX safe, particularly for motorists driving at night.

"Based on statistics from here and overseas, more vehicle accidents occur during the nighttime," said Robert Gervacio, SCTEX program manager for operational support services and spokesperson. "We are committed to make sure that the SCTEX has the necessary safety feature to ensure safety while traveling at night, especially now when more and more people are using the tollway."

"Like all world-class tollways, the SCTEX has a number of safety features, but motorists must also do their part—by strictly keeping within the allowable speed limits and by driving defensively and carefully all the time," Gervacio pointed out.

In conformity with global standards, lamp posts at the SCTEX are placed 500 to 800 meters before and after each interchange to illuminate entrance ramps, exit ramps, toll plazas and all major bridges (400 meters or longer). "Thus, motorists driving at night are advised that when they approach lighted lamp posts, they should be aware that

they are nearing an interchange or entering a major bridge way," said Gervacio.

The other SCTEX night safety features include ample reflectorized traffic cones and reflectorized road signs. One unique feature is the retroreflective raised pavement markers (RPMs). RPMs are durable, highly reflective markers used for longitudinal lines that serve as a guide when driving. The RPMs or "cat's eyes" are the primary means to improve wet-night visibility. "Through all these safety features and equipment, motorists will be able to avoid hazards when driving at night," Gervacio said.

Motorists, he noted, should also remember that, at night, 20/20 vision is reduced to about 20/50, so they must drive at a speed that permits them to stop within their range of vision. "As a rule, the speed limit that is reasonable for daytime is too fast at night," he continued. "Motorists must observe night driving safety as soon as the sun goes down."

For the safety and convenience of motorists, security teams are strategically deployed along the tollway to ensure that help is just 20 minutes away at any point along the SCTEX. Motorists needing



Sacobia Bamban bridge at night

roadside assistance can call the following SCTEX hotlines: (0920) 96-SCTEX (72839), (045) 865-2030, (02) 362-9997 and (02) 362-2246.

The *SCTEX Motorist's Handbook* lists down the following safety tips for night driving:

- Never look directly into oncoming headlights; look instead at the right side of the road to stay on course;
- Be sure to dim your lights for approaching traffic and for vehicles traveling ahead of you;
- Be sure your windshield is clean inside and out, and that the windshield wipers are adequately clean and are in good condition; and
- Keep your headlights clean; dirty headlights can reduce visibility by more than 50%.

The handbook also urges motorists to be extra cautious when driving at twilight. "Twilight," it says, "is one of the most difficult times to drive because your eyes are constantly changing to adapt to the growing darkness. Keep your headlights on. This may not help you to see but you can be seen by other drivers, thereby decreasing the likelihood of an accident."

Linking the three major economic and industrial zones of Central Luzon—the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, the Clark Freeport Zone and the Central Techno Park in Tarlac—the 94-kilometer SCTEX is currently handling an average daily traffic volume of some 30,000 vehicles. With its seamless connection to the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX), it now offers the fastest route from Metro Manila to the provinces of Central and Northern Luzon.

"Travel time between Manila and Tarlac City, for example, just takes an hour and 25 minutes through the SCTEX and NLEX," said Gervacio. "And a growing number of motorists are discovering and taking advantage of this fact."

During this year's Holy Week, traffic volume on the SCTEX went up sharply, posting a new record high of nearly 40,000 vehicles on Easter Sunday, 15% higher than the total registered on Easter 2009.



TOLLWAYS MANAGEMENT CORPORATION (TMC)
Publisher and Circulation



ALOYSIUS R. SANTOS
Chairman, BCDA

GEN NARCISO L. ABAYA (RET)
President and CEO, BCDA

AILEEN R. ZOSA
Executive Vice President, BCDA

MGEN EDUARDO J. LENA (RET)
SCTEX Program Director

BGEN ROBERT C. GERVACIO (RET)
SCTEX Program Manager for Operational Support Services (OSS) & SCTEX spokesperson

LEILANI BARLONGAY-MACASAET
Editor-in-Chief/BCDA Public Affairs Manager

ROY VICTOR R. ROSALES
Managing Editor/BCDA DMO V

GARRY A. CATIVO
MICHELLE S. SAN JUAN
Writers and Lay-out Artists/BCDA PIOs

AGEM O. ALFAFARAS
Photographer/BCDA Media Production Specialist

Contributors:

JENNIFER A. MALLO
SCTEX Community Relations Officer

ENGR. JOSHUA M. BINGCANG
SCTEX Project Manager for Engineering and Construction PMO

Ang *Biyaheng SCTEX* ay ang opisyal na pahayagan ng Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway, proyekto ng Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) na inilathala ng Tollways Management Corp. (TMC). Matatagpuan ang opisina ng SCTEX sa Toll Operations Center Bldg. (TOCB) Brgy. Dolores, Mabalacat, Pampanga.

Day tours via SCTEX: Quick access to emerging tourist destinations

by the BCDA Public Affairs Department



Las Casas Filipinas de Acuzar

Summer has ended and the new school year has already started. But this does not mean plans for the next family outing must be put on hold until the Christmas break or, worse, until next summer.

The seamless connection of the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) with the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEX) has made travel from Metro Manila to Central and North Luzon so fast and convenient that families living in the metropolis can now take day tours to these regions' many tourist destinations without disrupting their weekday work and schooling schedules. They can simply drive to their favorite R&R (rest and recreation) spot on a Saturday morning, stay there the whole day, take a late afternoon drive back to Metro Manila and be at home in time for dinner. They don't even have to wait for a three-day weekend to enjoy an out-of-town trip with family and friends.

The 94-kilometer SCTEX, the Philippines' longest tollroad, plays a particularly key role in making these day tours easily do-able and highly enticing. Built by the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) to interconnect Central Luzon's three major economic and industrial zones—the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, the Clark Freeport Zone and the Central Techno Park in Tarlac—this expressway has not only made these growth hubs more accessible, it has also dramatically shortened travel time from Metro Manila to the region. For instance, the drive from the Manila via the NLEX to the SCTEX Mabalacat Toll Plaza takes some 45 minutes. From there on, it only takes a mere 25 minutes to Tarlac City. Similarly, from the SCTEX Mabalacat Toll Plaza, it just takes some 45 minutes to Subic.

Providing travelers with breathtaking views of verdant fields and majestic mountain ranges, the SCTEX is also widely acclaimed as the country's most scenic expressway and, thus, has become a tourist attraction in itself. Even more important, it continues to help drive tourism growth in Central Luzon by making easily and conveniently reachable the region's established tourist destinations (Subic's theme parks, Clark's hotels, resorts and duty-free shops, the pristine beaches of Zambales and Bataan, the famed *Mt. Pinatubo* trek via Capas, Tarlac, the Hundred Islands in Pangasinan, Baguio's Camp John Hay, and La Union's Thunderbird Resorts Poro Point) as well as some new ones that are rapidly becoming "must-see" attractions too.

Heading the list of Central Luzon's emerging tourist destinations are the *Las Casas Filipinas de Acuzar* in Bagac, Bataan, and the New Well Being Spa of the Lohas Hotel in Clark—two destinations that you can visit in just one day trip via the SCTEX.

Just an easy two and a half hours drive from Metro Manila via the SCTEX, *Las Casas Filipinas de Acuzar* can perhaps best be described as the Philippine equivalent of Virginia's Colonial Williamsburg—a "historical" site that allows visitors not only to get a glimpse of the country's past but to actually experience it. Although the town of Bagac is more commonly associated with the infamous "Death March" of World War II, *Las Casas Filipinas* brings visitors to an older, more gracious period of Philippine history.

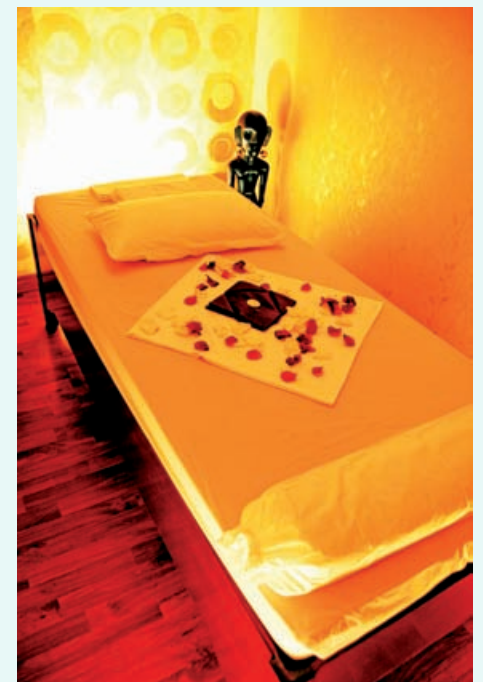
Occupying a 400-hectare site surrounded by the *Umagol* River, the South China Sea and carabao-plowed fields that extend to the Bataan mountains, it is essentially a life-sized replica of a town settlement during the Spanish times. It boasts of authentic 19th century principalia mansions, original *bahay na bato* (stone houses) and cobblestone plazas and streets that were carefully taken down from different parts of the country and painstakingly rebuilt in Bagac "brick by brick" and "plank by plank."

These structures, all of them at least 100 years old, have been restored to their former grandeur to create a walk-through—or, for those who would opt to ride in one of *Las Casas Filipinas'* *caruajes* (horse-drawn carriages), a drive-through—museum of Philippine architecture that celebrates Filipino ingenuity and craftsmanship.

Las Casas Filipinas also has *El Museo*, a museum showcasing artifacts from the Spanish times, functions rooms, and two restaurants: *Marivent Café* serves authentic Filipino-Hispanic dishes cooked the traditional way, while *Taberna del Señor Pepe* offers a variety of Spanish tapas, deli items, cocktails and hand-rolled cigars.

For those seeking to be pampered after a hard week of work and studies, a day tour to the New Well Being Spa of the Lohas Hotel in Clark is an ideal weekend treat. Built on a three-hectare property around the former Red Villas Clubhouse, the Lohas Hotel is a 40-room condotel that has the largest spa in the region.

The spa offers Swedish, shiatsu, aromatherapy and foot massages, but is best known for *Jjimjilbang*, a Korean-style sauna. This is a three-step sauna where guests first enter the hot sauna, then go to a warm room to rest, before entering an ice cold room. Guests can also use the spa's jacuzzi before proceeding with the massage.



New Well Being Spa at Lohas Hotel

BCDA awards SCTEX O&M contract to MNTC

Following the bidding process for the project which started October 2009, the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA), the government agency mandated to convert former military bases in Central Luzon and Metro Manila, has awarded to the Manila North Tollways Corporation (MNTC) the right to enter into the contract to lease, manage, operate and maintain the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEX).

The SCTEX is a 94-kilometer tollway that interlinks Central Luzon's three major economic zones—the Clark Freeport Zone, the Subic Bay Freeport Zone and the Central Techno Park in Tarlac. It was built by BCDA using a concessional loan from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), formerly the Japan Bank for International Cooperation.

The MNTC, on the other hand, is the builder and concessionaire of the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) to which the SCTEX has been seamlessly connected. The firm is a member of the Metro Pacific Group of Companies that is headed by businessman Manuel V. Pangilinan.

Under the terms of the contract which was awarded June 9, BCDA shall lease to MNTC the SCTEX and assign to it the concession to manage, operate and maintain the tollway for a period of 25 years, renewable for another 8 years. BCDA also assigns to MNTC its toll operations rights under the Toll Operations Agreement (TOA) which BCDA signed with the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) on June 13, 2007, including the right to collect toll revenues.

In return, MNTC shall pay BCDA a semi-annual lease/concession fee (SAL/CF) amounting to the peso equivalent of the yen-denominated JBIC/JICA debt service requirements for the years 2010 to 2016.

From 2017 to 2043, MNTC will pay, as lease concession fee, 20% of the gross revenues from the SCTEX, with the provision that if the lease concession fee falls short of the JICA debt service requirement, MNTC will advance the shortfall to BCDA without interest and recover the amount from BCDA's future 20% share in gross revenues if it exceeds the debt service requirement.

Based on MNTC's estimates, it will pay BCDA a total of P64.4 billion in lease concession fees for the concession period. This amount is higher than the minimum requirement of P38 billion which BCDA set under the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the bidding of the operation and management (O&M) contract for the SCTEX.

The bidding for the SCTEX O&M contract began in October 2009. Following the failure of the bidding on February 2010, after BCDA declared MNTC's financial proposal as "non-complying," BCDA, in line with the TOR, went into negotiations with MNTC, the lone eligible bidder, and later accepted the improved proposal submitted by the company.

The BCDA and MNTC are now negotiating the details of the draft lease/concession agreement which is expected to be executed in 30 days, subject to obtaining the appropriate approvals of relevant agencies such as the TRB, OGCC and JICA.

As the SCTEX concessionaire, the MNTC will be responsible for, among others, the overall management and supervision of the tollway; management of the toll operations center, toll plazas, and all other related ancillary facilities and equipment and the provision of appropriate resources to run the toll operations; implementation of a traffic safety and security management program for the entire stretch of the tollway on a 24/7 basis; provision of an adequate patrol system for the whole stretch of the tollway on a 24-hour basis; provision of emergency response and incident management on a 24-hour basis in coordination with appropriate law enforcement agency; and maintenance of greenery and landscaping along the tollway.

Scenes from an Expressway

by: Doods Tanabe



Day tours via SCTEX...

from page 4

Facial treatment services that use non-evasive, non-pricking techniques done by professionally-trained therapists are also available.

Like all world-class hotels, the Lohas Hotel offers guests with their choice of food and beverage outlets: Café Mu, the Yummy Restaurant which serves Korean specialties, and the Open Cottage which is fast becoming a popular venue for garden-type wedding receptions and birthday parties.

Nothing can top the wonderful experience of having had two destinations in two provinces of Central Luzon in one day via the SCTEX.

