

PLDT-Smart officials called to task on bias against Filipino talents during the COVID pandemic

MANILA, PHILIPPINES, October 29, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- PLDT-Smart Chair, Manuel V. Pangilinan and its President, Al Panlilio were rebuked by Philippine House of Representative Congressman Ronnie Ong for their inappropriate treatment of Filipino talent for spending millions of dollars on foreign artists at a time when the Philippine population is battling an economic crunch due to the pandemic.

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Congressman Ong

The World Bank's goal cites "inequality-reducing policies" that is needed more than ever to support the population in addressing the debilitating effects of a depressed quality of life. For this reason, Congressman Ong is adamant about corporations "paying billions of pesos to foreign artists for the telco's mundane product promotions at the behest, in this case, of PLDT-Smart".

Further to this, government leaders are mindful of the 1980 Corporation Code of the Philippines that specifies the

objective of establishing businesses not just for private gain but as partners in spreading capitalism's benefits for the nation's social and economic development.

Congressman Ong, a party-list Representative for Probinsiyano Ako (I'm from the province) is also a member of the House Committee on the Creative Industry and Performing Arts, and he pointed out that the local telco executives' misplaced preference in hiring foreigners as product endorsers had virtually downgraded Filipino artists. The Philippine lawmaker was reacting to reports that the telecommunications firm has tapped South Korean entertainment personalities as endorsers, including the well-liked BTS group that was reportedly paid PHP500 million (USD10 million) for a commercial last year.

Among the foreign brand endorsers were Hyun Bin, Son Ye Jin, Park Seo Joon and the BTS from South Korea. Joining the Asian stars are Hollywood's A-list like Chris Evans, Charlize Theron and Gwyneth Paltrow. Representative Ong said that while PLDT-Smart's hiring of foreign talents it its own prerogative, such 'executive decision' has reportedly become a [source of frustration](#) among Filipino nationalists.

The 2021 Edelman Trust Barometer highlights "living up to values as a responsibility to deepen roles and purposes and realize the full potential of brands and services in bettering the lives of everyone who are touched". PLDT-Smart is in a position to render its brands and businesses socially-relevant beyond spending those billions of pesos just for marketing purposes and with foreign celebrities. Otherwise, "patronizing foreign talents with no regard for the struggles Filipinos go through during these abnormal times is immensely insensitive and unsympathetic to say the least", Philippine Congressman Ong stressed.

Contrary to the trend in companies engaging celebrity endorsers as a surety for successful marketing campaigns, an international YouGov research finds that "consumers may not find them as effective for telecommunications brands". In fact as the research indicates, only 15% of global consumers think celebrities are effective at promoting media and telecoms services.

For all the money spent by PLDT-Smart on foreign celebrity endorsers, there seems to be no guarantee that the marketing campaigns will achieve their goals and succeed as expected. Congressman Ong believes that, especially in these challenging times, "the way to go is to make use of home-grown talents".

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