

01 March 2023, Wednesday



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POACHERS' BULLETS DOWN STUDIED PH EAGLE

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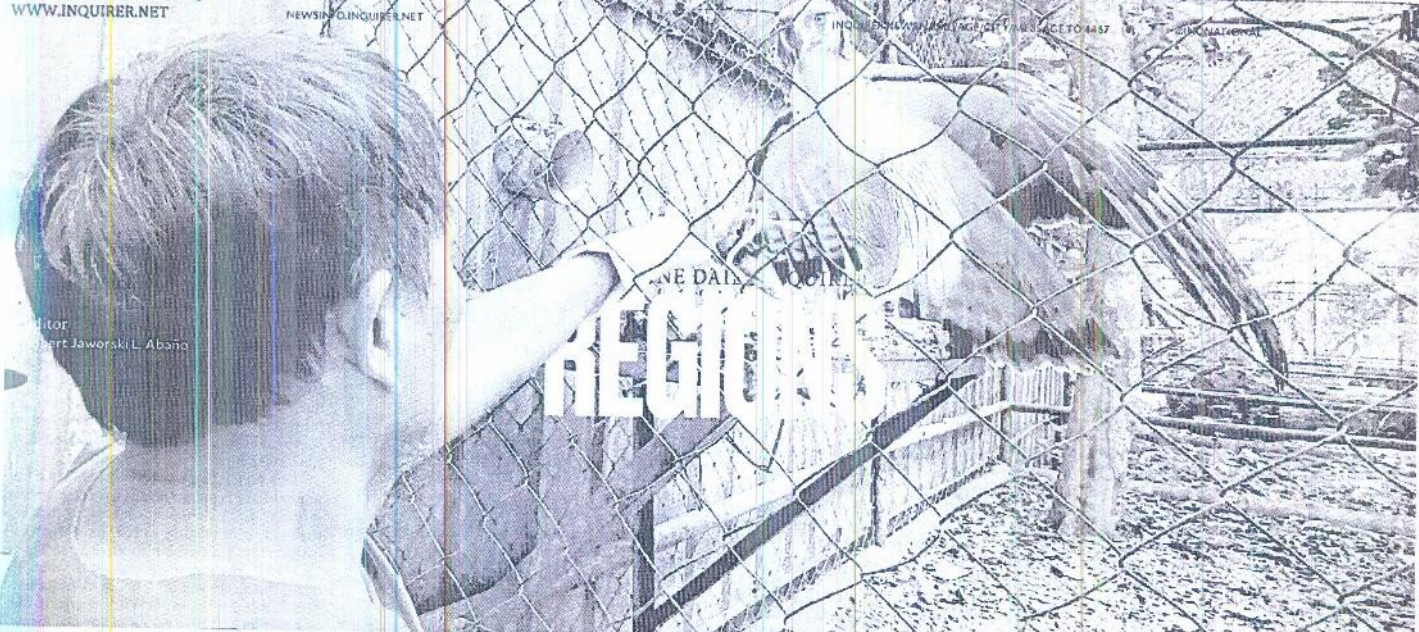


DELICATE RESCUE A wounded Philippine eagle named Sinabadan is carried by Philippine Eagle Foundation field biologist Rowell Ron Lemente Taraya, accompanied by senior animal keeper Dominic Tadena, after the endangered raptor is rescued in the forests of San Fernando in Bukidnon province last week. The bird could still stand but was weak and dehydrated (upper inset) and an X-ray taken later showed air-gun pellets lodged in its body. —PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE PHILIPPINE EAGLE FOUNDATION

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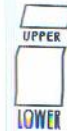
Editor
Robert Jaworski, L. Abano

PHILIPPINE DAILY
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REGIONS

FEEDING TIME A staff member of the Philippine Eagle Center at Malagos district in Davao City feeds an endangered Philippine eagle under its care. The conservation center has become the refuge of endangered birds rescued from poachers, like the injured Sinabadan, who was found in the forests of San Fernando, Bukidnon. —ERWIN M. MASCARIÑAS



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PH eagle tracked in study shot, wounded by poachers

Veterinarians found endangered bird weak, dehydrated in Bukidnon forest; three air-gun pellets seen in raptor's body after X-ray

By Erwin M. Mascariñas
@InqNational

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Sinabadan, a female Philippine eagle (*Pithecophaga jefferyi*) whose well-tracked life provided conservationists deeper knowledge on the growth and maturation of the endangered raptor in the wild, is recuperating at the Philippine Eagle Center in Davao City after surviving a poacher's attack in Bukidnon province five days ago.

The country's national symbol, the Philippine eagle, is one of the rarest eagles in the world, and one of the largest and most powerful birds of prey.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature classifies it as critically endangered as only 400 pairs of the bird remain in the wild, thriving in the dwindling forests of Luzon, Samar, Leyte and Mindanao.

Community-based forest guards trained by the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) found Sinabadan near a creek in San Fernando town, Bukidnon, on Feb. 24. She was too weak to even resist being taken by rescuers, and also showed signs of dehydration.

PEF experts told the Inquirer Sinabadan was malnourished and underweight. During an X-ray exam, PEF veterinarians found three air-gun pellets in her body—one in the chest, another in the thigh, and still another deep in the abdomen. Those in the chest and thigh were removed during surgery on Saturday.

The pellet wound in Sinabadan's chest was still fresh, while the two others were probably inflicted a few months ago, said Dr. Jayson Ibañez, the PEF director for research and conservation.

Due to her injuries, PEF experts worry Sinabadan may not be able to live in the wild again, and put an abrupt end to a budding love affair with another raptor.



HEALTH ISSUES The right eye of Philippine eagle Sinabadan indicates a cataract has clouded her vision but veterinarians say she is not fully blind. At right, veterinarian Bayani Vandebroecq operated on and removes the air-gun pellet from the chest of Sinabadan after she was taken to the Philippine Eagle Center in Davao City. —PHOTOS COURTESY OF PHILIPPINE EAGLE FOUNDATION

"This is heartbreaking and painful for all of us in the PEF. We are extremely appalled by this incident, we condemn such acts of violence against the world's rarest eagle," said Ibañez, who has been acknowledged as some kind of surrogate parent to the raptor, having monitored her since she was about a year old.

Sinabadan was also found to have poor vision due to a cataract buildup in her right eye which, Ibañez said, might have affected her hunt for prey and resulted in her malnutrition. Her condition was aggravated by the poacher's attack, he lamented.

Unsafe

"Many of our forests still remain unsafe for our national bird," Ibañez noted, pointing to some 10 raptors who survived gun attacks by poachers during the pandemic, many of them lost the capacity to live in the wild again.

Dennis Salvador, the PEF executive director, said the shooting of Sinabadan "is tragic and shows the need for the government to do more" to address the threats against the country's wildlife.

"Shooting and hunting continue to plague the plight of the

species in the wild. If we keep losing young birds, there will be none left to replace old breeding populations," Salvador said.

"We are hoping that our government can begin investing in enforcing our laws and putting an end to hunting and trapping of critically endangered species in the wild, not only for our Philippine eagle but for all other species," he added.

"We don't know others are getting extinct, if this can happen to Sinabadan who we have closely monitored for years, what else for other species out there in the wild?" Salvador said.

Then living in the vicinity of Mt. Apo, Sinabadan lost her father to a hunter's gun in 2014 while she was still a 7-month-old chick. Eaglets normally rely heavily on their male parents to bring them food, which had conservationists worry back then that Sinabadan might not survive long.

Reared by single parent

"But amazingly, the mother fought hard for Sinabadan to live," Ibañez recalled.

This is why the PEF considers Sinabadan as the world's first juvenile eagle reared successfully to independence in the

wild by a single eagle parent.

By then, Sinabadan—named after a Bagobo Tagabawa people's organization whose members guarded her natural habitat—was strapped with radio and GPS transmitters to allow conservationists to monitor her every movement.

Ibañez said that Sinabadan left Mt. Apo for good in November 2017.

"It was a remarkable and challenging journey getting to the next big forest, and flying over peopled landscapes, given that Mindanao's forest cover now are mostly fragments in a sea of farmlands, orchards and open areas," he said.

"Remarkably, Sinabadan used small patches of forests as her cover and pit stops. From a naive juvenile, she had grown wary through time. She dispersed secretly and gradually, covering distances of no more than 2 kilometers daily," Ibañez said of the bird's journey.

"She also followed riverine forests, such as those along Davao and Pulangi rivers. At Pulangi, PEF biologists saw her chase monkeys, flying lemurs, palm civets, hornbills and other food animals were also recorded at forests where Sinabadan temporarily took shelter. These data on how a juvenile eagle used and flew across a bigger, human-dominated terrain were all new to science," Ibañez said.

A July 2020 PEF report showed Sinabadan was 80 km away from where she was born, recording a total of 47,459 GPS locations over six years of remote monitoring from a total of four GPS transmitters strapped on her back. This meant the PEF team had to trap Sinabadan three more times to replace units that expired.

Now sexually mature, Sinabadan has been observed doing courtship displays, which means she is at an "early pairing stage." Philippine eagles normally take time to pair. **INQ**



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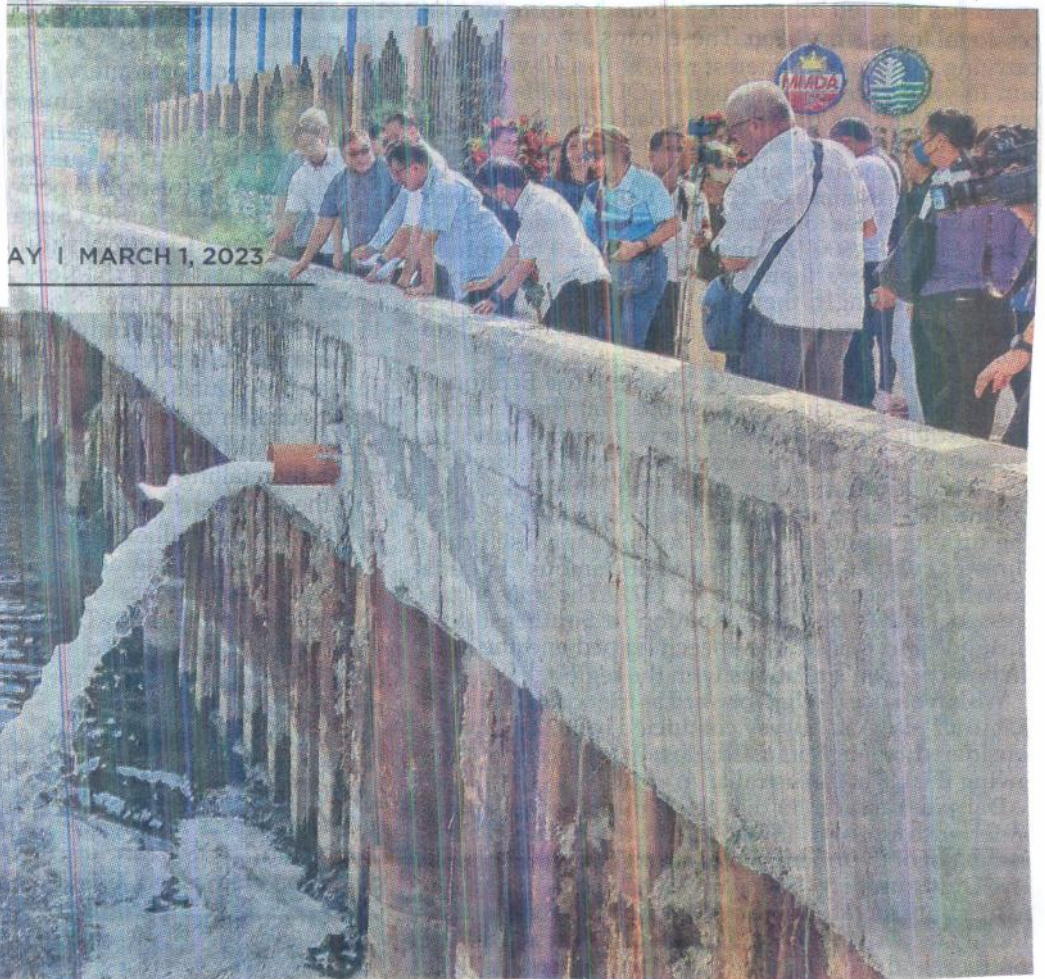
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**Metropolitan Manila
Development Authority
acting Chairman Romando
Artes leads the inauguration
of the Libertad Sewerage
Treatment Plant in Pasay
City yesterday. The plant
will help the MMDA and
other government agencies
achieve the dream of making
Manila Bay clean enough for
swimming, he said.**

BY ERNIE PEÑAREDONDO





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THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1880
MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER



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FLOOD CONTROL — Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Acting Chairman Romando Artes and Environment and Natural Resources Undersecretary Jonas Leones lead the inauguration of the Libertad Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) and Wastewater Interceptor on Macapagal Boulevard near the MMDA Libertad Pumping Station and HK Sun Plaza, Pasay City, on Tuesday, Feb. 28, 2023. Scan the QR code to watch the video online. (Ali Vicoy)





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IN BRIEF

MMDA installs water treatment plant in PC

THE Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) has inaugurated a sewage treatment plant in Pasay City as part of government efforts to mitigate pollution of the Manila Bay.

MMDA chairman Romando Artes said the Libertad Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) will treat wastewater from the Tripa de Gallina, which has been discharging wastewater into the Libertad Channel and draining into the Manila Bay.

Artes stressed the project was a result of the collaboration with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Philippine Reclamation Authority.

According to him, the Libertad STP can treat 10 million liters of wastewater per day and has a catchment area of 779 hectares. The treated wastewater will be used for watering plants and for the water supply of firetrucks in Pasay City.

"The MMDA will be in-charge of the maintenance and operations of the treatment plant, which is similar to the first STP located in Manila, equipped with a solar panel system to reduce maintenance and electricity costs," Artes said. **Rey E. Requejo**



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BATAAN FISHERS PROTEST MANILA BAY RECLAMATION

ORION, Bataan: A group of fisherfolk staged a fluvial protest against the ongoing reclamation in Manila Bay here on Tuesday.

According to the members of the Pagkakaisa ng mga Samahan ng Mangingisda (Pangisda), the Manila Bay reclamation "greatly affects the livelihood of those in the fishing sector."

The protesters carry placards and banners, demanding to stop the reclamation and, instead, concentrate on the rehabilitation of Manila Bay.

Pangisda-Bataan chairman Edlyn Rosales said they held a fluvial protest to mark the 25th anniversary of the passage of Republic Act 10654 that amended the Phil-

ippine Fisheries Code of 1998 which mandated the protection and rehabilitation of the fishing areas in the country.

"Subalit sa loob ng 25 taon ay nananatiling ang sektor ng mangingisda ay isa sa pinakamahirap na sektor sa lipunan na lalong pinalalala ng mga proyektong mayroon ngayon tulad sa probinsya ng Bataan (But in the last 25 years, the fishing sector remains to be the poorest in country, and its difficulties are compounded by projects like these in Bataan)," she said.

Rosales claimed that reclama-

tion projects take away their fishing grounds. She also said that seabed quarrying to extract sand at the Manila Bay also affected the lives of the marginalized fisherfolk.

"Tahasan nitong tinatangal ang karapatan at kabuhayan ng mga mangingisda na naninirahan sa coastal area. Nakataya na din dito ang food security ng bansa dahil alam naman natin na ang mga mangingisda ang isa sa nagbibigay ng tiyak na pagkain sa mamamayan (They take away the rights and the livelihood of the fisherfolk who live in the coastal area. Also

in jeopardy is the country's food security because we all know that the fishermen bring food to the Filipino people)," she said.

She claimed that around 20,000 hectares of sea water will be converted into land and more or less 50,000 families in the fishing sector will be affected by the reclamation.

Rosales appealed to the government to recognize the role of fishermen in society and to give teeth to the laws that will safeguard the environment and protect the livelihood of the fishermen and farmers.

ERNIE ESCONDE



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ENOUGH!

Small fisherfolk hold placards during a fluvial protest in Pasay City on Tuesday, Feb. 28, 2023, to condemn the rampant reclamation projects in Manila Bay that they claim robbed them of their livelihood. PHOTO BY MIKE ALQUINTO

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ANA MARIE PAMINTUAN

Reclamation frenzy

Last Saturday I went to Taytay to buy raw *balut* and runny *penoy higop* to cook at home, plus extra-jumbo eggs and freshly prepared salted duck eggs.

The Circumferential Road 6 from Lower Bicutan to Taytay provided a smooth drive. But it was dismaying to see how muddy brown the water of Laguna de Bay had become.

It was a sunny day and the bright blue sky should have been reflected on the lake that is one of the sources of fresh water for west zone concessionaire Maynilad.

Instead the lake looked shallow and heavily silted from the proliferation of private fishpens. No wonder there are always water service interruptions in this zone, due to the extra work needed to purify and eliminate turbidity in the water.

C-6 Road was touted as a scenic lakeside drive. But these days you'll have to crane your neck to see the water, as the former lakefront is now chock-full of ugly reclamation projects. The patches of remaining water near the road are overgrown with water lilies. It's an ugly, dismaying sight.

C-6 years northeastward alongside the Pasig River. The riverside would be a great area to develop into a commercial / recreational area, like similar waterfront spots in sustainable cities abroad. But there's no visible effort along this line. Perhaps the local governments are more interested in identifying portions of the river with reclamation potential.

Apart from ruining the quality of water in the lake, indiscriminate reclamation in what is supposed to be a natural floodplain has worsened flooding around the lakefront communities. In low-lying areas of Muntinlupa, it can take up to three months for floodwaters to subside.

The reclamation frenzy is even more intense in Manila Bay. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources should be at the forefront of reviving the bay and protecting its marine biodiversity. Instead, according to fisherfolk group Pamalakaya, the DENR has issued environmental clearances for several massive bay reclamation projects.

These cover, among others, 420 hectares in Bacoor, Cavite; 2,500 hectares for an "aerotropolis" in Bulacan; 360 hectares in Pasay; 65 hectares in Navotas and 419 hectares for the Horizon Manila.

What will be left of the bay?

Defending its project, the Pasay government has explained that the city wants to expand its area and earn from the business revenues that are expected to be generated from the new development.

Rodrigo Duterte scuttled all reclamation projects in Manila Bay during his presidency. Instead he tasked his environment chief Roy Cimatu to do for Manila Bay what was done for Boracay. But there were suspicions that the cleanup was meant to pave the way for the reclamation projects. Also, the synthetic dolomite beach in Manila's Baywalk was created during his watch.

Is President Marcos aware of the massive reclamation projects in Manila Bay and Laguna de Bay? Is decision making on projects that endanger the environment now left entirely to local government executives, many of whom have personal vested interests in such projects?



Manila Bay keeps getting smaller, threatening to worsen perennial flooding in Metro Manila and other surrounding areas, and destroying the already much reduced fish catch. Development projects have already decimated the salt beds around the bay. One day in the not-so-distant future, all that reclamation may make the bay too small even to function as an international and domestic port.

Marcos' mom Imeldific started the reclamation frenzy with the Cultural Center of the Philippines complex and the Dagat-Dagatan housing project in Malabon-Navotas that worsened flooding in northern Metro Manila.

BBM has yet to make clear his stand on the ongoing reclamation projects and other environmental issues. But the Marcoses, as political kingpins of *flocos Norte*, have supported renewable energy projects particularly wind power, and have shown appreciation and respect for heritage structures.

Is there political will, however, to stop the current reclamation projects, most of which are being pushed by supporters of the administration?

One of BBM's staunch political allies, at least, has been waging a spirited battle against Manila Bay reclamation.

Sen. Cynthia Villar has successfully turned a stretch of the bay from Parañaque to Las Piñas into an internationally protected critical wetland and ecotourism park - the only one of its kind in the entire Metro Manila.

The Villars have had their share of controversies. The clan's turf Las Piñas, once home to extensive salt beds, has not been spared from indiscriminate development.

Still, a different type of reclamation has been carried out in recent years by the local government in Las Piñas. Rivers, creeks and other waterways have been dredged and cleaned, with structures encroaching on them dismantled. The larger waterways have been developed into river drives with riprapped banks, providing alternate routes to ease traffic in the city.

The waterways are cleaned regularly by uniformed personnel; you won't ever see any overgrowth of water lilies. Taguig should ask Las Piñas how to turn water lilies into useful items such as hats, handbags and slippers. Such projects provide livelihoods while cleaning up waterways.

Instead of reclaiming precious bodies of water to expand the ugly concrete jungle that is Metro Manila, local governments in the country's capital region should restore the waterways in their respective jurisdictions, clean these up and develop them into open spaces where people can hang out and relax.

Metro Manila, with its unplanned development and urban blight, has an acute lack of these open spaces, which promote physical and mental well-being. The demand for such open spaces is evident in the popularity of the few shore areas in Manila Bay still open to the public as well as open-air weekend flea markets where people congregate with children, grandparents and fur babies in tow.

BBM, who studied in the UK and must be familiar with life in sustainable cities, and his wife Liza who worked in New York surely appreciate the value of intangibles, such as the beauty of a clean, peaceful bay.

Sadly, all this ongoing reclamation is giving a new dimension to the image of the sun setting over Manila Bay. Perhaps it's not yet too late to stop the madness.



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DENR thanks Australia for development support

By **CORY MARTINEZ**

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) expressed its gratitude for the Australian government's continued support of the professional development of its workforce through the conduct of a tree planting activity at the La Mesa Watershed Reserve

(LMWR) in Quezon City recently.

Analiza Rebueta-Teh, DENR Undersecretary for Finance, Information Systems and Climate Change, said that it is only fitting that the Australian government must be given due recognition since the scholarships it granted have helped shape Filipino scholars into becoming innovators, especially in formulating policies on conservation and sustainable

use of the country's natural resources.

Teh and Australian Ambassador to the Philippines Hae Kyong Yu together with the over 100 DENR employees, have planted some 100 two-year-old Narra saplings within the two-hectare LMWR Arboretum Park maintained by the DENR-National Capital Region.

Key officials from other government agencies and the Philippine-Aus-

tralian Alumni communities also attended the event dubbed as "Australia Alumni Family Day."

"More than enriching knowledge and competencies, this has resulted in the personal and professional growth of our workforce," Teh said, pointing out that the DENR is not the only beneficiary of these opportunities; "but also the very public it serves."

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At present, the scholarships and training sponsored by the Australian government have produced 60 postgraduate degree holders (five PhDs and 55 masteral degrees), including 100 participants in foreign and local training.

The scholarship and training programs offered cover areas such as human resource management and development, geographic

information science, natural hazards, marine science, mineral resources, remote sensing, groundwater management, environmental law, public policy, and public administration.

For her part, Ambassador Yu said the event underscores the two countries' mutual priorities on climate action, stressing that the tree planting activity brought attention to the important issue of environmental challenges.

She added that the activity "catches what is so

wonderful and fantastic about the Australian-Philippine relationship" as it likewise celebrated Australian Day and World Environmental Education Day on Jan. 26.

"As true friends, partners, and in fact, neighbors in this region, we know what it means to celebrate," she said.

Ambassador Yu further disclosed that the Australian Government has invested AU\$18 million through the SHIELD (Strengthening Institutions

and Empowering Localities Against Disasters and Climate Change) Programme to help the most vulnerable provinces in the Philippines deal with disasters that are driven by climate change.

The La Mesa Watershed Reserve has a total area of 2,659 hectares, around 75 percent of which is watershed and 25 percent is basin area.

The DENR has rehabilitated approximately 1,000 hectares of forestland within the reserve.



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A circular economic model for responsible stewardship of the environment

THINKING BEYOND POLITICS

VICTOR ANDRES C.
MANHIT

All our efforts to achieve economic growth and create wealth will amount to nothing if we leave behind depleted resources and a damaged environment for future generations.

In fact, we are already feeling the effects of this: climate change is taking its toll on the world's most vulnerable countries, and, within those countries, the most vulnerable communities. In terms of plastic pollution, the Philippines is the third-largest contributor to plastic waste worldwide.

Indeed, development is not genuine if it is not sustainable.

The Stratbase ADR Institute and Philippine Business for Environmental Stewardship (PBEST) held a roundtable discussion on Feb. 23 entitled "The Philippine Circular Economy Agenda: Integrating Sustainable and Strategic Waste Management Systems." Experts from the government, business, and civil society joined us to help shed light on the issue of cooperation towards solutions to this end.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Carlos Primo David said that the common understanding of "sustainability" is that it is a precarious balance between economic development and environmental protection. But there is a third aspect, he said: social welfare. Waste to energy is not just an environmental issue but a social one, and solutions to this end must be part of an integrated strategy for the good of all.

The mitigation hierarchy that is common in climate change issues may also very well apply to solid waste, he said. "It starts with avoidance, then reduction of impact, then rehabilitation, then offsetting."

The implementing rules and regulations of the Extended Producer Responsibility Act of 2022 was signed last month by DENR Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga. They are required to implement their own Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs to process plastic packaging waste for recycling and re-



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use instead of discarding them in landfills and to prevent its leakage into the environment, especially our waterways. The law requires enterprises to offset their plastic packaging footprint by 20-80% beginning this year until 2028.

But while the law is good, it is its implementation that would spell the success or failure of the program, Mr. David said. "For our part at the DENR, we hope to make the EPR procedures as straightforward as possible, with less paperwork, and focus first on the registration of all plastic producers."

The Director of the Environmental Management Bureau, Gilbert Gonzales, said that the shift from linear (take-make-sell-use-waste) to the circular economy is indeed transformative. The circular model yields greater benefits including economic growth and sustainability, more equally shared benefits and a more sustainable relationship with nature.

Nazrin Castro, Branch Manager of The Climate Reality Project Philippines, said a circular economy aligns well with the global and national agenda on climate resilience and sustainable growth.

She said the Philippines is a top contributor to plastic waste, next only to Indonesia and China, but they are also looking at plastics from a carbon-emission and global-warming perspective.

"Shifting to a circular economy is a pathway that can help address our addiction and dependence on plastics which is aggravating the climate crisis as well," she said.

Carlo Chen-Delantar, a pioneer of Circular Economy from the Ellen MacArthur Foundation Philippines, said that in implementing the EPR law, what are important are localizing the program, understanding the supply chain, understanding the industrial symbiosis, and appreciating how each step in the value chain works.

Alexander Cabrera, vice-president of the Management Association of the Philippines, said the government must provide incentives and impose taxes on business to address the country's waste problem.

"There must be an incentive integrated in the EPR or supplement to it when collecting your plastic or repackaging in order for your products to be more environment friendly. Meanwhile, the compulsion of taxing end-of-life plastic use will force people to reinvent their packaging because they don't want to pay tax. It's not a question of whether it can be done or not, it's a question of political will," Mr. Cabrera said.

What I found most heartening during the forum was the release of a survey conducted by Pulse Asia, commissioned by Stratbase, saying that 83% of Filipinos prefer to patronize products and services of brands that have environment friendly operations

and products. The survey was conducted between Nov. 27 and Dec. 1 last year. The findings were presented by Pulse Asia President Ronald Holmes.

"The message is clear," Mr. Holmes said. "Filipinos know that there are certain things that are happening in the country that require us to be more socially conscious. The question now is whether industries or firms will be able to cater to this preference."

In adopting a circular economy, the government plays a key role in creating and implementing policy, including providing incentives to occasion certain behavior. The private sector contributes through its investments and programs that enable circular business models. Some large-scale enterprises have taken the challenge, thus creating jobs, new revenue streams, and sustained livelihood for Filipinos especially in the waste management industry. After all, while companies need to be efficient

in their processes to maximize profit, they must consider the impact of their operations on the environment. Meanwhile, civil society must keep watch and hold the government and the private sector accountable for their action – or inaction.

Environmental stewardship is one of the key advocacies of Stratbase and PBEST. Every one of us, not just the government, has the responsibility to ensure that the resources we enjoy are used productively and prudently not just for ourselves but for future generations. We do not own the resources, we are but its stewards, and so we must act responsibly and considerately not only for ourselves but, most importantly, for our children and our children's children. ■



VICTOR ANDRES
"DINDO" C. MANHIT
is the president of the
Stratbase ADR Institute.



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Misinformation, just like plastic, never goes away

LAST week, an old infographic resurfaced again on our local social media landscape. The photo with the title, "Highest Ocean Plastic Waste Polluters," shows an earth covered in plastic waste, demonstrating the percentage of which country produced the most plastic waste. The Philippines was erroneously shown to be the biggest plastic waste polluter with 356,371 metric tons while the rest of the world was shown to be responsible for 176,012 MT. Other top polluting countries included India, Malaysia, China, Indonesia, etc. This misleading and damaging infographic was based on a 2015 report by a US organization called Ocean Conservancy. The group published an apology seven years later.

Before I go on about how this report was so harmful to the Asian countries mentioned, I must say that we do have a problem with single-use plastic waste disposal both on an individual and municipal level. But so does every country on this earth. The United Nations keeps telling us that the planet is choking on plastic. The World Economic Forum forecasts the consumption of plastic to skyrocket from 460 million tonnes in 2019 to 1,231 million tonnes in 2060.

In the Philippines, despite the ban on the



URBANISTA

DAPHNE
OSEÑA PAEZ

use of single-use plastics in various local governments, they are still being sold. I remember how quickly Makati pivoted to require all retailers to use brown paper bags instead of "sando" plastic bags. Yet in the same grocery store, rolls of single-use plastics including sando bags were being sold. We can do a lot better by reducing our consumption of plastic bags and teaching our children to dispose of their trash properly. In Canada, kids were taught to put their dry trash in their pockets or bags. To this day, I automatically crumple my gum wrappers or dry tissues and put them in my pocket until I find a proper receptacle.

This "blame the Philippines for plastic garbage" infographic not only continues to do us harm, it passes the buck to developing countries. It has ignored the policies and programs the Philippines and other Asian countries have set to seek solutions to the garbage problem. The report

ignored the role of countries in the Global North where most of the plastic waste was produced to begin with. Much of the data published about waste generation does not take into consideration the source or production of waste.

In this day and age of environmental greenwashing buzzwords like "zero waste," big companies that produce pop colas and shampoos continue to make it more accessible for a large part of the poorer population to have small quantities in sachets and mini bottles. Have you seen the palm-sized Coke bottles? This all seems counter-productive to the global effort to reduce plastic consumption. Yet the Global North isn't held accountable for propagating this mass consumption of plastics in the Global South.

The Ocean Conservancy's rescinded report backed measures for waste-to-energy incineration which led to some reactive policies weakening the ban on incineration. An apology seven years later seems a little too late. And despite their takedown of links and all reference to the original report, the damaging infographics continue to recirculate on the internet. In this case, the misinformation, disinformation, and false narratives don't go away, they keep coming back. Just like plastic. They never really go away.



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Magalong: Don't dump used oil in drainage

BAGUIO CITY: Mayor Benjamin Magalong has issued a stern warning to business establishments against the indiscriminate dumping of used oil.

"If you continue to throw your used oil in drainages and canals, I will not hesitate to revoke your business licenses," he said.

During the regular management committee meeting of local officials at City Hall on Tuesday, February 28, the mayor said he has received reports from concerned

residents that food establishments at Burnham Park across the Bayanihan building are allegedly using the cover of the night to dump used oil in the city's drainage system.

"These establishments usually serve grilled chicken or 'lechon manok' to their customers," he said.

Magalong said he has tasked City Environment and Parks Management Office Officer in Charge Engr. Marivic Empizo to meet with

the operators and owners of the food establishments in the area and remind them that it is illegal to dump used oil in public canals.

"I will not hesitate to have all the establishments in that area closed if they continue to dump their used oil irresponsibly even if it is during the city's Panagbenga celebration. They have already been given repeated warnings," Magalong stressed.

Empizo, meanwhile, disclosed

that her office has already warned all food establishments in the city against dumping grease and used oil in canals and waterways as covered by Republic Act 6969 or the "Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Waste Control Act of 1990."

"The presence of grease deposits in drainage pipes is one of the determined causes of clogging of water passageways that lead to flooding of streets," she said.

GABY KEITH



VESSEL EN ROUTE TO ILOILO WHEN ENGINE CONKED OUT

COAST GUARD OBSERVES SPILL NEAR CAPSIZED FUEL TANKER

OFF ORIENTAL MINDORO

By Madonna T. Virola
@mvirolaINQ

CITY OF CALAPAN—An aerial surveillance by the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) on Tuesday showed a suspected oil spill near the fuel tanker that capsized in the waters off Naujan town in Oriental Mindoro province early Tuesday.

The PCG said the tanker was carrying around 800,000 liters of industrial fuel, when

its engine overheated due to straining against the strong waves around 2 a.m. at Balingawan Point in Tablas Strait near Naujan and the island province of Marinduque. It described the condition of the vessel as “half-submerged.”

The tanker, according to the PCG, came from Limay, Batanan, and was on its way to Iloilo province with 20 crew members. It is operated by RDC Reield Marine Services Inc.

A foreign cargo vessel, MV EFES, rescued all crew members onboard.

Naujan disaster response official Joery Geroleo, in an online message to the Inquirer, said the crew members were taken to Subic Bay in Zambales province. He said they were “OK” and no one was reported hurt.

The BRP Melchora Aquino, one of the PCG’s biggest ships, and an airbus helicopter, were

dispatched to provide necessary assistance.

In a 5:30 p.m. update on its Facebook page, the PCG said that during its aerial surveillance, “the Aviation Force sighted a suspected oil spill with an estimated area of 5-kilometer-long and 500-meter-wide near MT Princess Empress.”

The PCG said it was working to contain spilled diesel fuel that was “not part of the industrial oil fuel cargo.”

An oil spill boom will be deployed “to contain the spillage,” it said.

Another accident

Geroleo said a barge also ran aground in the waters off Naujan early Monday in a phone interview Tuesday.

He said the barge also encountered engine trouble as it neared Mag-Asawang Tubig River in Barangay San Antonio.

“The Coast Guard can’t get

closer yet because of strong waves and the bad weather due to northeast monsoon,” he said.

“We were told it (barge) is an empty one (no cargo) bound for Baseco in Manila from Cagayan de Oro. The Coast Guard had contact with the master of the barge and was told that there are also about 20 crew [in the barge],” Geroleo added.

—WITH A REPORT FROM FRANCES MANGOSING INQ



Oil tanker may kargang 800K litro ng langis lumubog sa bahagi ng Romblon

ISANG oil tanker na may kargang 800,000 litro ng industrial fuel oil ang lumubog malapit sa isla ng Tablas, Romblon.

Sa ulat, 2:00 ng madaling araw nitong Martes nangyari ang paglubog ng MT Princess Empress dahil sa malakas na paghampas ng alon.

Ayon sa manager ng Batangas Port na si Dr. Joselito Sinocruz, maswerteng nailigtas ang 20 tripulanteng lulan nito kasama na ang kapitan ng barko sa tulong ng napadaang foreign vessel sa nasabing lugar.

"Ang tripulante nailigtas lahat, 20 katao kasama 'yung kapitan," ayon kay Sinocruz.

Ang tanker, na patungo sa Iloilo, may dalang 800,000 litro ng industrialized fuel oil, sabi ni Sinocruz, mula sa impormasyong galing sa kapitan ng MT Princess Empress.

Sinabi ni Sinocruz na wala pa silang natatanggap na impormasyon kung nagkaroon ng oil spill, ngunit nai-report na ang insidente sa Philippine Coast Guard para sa kaukulang aksyon.

(Jocelyn Domenden)



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MOTOR TANKER WITH INDUSTRIAL OIL CAPSIZES OFF MINDORO

By MARTIN SADONGDONG

A motor tanker loaded with 800,000 liters of industrial oil sank after encountering engine trouble and sparked oil spill concerns in the vicinity waters off Naujan, Oriental Mindoro yesterday.

A report from the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) said MT Princess Empress departed from Bataan en route to Iloilo with 20 crew members when its engine overheated around

2 a.m.

"It then drifted towards the vicinity waters off Balingawan Point due to rough sea conditions until it became half-submerged," the PCG report stated.

Meanwhile, MV Efes, a foreign vessel, rescued all the crew members who were all deemed to be in good physical condition, the report noted.

The PCG said it deployed BRP Melchora Aquino (MRRV-9702) and personnel of Coast Guard

District Southern Tagalog to assess the vicinity waters "for possible traces of an oil spill."

The Coast Guard Aviation Force also dispatched an airbus helicopter for aerial surveillance.

MT Princess Empress' agent, Argie Gicanto, told the PCG that they will deploy two tugboats with oil spill boom, which is used to contain oil spill, to monitor the motor tanker and respond to any eventuality.



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Oil tanker na kargado ng 800K litrong gasolina lumubog

PROBINSYA

Lumubog ang isang motor tanker na may luluan na 800,000 litro ng industrialized fuel oil ang lumubog sa may bahagi karagatan malapit sa Tablas Island sa Romblon Mar- kas nang umaga.

Ayon kay Dr. Jose- lito Sinacruz, port manager ng Batangas Port, nailigtas naman ng isang napadaang foreign vessel ang la- hat ng 20 katao na sakay ng MT Princess Empress kabilang ang kapitan nito.

Dinala ng nakasa- gip ang mga nailigtas na crew sa Subic port sa Bataan.

Sinabi ni Sinacruz, patungo ang tanker sa Iloilo, at may dalang 800,000 litro ng in- dustrialized fuel oil at nangyari ang aksiden- te dakong alas-2:00 nang madaling-araw dahil sa malakas na

Sinabi ng opisyal na wala pa silang natatag- gap na impormasyon kung nagkaroon ng oil spill ngunit nai-report na ang insidente sa Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) para sa kaakulang aksyon.

Samantala, isang cargo ship barge naman ang napadpad sa bu- kana ng Mag-asawang Tubig River sa Brgy. San Antonio, Naujan, Ori- ental Mindoro bandang alas-4:00 nang mada-

ling-araw noong Lunes. Sa ngayon, binaban- tayan pa rin ng PCG Calapan ang masabing barko na may luluan na 20 tripulante.

Baray sa palikpaga- ugnayan ng PCG Cala- pan sa Naujan Mu- nicipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Ma- nagement Office (Nau-

jan MDRRM O) at sa Sangguniang Barangay ng San Antonio, nagka- roon ng engine trouble at nag-overheat ang makina ng barko at da- hil sa malalaking alon na dulot na rin ng ma- samang panahon kaya ito napadpad sa na- sabing lugar. (Ronilo Dagos)



DOH sends team to verify amebiasis outbreak in San Carlos City

BY GERARD NAVAL

ALMOST a week after the local government declared a state of health emergency in San Carlos City, the Department of Health (DOH) is sending a team of epidemiologists to Negros Occidental to verify the reported outbreak in amebiasis cases.

In a press conference, Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said the DOH-Epidemiology Bureau is deploying a team to help their regional health office in verifying the surging number of amebiasis cases in San Carlos City.

"We are sending a team here from the Epidemiology Bureau to go to Region 6 to help our Regional Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit

to verify this event," said Vergeire.

She said the deployment is part of the national government's efforts to confirm if the situation warrants such a declaration from the local government unit (LGU).

"We have a policy that states that the LGU has to go through the DOH to seek guidance and for us to verify the event before they can declare a state of calamity or emergency," she explained.

"All LGUs have to comply with these policies since this is based on law. We are just verifying the cases right now," added Vergeire.

She noted that based on their initial data, only 60 percent of the 189 reported cases have been confirmed as amebiasis.

"Cases started going up this February in San Carlos City. They currently have 189 cases. The previous year, they had zero cases of amebiasis," she said.

"They have 189 cases today, but those found positive for amebiasis are around 60 percent only. Others tested negative or positive for e. coli or other organisms based on tests done," she added.

Last week, San Carlos City Mayor Renato Gustilo issued an executive order declaring a state of health emergency in the area due to the increasing number of reported amebiasis cases.

Amebiasis is an infection of the intestines caused by a parasitic amoeba, and its symptoms are diarrhea (loose stool/poop), nausea (a

feeling of sickness in the stomach) and weight loss.

Vergeire said amebiasis is usually transmitted via a contaminated source of water supply.

She said this explains why they have begun discussions with other concerned government agencies, such as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), regarding the source of water supply in the city.

"To the communities, it is better to boil your drinking water if you are not sure if your water supply is clean and safe," Vergeire said.

She said they have also activated their local health units in the area to help attend to suspected cases of amoebiasis



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REMATE OPINION

ANG INYONG LINGKOD

NI DR. HILDA C. ONG

UMINOM NG MARAMING TUBIG AT MADALAS MALIGO SA PANAHON NG TAG-INIT

INAASAHAN na sa pagsisimula ng buwan ng Marso ay ideklara na rin ng Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration o PAGASA ang pagsisimula ng summer season o panahon ng tag-init sa bansa.

Ayon kay Dr. Seville David, Jr. Executive Director ng National Water Resources Board o NWRB, kailangang simulan ang pagtitipid sa paggamit ng tubig lalo na magsisimula pa lamang ang panahon ng tag-init.

Mula alas-onse ng tanghali hanggang pasado alas-tres ng hapon ay talaga namang damang-dama natin ang panahon ng tag-init sa ating bansa.

Kung titignan natin ang ulat ng PAGASA inilabas noong ika-21 ng Pebrero (6:00AM), bumaba na sa 211.06 meters ang level ng tubig sa Angat Dam. Maituturing mataas parin ang lebel ng tubig sa Angat Dam dahil ang Minimum Operating Water Level (MOWL) ng Angat dam ay nasa 180 meters.

Ang mahalaga sa panahon ng tag-init ang pag-inom ng sapat na tubig araw-araw upang mapanatili nating malusog at malakas ang ating katawan lalo na ngayon.

Kung akala ng marami ay sa mga "ber months" lamang dumarami ang tinatamaan ng karamdaman dulot ng malamig na panahon, aba, marami rin ang nagkakaroon ng mga sumusunod na sakit sa panahon ng tag-init, kabilang ang mga sakit na Asthma attack; Chickenpox; Influenza; Food poisoning; Measles; Mumps; Rabies; Skin conditions; Conjunctivitis o sore eyes; at Hyperthermia o over heating body.

Kapag ganitong lubhang mainit ang panahon, mula tatlo hanggang limang beses naliligo ang maraming Filipino. Pero ang tanong ng marami, sasapat pa ba ang tubig sa Metro Manila ngayong nasa buwan ng Pebrero pa lamang tayo at mukhang matagal pa papasok ang tag-ulan?

Huwag tayong mag-aalala dahil kahit higit dalawang beses tayong maligo sa isang araw, ang pagtitiyak ni Dr. Seville D. David Jr., Executive Director ng National Water Resources Board o NWRB ay sapat ang tubig hanggang sa dumating ang tag-ulan.



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Fishing boat seized over illegal sand quarrying in Basilan

The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) said yesterday it has confiscated a fishing boat from a group of fishermen allegedly engaged in illegal sand quarrying off Malamawi Island in Isabela City, Basilan.

The PCG said the fishing boat "Under Water" was carrying four fishermen led by its owner, Hassan Adjal, when they were allegedly caught by officials while conducting illegal sand quarrying in the vicinity waters of Barangay Marang-Marang last Feb. 26.

"According to the Coast Guard

Station Isabela, the fishing boat violated Section 47 of Isabela City Ordinance No. 03-148 (quarrying of the marine habitat)," the PCG stated.

Illegal sand quarrying raises various environmental concerns such as damage to landscape which leads to soil erosion.

Adjal and his three companions, whose identities were not divulged, were turned over to the Isabela City Agriculturist Office "for further investigation." (Martin Sadongdong)



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Hold rich nations accountable for warming -- Imee

SEN. Imee Marcos has urged the national government to take a more aggressive stance in the next Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention to Climate Change.

Marcos, who chairs the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, said it is time to hold the industrialized nations accountable for previous contributions to global warming, given that the contribution of the Philippines is very minuscule.

"There have been too many pledges and too little action. But there are at least two new grounds for optimism: the COP27 discussion, at last, of their debt to the vulnerable developing world's 'loss and damage' as well as US President Joe Biden's climate catch-up law, the Inflation Reduction Act," she said.

The Cross Dependency Initiative recently reported that 17 provinces in the country were among the top 100 areas in the world that are most vul-

nerable to the growing destructive power of climate change.

These provinces include Occidental Mindoro, Oriental Mindoro, Pangasinan, Ilocos Sur, Eastern Samar, Zambales, Aurora, Northern Samar, Cagayan, Surigao del Sur, Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Sulu, Leyte, Pampanga, Samar, and Southern Leyte.

It has long been established, Marcos said, that island nations like the Philippines suffer the most from associated damage from climate change such as rising sea levels, prolonged droughts, and stronger typhoons.

"On our part, the national government can continue to promote efforts to reduce the carbon footprint of the Philippines through a shift to renewables and other low-carbon technologies, promoting energy conservation, and promoting mass transportation through railways. For the LGUs, investment for resiliency programs will be critical," she added.

Climate Change Commissioner Albert dela Cruz recently called for the private sector to participate in immediate climate action by supporting the CC programs such as tree planting activities and adopting the just transition of landfills to waste-to-energy technologies.

"We, in the Climate Change Commission, have been given the mandate to formulate and issue national policies that would support the Marcos administration's advocacy of protecting our planet and adopting a mitigation and adaptation strategy to achieve resiliency to climate change," Dela Cruz said.

As one of the policy-making bodies of government, CCC is tasked to coordinate, monitor and evaluate government programs and ensure mainstreaming of climate change in national, local and sectoral development plans towards a climate-resilient and climate-smart Philippines.



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Department of Environment and Natural Resources
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT BUREAU
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Management
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ISO 9001:2015
ISO 14001:2015



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

On the **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) REPORT** of the proposed Coto Chromite Project of Consolidated Mines, Inc. located in Sitio Coto, Barangay Taitai, Masinloc, Zambales.

Notice is hereby given to all parties who wish to give their opinion regarding the implementation of the proposed Coto Chromite Project to attend Public Hearing that is scheduled as follows:

Date	Time	Venue
09 March 2023	9:00 AM (Registration starts at 8:30 AM)	Dfarm & Park, Km 3 Balaganon, Masinloc, Zambales

This Public Hearing is being conducted in connection with the Consolidated Mines, Inc. application for Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC). The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) of the aforementioned project is being reviewed by the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The following is the project information:

Proponent	Consolidated Mines, Inc.	
Project Name	Coto Chromite Project	
Project Location	Sitio Coto, Barangay Taitai, Masinloc, Zambales	
Components	UG Mine Area (APSA No. 000409-III within ZMCR-Lower Western Orebody)	Fine Plant Facilities (Vibrating Screens Classifier, Vibrating Screens Classifier Cyclone, Cyclones, Yuda Jig Reicher, Spiral, Humprey Spiral, Product Storage Bins)
	UG Mine Facilities (Field Office, Workshop, Air Compressor Building, Generators Building, Hoist Room Building, Sand Cement Plant)	Campsites (Coto Camp Residential Areas, Staff House, Staff Mess, Hospital, Towers, Elementary Schools, Coto High School Annex, Recreational Facilities)
	Explosive Magazine	Administrative Facilities (Warehouse, Accounting Office, Personnel Office, Mechanical/Electrical Office/Shop, Mechanical/Electrical Office/Shop, Motor pool, Carpentry Shop, Fabrication Shop, Core house)
	Tramline	Airstrip
	ZMCR Loading Station	Helipad
	Haul Roads and Access Roads	Power and Water Source
	Mill/Processing Plant	Pollution Control Structures/Facilities and Devices
Rationale	The project aims to produce 87,900 MT of chromite concentrate and 10,000 MT of lumpy ore annually, using underground mining methods. The output will be domestic and foreign, particularly in metal foundries and other refractory uses. Export prices of Philippine chromite have been increasing, following the trend of world prices.	
Area	745.53 hectares	

All interested parties who wish to attend or participate in this Public Hearing should preferably confirm their attendance/participation and may give their opinion(s) in a concise position paper submitted to the **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION (EIAMD)** of this Office through email or eia@emb.gov.ph, three (3) days before the Public Hearing schedule. Those who cannot register or submit written positions may be given the opportunity to share their issues on the day of the hearing.

The project's EIS and Executive Summary for the Public is downloadable at our website: www.eia.emb.gov.ph (kindly access the Notice of Public Hearing/Consultation link found on our website) while copies will be available in the following offices:

EMB Region III Masinop Corner Matalino St., Diosdado Macapagal Government Center, Maimpis, San Fernando City, Pampanga
Tel No. (045) 983-3623

Barangay Taitai Hall
Barangay Taitai, Masinloc, Zambales

Masinloc Municipal Hall
Masinloc, Zambales

For more details, please contact the EIAMD Division at this Office at telephone number (02) 8539 4378 local 116 and look for the project case handler **Engr. Joel G. Polintan** or at this email: joel_polintan@emb.gov.ph.

Protect the environment... Protect life...

(PDI-Feb. 22 and Mar. 01, 2023)