



Students perform during a “Pasinaya” festival in Manila on Feb. 26. Pasinaya is one of the largest multi-arts festival in the country involving almost 5,000 artists and 300 shows in a single day, according to local media. (Reuters/Romeo Ranoco)

CALAPAN CITY — Puerto Galera, the foremost tourism town of Oriental Mindoro, is attempting a major “tourism coup” of sort as it conducts a three-day cultural music and arts festival and concert in a remote and mountainous village that started on March 2.

Organizers of the Malasimbo Music and Arts Festival, an annual festivities highlighted by ethnic-inspired concert in Puerto Galera to welcome the summer season, are expecting some 2,000 to 3,000 local and foreign tourists from different countries to flock to Sitio Malasimbo to witness the event.

The festival, which is slowly getting popular because of its uniqueness, will be held at the three to five hectares of land owned by Hubert D’ Aboville, a French national and principal organizer of the international event.

This is also part of the provincial government tourism office’s goal of tapping private sector to boost tourism in Oriental Mindoro.

As described by the head of the provincial tourism office, supervising tourism operations officer Orlando Tizon, the venue of the said big event was specially designed as a “natural amphitheater” for some 300 local and international performers which include known and popular artists, singers and dancers in the country, as well as abroad.

According to Mr. D’Aboville, among those who signed up to perform are Joe Bataan, a half-Spanish and half-Filipino recording artist who is popularly known as the “King of Latin Soul.”

The festival will also showcase art products made from wood and cement, especially-designed by artists.

Some of the features artists are Mangyans, the indigenous people of Mindoro Island.

Aside from experiencing the cool and breezy winds of the mountainous resort of Malasimbo and the whole of Puerto Galera, attendees at the event will also get to know the unique culture of the tribal Mangyans.

Proceeds from the event will be spent on environmental projects which will be implemented by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).