

## Message

**Dr. Caesar A. Saloma**  
**Chancellor, UP Diliman**

Dr. Caesar A. Saloma started by congratulating UP ISSI for its 42<sup>nd</sup> founding anniversary as a unit of the University of the Philippines.

Citing figures, Dr. Saloma acknowledged that the Philippines is fuelled by small entrepreneurs operating across the country, “--lining our major highways and neighborhood streets, keeping shop in airconditioned malls and open air markets, servicing congested urban areas and the sprawling campus. “

According to Dr. Saloma, the number of Philippine SMEs and their contribution to the economy attest that National Artist for Literature Nick Joaquin’s portrayal of the Filipino entrepreneur could only be true in his day when he wrote the essay, *A Heritage of Smallness*. In the essay, Joaquin described the Filipino enterprise as being a small stall - a sari-sari store, Filipino industry as *isang kahig, isang tuka*, and trade as *tingi*, and for the Filipino’s inclination to take big, bold risks as a barrier to progress.

The Chancellor, however, said that Nick Joaquin’s essay should influence everyone to follow the dream to be THE small enterprise. He also urged the audience “to exhaust all possible means to make the *sari-sari* scale enterprise productive and competitive so that when crises abound—the *isang kahig isang tuka* situation—does not affect the lives of many Filipino people.”

He then set the tone for the day’s discussions by posing the question, “What complex measures must be undertaken to ensure strong and healthy MSMEs so that they remain stable, pursue the elusive dream, and alleviate poverty?”

He acknowledged the significance of holding the Forum in UP Diliman citing that “this is where experts in business administration, economics, social sciences and philosophy, social work, and public administration are based and whose joint efforts can offer more than disciplinary approaches to the issues concerning MSMEs.” Dr. Saloma also informed the audience that “UP Diliman is also home to future entrepreneurs trained not only to excel in their endeavors but also to exercise social responsibility in whichever enterprise they set-up and work for.”

In closing, the Chancellor expressed hope for a fruitful discussion of the topics in the agenda.