

26 August 2023 Saturday



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

PHILIPPINE DAILY
BALANCE OF POWER
INQUIRER

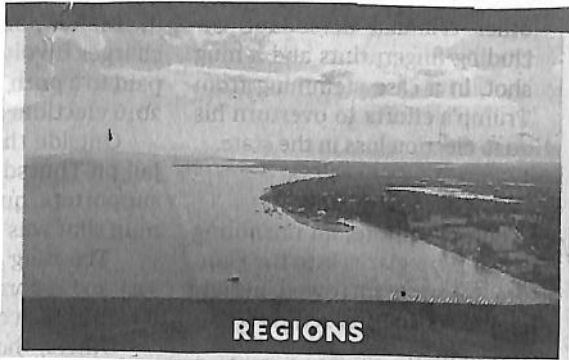
PAGE UPPER LOWER
PAGE 1 STORY
BANNER STORY
EDITORIAL CARTOON

AUG 26, 2023

TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____



REGIONS

Seabed quarry plan on Tayabas Bay hit

LUCENA CITY—Fisherfolk and environmentalists in Quezon province are opposing another plan to conduct seabed quarrying in Tayabas Bay, petitioning local governments to help protect their fishing grounds. The group Tanggol Kalikasan said a local businessman had applied for an exploration permit for “marine sand ... for reclamation purposes” covering 1,079 hectares of the bay in Padre Burgos town. —STORY BY DELFIN T. MALLARI JR. **A7**

WWW.INQUIRER.NET

NEWSINFO.INQUIRER.NET

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

INQUIRERNEWS@GMAIL.COM

@INQONATIONAL

A7

Editor
Maria Edralyn L. Benedicto

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

REGIONS

LIVELIHOOD SOURCE The coastal area of Lucena City, the provincial capital of Quezon, hugs a portion of Tayabas Bay, one of the major sources of livelihood for locals. Environmentalists are calling for the continued protection of the bay, shown in this photo taken in June, amid threats of illegal fishing and quarrying. —DANNY ORDOÑEZ/CONTRIBUTOR

Plan to quarry Tayabas Bay opposed anew

Group seeks help of Quezon local gov'ts, DENR to reject project as scraping seafloor will damage fishing ground

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
@dtmallarijr1nq

LUCENA CITY—Fisherfolk and environmentalists in Quezon province have opposed another plan to conduct seabed quarrying in Tayabas Bay, as they prepared a petition that would be sent to local government units in areas facing this important body of water in Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon) region.

“We strongly oppose any application for any kind of activity that could harm Tayabas Bay, such as mining and quarrying, even if it’s still in the exploration stage,” said part of the petition signed on Wednesday during an environmental paralegal training for fish wardens initiated by Tanggol Kalikasan (TK) in Tayabas City.

According to the petitioners, if Tayabas Bay is destroyed due to these threats, thousands of fishermen and residents would be affected as they would lose their livelihood and food source for their families and communities.

TK obtained a copy of an application for an exploration permit in a section of Tayabas Bay in Padre Burgos town, covering 1,079 hectares.



THREATENED Tourists enjoy the white sand and clear waters around Borawan Island, a popular tourist haven in Tayabas Bay in Padre Burgos, Quezon, in this photo taken in 2017. The group Tanggol Kalikasan warns that areas like this tranquil beach will be damaged once seabed quarrying is allowed in the area. —DELFIN T. MALLARI JR.

Citing government documents, Jay Lim, TK project officer, said they were worried about the project since the planned seabed quarrying would cover not only Tayabas Bay but also the waters of Batangas and Cavite provinces.

“It (exploration) will cause massive damage and losses in fishing grounds and the fragile marine ecosystems that we are trying to protect and rehabilitate,” Lim said.

Tayabas Bay, located northwest of the island province of Marinduque, stretches from San Juan town in Batangas province to the towns of Sar-

along Lamon Bay in the Pacific Ocean, as along Tayabas Bay and five along the Ragay Gulf.

Appeal

Lim appealed to the local governments and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to reject the application.

“They had successfully prevented it before; they can do it again,” Lim said.

On March 3, 2021, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources rejected two applications for seabed quarrying covering more than 18,000 ha in Tayabas Bay.

The local governments of at

receive a copy of the latest application for an exploration permit.

In January, Quezon Gov. Angellina Tan, the province’s mayors, and representatives from the DENR, law enforcement networks and environmentalist groups formed the Marine Protected Area Network to protect and preserve the seas around Quezon. A protected area is an identified portion of land and water with unique physical and biological significance that is protected by law against destructive exploitation.

Threats

According to TK, the continuous increase in the demand for sand, gravel and filling materials for large construction projects has led contractors to resort to seabed quarrying, where the seafloor is scraped to extract materials.

“If seabed quarrying is carried out in rich seas like Tayabas Bay, what will happen to nature and the livelihoods of those who depend on it?” TK said in a statement.

Illegal sand quarrying along the coast of Tayabas Bay has also returned, the group said. Most of these illicit activities were happening on the shores of Sariaya town, where nesting



Rising sea level threatens to submerge Metro Manila

A RISE in sea level that is about four times higher than the global average threatens to submerge most of Metro Manila, the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (Namria) said on Friday. Speaking at a public briefing, Namria Physical Oceanography Division Chief

Dennis Bringas said that from 1947 to 2022, the level of Manila Bay has risen by 13.2 millimeters (mm) per year.

This is four times the annual average of 3.4 mm as declared by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration **>Level A2**

■ LEVEL FROM A1

Rising

(NASA), Bringas said.

The annual sea level rise from 1965 to 2022 was even higher at 14.4 mm, he said.

Bringas pointed to global warming as one of the factors triggering the accelerated rise in sea levels around the world.

"There is ocean thermal expan-

sion; when the water is warm, the tendency is that it will expand, which could increase the level (of sea water)," he said.

He also said human activities such as land reclamation, land subsidence and deforestation also contribute to the rising sea level.

The level in 1965 rose "maybe because of urbanization and construction of buildings in Metro Manila," he said.

In the data obtained from 1901 to 2022, the sea level rise was 8.4

mm per year, about three times the global average.

Metro Manila is considered one of the cities in the world most vulnerable to rising ocean levels.

Bringas said that other cities in the Philippines are also at risk from rising sea levels.

Based on Namria monitoring, Legazpi City in Albay recorded a 6 mm annual increase from 1947 to 2022.

In Puerto Princesa City in Palawan, the increase from 1990 to 2022

was 2.88 mm.

In Davao City, it was 3.6 mm from 1948 to 2022.

Bringas said increased sea level rise could cause frequent flooding, land loss, destruction of wetlands, and other negative impacts on ecological systems.

It could also lead to coastal erosion, which could bring economic problems such as population displacement, he said.

JANINE ALEXIS MIGUEL



TITLE :

PAGE

AUG 26 2023

'Handwashing' and avoidance

THE
Re-
sponse
of Sec-
retary
Maria



ON THE
CONTRARY
**ANTONIO
CONTRERAS**

Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) when asked during a budget hearing about the issuance of an environmental compliance certificate (ECC) to the reclamation projects in Manila Bay is quite disturbing. While she simply mouthed the canned response of the DENR on the nature of any ECC, as well as the environmental impact assessment (EIA) system of which it is an important component, there can be no excuse for what has become an institutionalized form of "handwashing," or abdicating and avoiding one's responsibility.

►ContrerasA5

■ CONTRERAS FROM A1

'Handwashing' and avoidance

Yulo-Loyzaga asserted that while the DENR did issue an ECC, it is not a permit. It is just a planning tool.

It's about time this response is called out not only because it passes on the responsibility and liability to others. It should be called out because it is both intellectually dishonest and legally vacuous.

The EIA system that contains the issuance of an ECC is not a mere bureaucratic instrumentality. While DENR and Yulo-Loyzaga are half-correct in saying that it is a planning tool, they are grossly mistaken to treat it as if it is a mere instrument for environmental planners. The EIA system ceased to be a mere tool and became a legal instrument as early as 1978 when the late President Ferdinand Marcos Sr., using his legislative powers, issued Presidential Decree (PD) 1586, which turned the EIA system into a mandatory requirement.

Section 2 of PD 1586 is unequivocal when it decreed the mandatory nature of conducting an EIA. It states: "There is hereby established an Environmental Impact Statement System founded and based on the environmental impact statement required, under Section 4 of PD 1151, of all agencies and instrumentalities of the national government, including government-owned or -controlled corporations, as well as private corporations, firms and entities, for every proposed project and undertaking, which significantly affect the quality of the environment." Take note that the law used the word "required."

Section 4 further states that: "No person, partnership or corporation shall undertake or operate any such declared environmentally critical project or area without first securing an environmental compliance certificate issued by the president or his duly authorized representative." The mandatory nature of securing an ECC is further amplified by coupling this with Section 9 which imposes a penalty for violation of Section 4. Any violation of Section 4 would merit cancellation of the project or activity and/or the imposition of a fine.

Yulo-Loyzaga may be correct in saying that an ECC is not technically just a permit. Actually, and in fact, it is more than a permit. It is a legislated warrant that serves as a legal requisite for any other government agency, such as the Philippine Reclamation Authority or the pertinent local government units (LGUs), to green-light a particular project. In its official website, the DENR defines the ECC as "a document issued by the DENR-EMB after positive review of an ECC application, certifying that based on the representations of the proponent, the proposed project or undertaking will not cause significant negative environmental impact. The ECC also certifies that the proponent has complied with all the requirements of the EIS system and has committed to implement its approved environmental manage-

ment plan. The ECC contains specific measures and conditions that the project proponent has to undertake before and during the project's abandonment phase to mitigate identified environmental impacts."

Thus, it is clear that an ECC is a requirement for any project or activity that has the potential to cause significant environmental impacts, and that securing it is a necessary condition before a project or activity can proceed. While it is not a sufficient condition, since after obtaining an ECC, proponents still have to secure clearance from other government agencies, it is clear that it is the DENR, through the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), that has the duty to provide the technical assessment and ascertain the environmental impacts of the project. It is not the primary duty of the LGUs and other government agencies to perform these roles.

It is therefore disingenuous and evasive for Yulo-Loyzaga to treat an ECC as a mere planning tool, as a way to deflect primary responsibility for the green-lighting of the problematic reclamation projects. It may not officially be labeled as a permit in a bureaucratic sense, but PD 1586 has converted this planning tool into a regulatory tool, that there are punitive provisions in the law when a project or activity which requires an EIA is pursued and implemented without first securing an ECC.

But this would not be the first time that the DENR secretary has resorted to avoidance as a strategy. She has repeatedly refused to speak to the representatives of the Masungi Georeserve Foundation (MGFI), whose contract signed by DENR is now being questioned even by current DENR officials, including Yulo-Loyzaga. When asked by Kabataan party-list Rep. Raoul Manuel when was the last time DENR actually spoke with representatives of MGFI, Yulo-Loyzaga responded by saying that, "The DENR is of the position at this point that everything that the MGFI has said in public has been negative."

Yulo-Loyzaga's response is clearly not befitting a public servant whose salary is drawn from taxpayers' money, and whose actions should uphold standards of transparency and openness to criticism and dialogue. It is unfortunate that she would ignore requests for an audience from, and avoid talking with, a group simply because it is critical of her and her agency. If there are people she must talk to, it should be those who have grievances. She cannot just choose to speak to parties who would praise DENR and her. Engaging critical voices is but one of the hazards that come with public service.

But asking Yulo-Loyzaga to grant her critics an audience may be asking too much, for someone who, according to my sources, rarely visits DENR's regional offices to touch base with her own people. Yulo-Loyzaga should be reminded that we are a Republic. And it is her duty to listen even to people who dislike her.



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900
MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

6
PAGE

UPPER
LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

AUG 26 2023

DATE

TITLE:

PAGE

The world must act now to combat 'global boiling'

In a "searing" statement issued recently, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres declared that the world is now entering an era of "global boiling." Official data confirms that July 2023 has become the "hottest month ever recorded in human history," with temperatures breaking records across the board.

"Humanity is in the hotseat," Guterres said at a climate press conference at the UN headquarters. "Climate change is here. It is terrifying. And it is just the beginning. The era of global warming has ended; the era of global boiling has arrived. The air is unbreathable. The heat is unbearable. And the level of fossil fuel profits and climate inaction is unacceptable."

According to data released by the World Meteorological Organization and the European Commission's Copernicus Climate Change Service, July has "already seen the hottest three-week period ever recorded, the three hottest days on record, and the highest-ever ocean temperatures for this time of year."

In the Philippines last Aug. 14, the heat index, or temperature as perceived by the body, reached 60 degrees Celsius (°C) in Casiguran, Aurora, based on the monitoring of PAGASA.

Sixteen other areas on the same day experienced "dangerous" heat indices, among them: Calapan, Oriental Mindoro (45°C); NAIA, Pasay City (43°C); Dagupan City, Pangasinan (43°C); Tuguegarao City, Cagayan (43°C); Baler, Aurora (43°C); Alabat, Quezon (43°C); Daet, Camarines Norte (43°C); Virac, Catanduanes (43°C); Roxas City, Capiz (43°C); Aparri, Cagayan (42°C); Iba, Zambales (42°C); Sangley Point, and Cavite (42°C).

PAGASA said a heat index ranging from 42°C to 51°C indicates impending "danger," as "heat cramps and heat exhaustion are likely," and "heat stroke is probable with continued activity."

And who is to blame for global boiling? Guterres points to humanity itself as the primary culprit.

"Humans are to blame. All this is entirely consistent with predictions and repeated warnings (of scientists)." What's surprising and alarming for Guterres, however, is the "speed of change."

But all is not lost, as there is still a little bit of time left. But there can be no hesitancy and excuses, especially for climate-vulnerable nations such as the Philippines. It wouldn't take a scientist to know — and feel — that we are in a precarious state, with heat getting more intense, and rains getting more mightier. In fact, the Institute for Economics and Peace has said that the Philippines is the country most at risk from the climate crisis.

Amidst the alarming shift from global warming to global boiling, Guterres urged us not to despair but to take action. He remains optimistic that when humanity unites and works toward a common goal, we can still prevent the worst outcomes.

One of the most crucial actions to take now is to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius in order to avoid the very worst of climate change. As citizens, we can support the private and public sectors' transition to renewable energy, reduce unnecessary electricity consumption, and prioritize the reuse of finite resources. Most of all, educating younger generations about the importance of saving this planet is also crucial.

Furthermore, Guterres emphasizes the need for "adaptation." "Extreme weather is becoming the new normal. All countries must respond and protect their people from the searing heat, fatal floods, storms, droughts, and raging fires that result. Those countries on the frontlines — who have done the least to cause the crisis and have the least resources to deal with it — must have the support they need to do so." Again, this statement perfectly describes the Philippine situation, as we are a "carbon sink" country.

Are you ready to do something today for the planet? Let's not wait for the "boiling point" to force us into action.



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900
MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

6
PAGE

UPPER
 LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

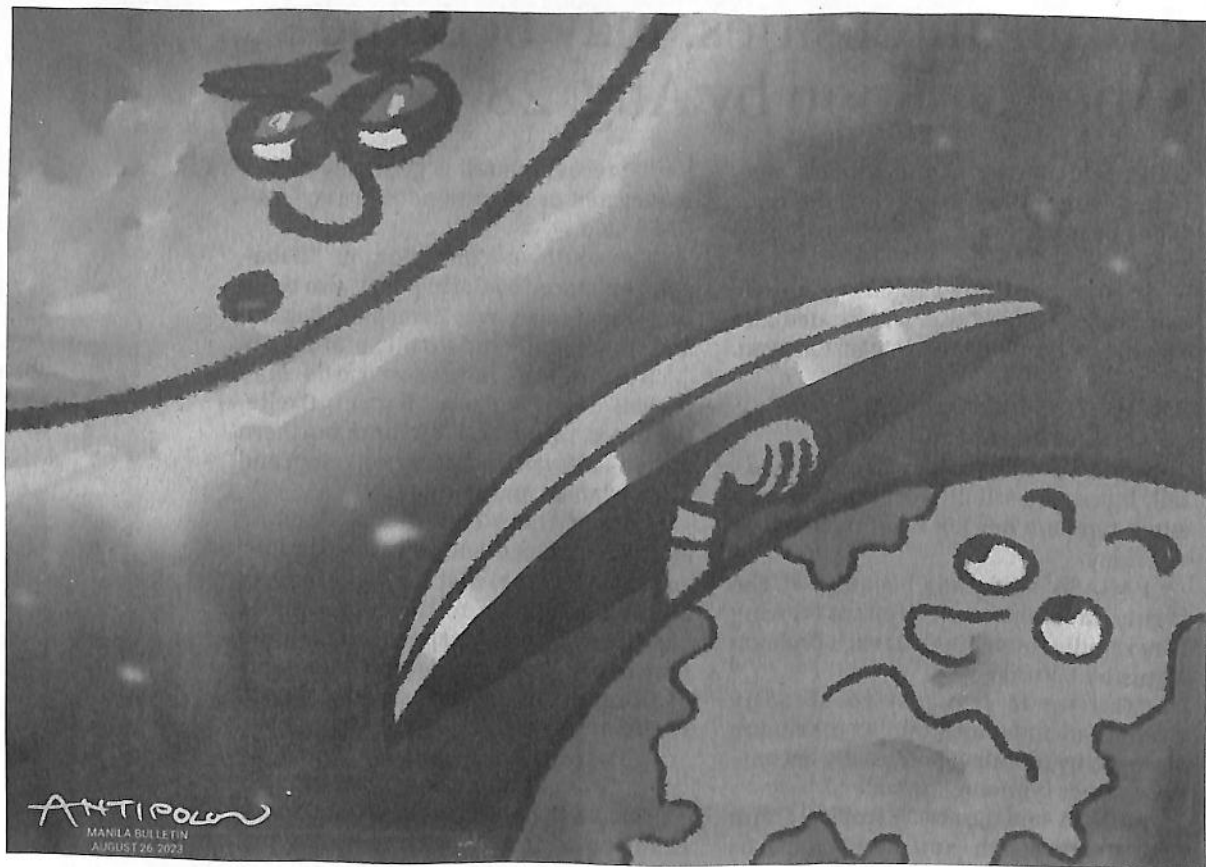
TITLE:

Global boiling

PAI

H2

AUG. 26. 2023
DATE





TITLE:

PAGE

AUG 26 2023

World view

How not to handle radioactive waste

By AZBY BROWN

YOKOHAMA – This week Japan began releasing more than a million tons of treated radioactive water, now stored at the disabled Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, into the Pacific Ocean.

It is expected to take decades to release all of the water at the plant, which was devastated in 2011 by a tsunami generated by the powerful Tohoku earthquake. Tokyo Electric Power Company, which operates the facility, and the International Atomic Energy Agency both say the radiation to be released will be of such low concentrations that it will have a negligible radiological impact on people and the environment.

That may turn out to be true, if everything goes according to Tepco's plans, consistently and without major mishap, for at least the next 30 years. Only time will tell. But the most important questions here may not be the technical, scientific and radiological ones, but about the example being set.

The Japanese government and Tepco made the decision to release the water after a process that has been neither fully transparent nor adequately inclusive of important stakeholders, both in Japan and abroad. This plants the seeds for what could be decades of mistrust and contention.

But perhaps even more worrying, Japan is setting a precedent for other governments that might be even less transparent. This is dangerous, particularly in Asia, where more than 140 nuclear power reactors are already in operation and, led by growth in China and India, dozens more are either being built, are in the planning stages or have been proposed. If Japan, a globally respected cultural and economic force, can get away with dumping radioactive water, what's to stop other countries?

There's no denying that Japan and Tepco are in a bind over what to do with the byproducts of the world's worst nuclear accident since Chernobyl in 1986. Melted nuclear fuel debris inside the damaged reactors is being cooled by pumped-in water, which comes into contact with a toxic cocktail of radioactive substances known as radionuclides. To this is added approximately 100 tons of groundwater and rainwater, which leak into the reactor buildings each day and also become contaminated. All of the water is sent through a powerful filtration system to remove much of the radioactivity and is stored on-site in more than 1,000 giant steel tanks. But the amount of water is constantly growing, and Tepco has repeatedly warned that it is running out of storage space at Fukushima.

I have researched or written about Fukushima and affected communities ever since the disaster and have closely followed the official response. As early as 2013, the IAEA began advising Tepco to consider discharging the water into the sea. The government also looked at other options, such as releasing the water into the air as vapor or injecting it deep underground. But numerous experts and environmental groups have complained that there has been a consistent lack of sufficient public input and that some viable alternatives, such as long-term storage in more robust tanks, were not seriously evaluated. Despite opposition from many Japanese citizens, the country's fisheries association and neighbors like South Korea and China, the government announced in April 2021 that it had decided on releasing the water into the ocean.

Public hearings, some of which I attended, were held before and after the final decision, but these seemed more about selling the ocean release option than about giving the public a say. It was only months after the decision was announced that a radiological environmental impact assessment – conducted by Tepco – was finally released. When Tepco called for public comments for the study, some experts pointed out troubling information gaps, such as the lack of a full inventory of what radioactive elements remained in the tanks. There is no evidence that serious efforts were made to address some of these issues.

Involving local residents, civil society groups, technical experts and – when necessary – neighboring nations in decision-making can lead to notable successes. In choosing the site of a long-term repository for low-level radioactive waste, Belgian regulators in 1998 gave decision-making power to a broad cross-section of public and private stakeholders. In the end, two neighboring towns actually competed to be the site, and in 2006 a proposal by the municipality of Dessel was approved. After years of study and environmental approvals, a final permit was issued this year. Similar processes have been followed in Finland and Sweden.

Fukushima's water was a golden opportunity for Japan to not only match those successes but to set a new global model for addressing the difficulty of nuclear waste disposal with transparency and inclusion. Instead, the decision was essentially made by the government, announced and then vigorously defended.

All of this might have been fine except that Tepco and the Japanese government suffer from a severe trust deficit on Fukushima. During the 2011 disaster, they repeatedly minimized the risks, withheld crucial information on threats to public safety and even resisted using the term "core meltdown," even though that is what occurred. Separate investigations by an official Japanese commission, the IAEA and other entities put much of the blame on poor regulatory oversight and a lack of preparedness despite Japan's history of earthquakes and tsunamis.

Yet the mistrust remains.

Tepco said for years that its purification system would reduce 62 radionuclides to safe or non-detectable levels, and that only traces of tritium, a radioactive form of hydrogen, and two other isotopes would remain. But it emerged in 2018 that 70 percent of the tanks also contained levels of other radioactive substances that were higher than legal limits. After the ocean release decision was made, an IAEA advisory task force identified a number of problems with the plan,



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE



AUG 26 2023

TITLE: How not to

PAGE 72

DATE

most of which were reportedly resolved later or deemed insufficient to force reconsideration.

Countries like South Korea, China and some Pacific Island nations have been particularly critical, with Seoul complaining of a lack of consultation by Tokyo. Following recent Japanese diplomatic efforts, South Korea and Micronesia have lifted their opposition. China, however, has redoubled its criticism, accusing Japan of treating the ocean like a "private sewer." The Pacific Islands Forum, which represents 18 nations – some of which are acutely aware of the legacy of American nuclear testing – remains opposed.

At this stage, it looks unlikely that Japan will change course. The country's bureaucratic and corporate culture is notoriously complex and slow-moving, and major decisions like this are nearly impossible to reverse.

But it's not too late to improve on public trust. Japan has invited the IAEA to help monitor the release, and this is welcome. But many Japanese, accustomed to obfuscation and a lack of transparency on Fukushima, simply no longer trust official assurances. Only a truly independent, international and participatory monitoring regime – with the close involvement of those most likely to be affected – will be sufficient to make sure that the release of the water is being done safely and responsibly.

With that, a bad precedent could be transformed into a globally admired one.

Azby Brown is an author, an expert on Japanese design and architecture and the lead researcher for the environmental monitoring organization Safecast. He has lived in Japan since 1985 and has written extensively on the impact of the Fukushima disaster.



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900
MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

3
PAGE

UPPER
LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CART

AUG 26 2023

TITLE:

PAI

DATE

Water samples after Fukushima release within safe limits — operator

TOKYO, Japan (AFP) — Samples of seawater taken following the release of wastewater from Japan's crippled Fukushima nuclear reactor showed radioactivity levels well within safe limits, according to data provided Friday by operator TEPCO.

"We confirmed that the analyzed value is equal to the calculated concentration and that the analyzed value is below 1,500 bq/L," TEPCO spokesman Keisuke Matsuo said a day after the release began, referring to becquerels per liter, a measure of radioactivity. The national safety standard is 60,000 bq/l.

TEPCO took what it called rapid tests on Thursday afternoon after the release into the Pacific Ocean began. TEPCO called a news conference for 4:00 pm (0700 GMT).

Japan's environment ministry also said it had collected seawater samples from 11 different locations on Friday, results of which would be released on Sunday.

The Fisheries Agency also pulled a flounder and a Gurnard fish early Friday from designated sampling spots near the pipe that released the Fukushima water.

"We will start seeing water quality data from the samples that were collected yesterday afternoon," said Trade and Industry Minister Yasutoshi Nishimura, who is in charge of nuclear policies.

"By publishing those data every day in

a highly transparent fashion, we will demonstrate our actions based on scientific evidence," he told a regular briefing.

TEPCO says that the water — more than 500 Olympic pools' worth — from cooling the remains of three reactors has been filtered of all radioactive elements except for tritium and is safe.

This is backed by the International Atomic Energy Agency, which said on Thursday that samples taken from the first batch of diluted water prepared for discharge showed that tritium levels were well within safe limits.

"IAEA experts are there on the ground to serve as the eyes of the international community and ensure that the discharge is being carried out as planned consistent with IAEA safety standards," said the chief of the UN body, Rafael Grossi, in a statement.

But the move infuriated China, which says the action contaminates the ocean and widened a ban on aquatic produce in place for 10 Japanese prefectures to cover the whole country.

Nishimura on Friday echoed Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in urging China, Japan's biggest market for seafood, to reverse the ban.

"The Japanese government...will strongly demand baseless regulations to be immediately terminated," Nishimura said.



Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida speaks to reporters about ALPS-treated water from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant at the prime minister's office on August 24, 2023. (Photo by JIJI PRESS / AFP) / JAPAN OUT



Caritas PH condemns release of wastewater

THE Catholic Church's social action arm Caritas Philippines on Friday condemned the release into the Pacific Ocean of treated radioactive water from Japan's crippled Fukushima nuclear power plant. Plant operator Tokyo Electric Power (Tepco) said the first batch of the release began at about 11 p.m. (Philippine time) on Thursday, marking the start of the project that is expected to last for years.

Bishop Jose Colina Bagaforo, president of the national Caritas, said such a move will harm nature and the population.

"The decision is a reckless gamble with the health and well-being of people and the environment," Bagaforo said Friday.

Also, Bagaforo said they support the bishops of South Korea and Japan in opposing Japan's controversial move to release 1.34 million tons of nuclear wastewater into the sea.

The company initially planned to continuously release nuclear wastewater over a period of 17 days, but said they would immediately stop if any issues were detected.

"We call on the Japanese government to reconsider its decision, and to find a safe and responsible way to dispose of the contaminated water," Bagaforo said.

The United Nations nuclear watchdog gave the plan the go-ahead signal after an inspection in July, saying it met international standards and that the effect on people and the environment was "negligible."

**CLAIRE BERNADETTE
MONDARES**



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE



AUG 26 2023

TITLE:

PAGE

DATE

Writing *finis* to Makati-Taguig row

Last June 26, the Supreme Court's Special Third Division denied the City of Makati's second omnibus motion, which among others, sought the Court's leave or approval to file and admit its second motion for reconsideration.

A second motion for reconsideration is generally prohibited under the Rules of Court, the SC said.

Basically, the City of Makati is once again asking the High Court to reconsider its Dec. 1, 2021 ruling which declared certain areas of Makati as being part of the territory of the City of Taguig.

HIDDEN AGENDA



MARY ANN
LL. REYES

In the same resolution, the High Tribunal also noted without action the City of Taguig's manifestation with motion, which prayed that the City of Makati and its mayor be required to show cause why they should not be sanctioned for making certain claims in relation to the present case.

On Dec. 1, 2021, the SC's Third Division denied the City of Makati's petition for review on certiorari and reinstated with modification the July 8, 2011 decision of the Pasig Regional Trial Court that awarded jurisdiction to Taguig over the Port Bonifacio Military Reservation, including 10 barangays, that formed part of Makati.

Then on Sept. 28, 2022, the Court denied with finality Makati's omnibus motion seeking reconsideration of the Dec. 1, 2021 decision and to refer the case to the SC en banc.

Here, the SC emphasized that the Court en banc is not an appellate court to which decisions of resolutions of a division may be appealed. In the same resolution, it directed that no further pleadings will be entertained and that an entry of judgment be issued immediately.

There should however be no confusion on the difference between the SC decision being final and executory and the actual transfer of jurisdiction to Taguig.

In a reply to a document dated Aug. 14 signed by Makati RTC Branch 64 executive judge Gina Bibat-Palamos, SC administrator Raul Villanueva said as an initial assessment, the SC decision

should be the subject of a writ of execution before the trial court of origin. And when this writ has been implemented by the Department of the Interior and Local Government, then that is the reckoning period for the transfer of jurisdiction from Makati to Taguig.

But the local government of Taguig is insisting that it does not need to obtain such a writ to exercise jurisdiction over the 10 barangays that were formerly part of Makati since the SC decision clearly provides that it is final and executory and therefore, the requirement from the SC's Office of the Court Administrator (OCA) does not have the force of law and does not bind Taguig.

It said that the supposed initial assessment from the OCA, which is an initial assessment, is not only a non-binding opinion but more importantly beyond the OCA's legal authority.

Makati's refusal to hand over jurisdiction to Taguig has reminded some observers of the 1989 en banc decision of the SC that ordered Quezon province to perpetually refrain from exercising all acts of jurisdiction or political authority over the disputed territory covering nine barangays as it ordered Quezon to relinquish the same to Camarines Norte.

In 2001, the two provinces went back to the legal battle by filing two different petitions but the SC said that it was an attempt to relitigate the same issues and it was imperative for the Court to write *finis* to these cases. But the SC said that "every litigation must come to an end; otherwise, it would become even more intolerable than the wrong and injustice it is designed to correct."

Meanwhile, in the Makati-Taguig row, while the SC has said it would no longer accept any pleadings, motions, letters or any type of communication regarding the case because an entry of judgment has already been made, Makati still sought to file a second MR which fortunately, the SC denied.

And now, the issue regarding the absence of a writ of execution is delaying the transfer further.

Hopefully, the SC can clarify this matter. The OCA's letter has unfortunately muddled the issue even more.

Legislative immunity

It was French author Voltaire who first coined the phrase "with great power comes great responsibility."

However, many would remember these words as the advice given by Uncle Ben to the young Peter Parker, aka Spider Man.

The 1987 Constitution provides that a senator or member of the House of Representatives shall, in all offenses punishable by not more than six years' imprisonment, be privileged from arrest while Congress is in session, and no member shall be questioned nor be held liable in any other place for any speech or debate in the Congress or in any committee thereof. That is

legislative or parliamentary immunity.

Unfortunately, this has become a much abused privilege. When Congress defames, you cannot sue "in an age when political lies are being weaponized to increasing effect," one writer for the *New York Times* pointed out.

One of the biggest, if not the largest, poultry operator in the Visayas and Mindanao is accusing a member of Congress of using this privilege for personal gain.

Just recently, Leyte Rep. Richard Gomez has filed a resolution calling for the investigation of DBSN Farms and Agriventures Corp. which operates a chicken breeder farm in Palompon, Leyte due to environmental violations, particularly for polluting a watershed with the farm's dead chicken and chicken dung. DBSN also has a chicken dressing plant in Albueria, Leyte.

Gomez claims that a House investigation found out that the breeder farm has been burying its solid wastes in a dumpsite "illegally excavated" in Barangay San Joaquin.

The Leyte solon based his accusation on a certification by the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) which states that it has no existing records for any permit applied for or application submitted by DBSN/DBSN Breeder Farm relative to any quarry operations in San Joaquin, Palompon, Leyte.

But DBSN Farms' lawyer Arnel Victor Valena emphasized that no violation has been committed since the company is not engaged in quarrying. Since it is not into quarrying, then there is not need for it to apply for a permit, he said.

As to the claim that DBSN's dumpsite is inside the protected Palompon Watershed and Forest Reserve, Valena added that this is also false since there is no such dumpsite.

Palompon Mayor Ramon Onate, who owns DBSN Farm, earlier said that Gomez's actions are politically motivated since Onate supported Gomez's opponent, former Comelec commissioner Gregorio Larrazabal.

He also welcomed the filing of a case in court by Gomez over alleged environmental violations by the company, saying that the courts are the proper venue to hear his complaints and to decide upon them.

Onate stressed that in the courts, he and Gomez stand on even ground where the latter cannot hide under the dress of congressional immunity.

Meanwhile, Gomez has denied accusations that the investigation on DBSN is politically motivated.

For comments, e-mail at mureyes@philstarmedia.com



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

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

B8
PAGE

UPPER
LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

TITLE:

PA1

AUG 26 2013



EXCITED FOR THE HOLIDAYS As September nears, Christmas decorations are already being sold



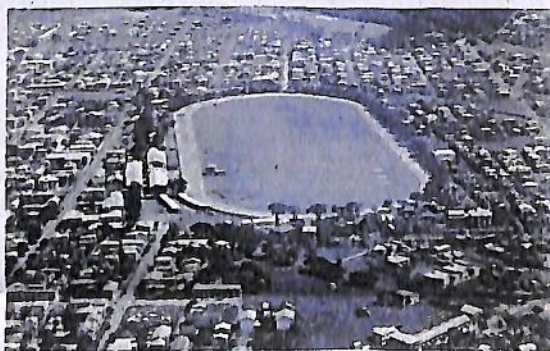
FLORAL PARADISE Dangwa in Sampaloc, Manila is the go-to for flowers

The flowers of Dangwa and the racehorses of San Lazaro



ELIZA ROMUALDEZ-VALTOS

Social media tells me that Christmas decors are already being sold at malls and establishments like Dapitan Arcade in Quezon City. I remember Dapitan when it consisted of makeshift stalls by the streets, where overrun factory items and quality control rejects were dumped. I accidentally discovered this area after attending the races at the San Lazaro Hippodrome where I



READY TO RACE The San Lazaro Hippodrome (Photo US National Archives via John Towell)

The flowers of Dangwa and the racehorses of San Lazaro

◀B-8

been another deterrent against the rampant demolition of built heritage structures in the country.

The AIA dig yielded some finds consistent with the various uses

prior and during the hippodrome's existence. There were a few medicine bottles and syringes, indicative of the time during the liberation of Manila when the hippodrome and

its main building were used as a general hospital by the US army in 1945. There were also a few Chinese tradeware sherds consistent with literature mentioning Santa Cruz as a bustling commercial center even during the Spanish period. Its esteros used to ferry goods to and from Manila Bay. The number of shells, both estuarine/mangrove and marine varieties, also indicate the

used to go with friends who owned racehorses to watch the races on the weekends over 20 years ago.

The San Lazaro Hippodrome in Santa Cruz, Manila was owned and run by the Manila Jockey Club, one of the oldest racing clubs in the Asia-Pacific. It was established in 1867 by Governor General Jose de la Gandara y Navarro exclusively for the Spanish-Filipino mestizos of the time. According to Jenny Ortuoste in her paper, "Down the Stretch: Memories of San Lazaro Hippodrome," it was at first just a social club where no betting was allowed between the 1860s and the 1870s and membership was very exclusive. Held April or May every year were "fun races, racing Philippine ponies on a quarter-mile (400 meters) straight course from San

type of landscape that existed during a period in Santa Cruz's history. Manila is described as a "region that lies along the flat alluvial lands extending from the mouth of the Pasig River in the west to the higher rugged lands of the Marikina Valley in the east."

On Laong Laan, just before it crosses Dapitan Street, there is another spot I had grown to know and

Sebastian Church to Quiapo Church," in which only members of the club participated. Later, it moved its operations to Sta Mesa beside the Pasig River and then found its way to San Lazaro, which later became known as the San Lazaro Hippodrome.

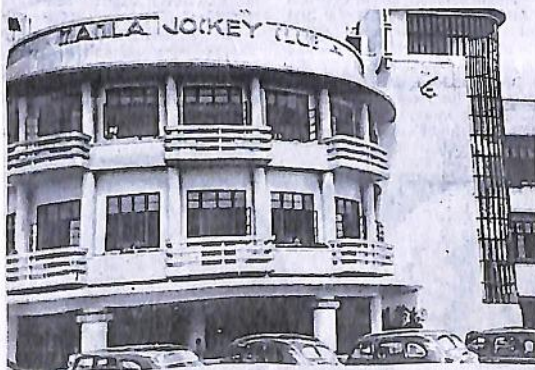
In 2005, the Manila Jockey Club moved to the San Lazaro Leisure Park in Carmona, Cavite. SM San Lazaro mall now stands where the old San Lazaro race track used to be. After the races in San Lazaro Hippodrome (and this was in the 1990s), I would go home to my parents' home at La Vista in Quezon City via Laon Laang Road and that was how I discovered Dapitan.

I remember visiting my colleagues as they conducted the Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) dig at the old San Lazaro Hippodrome in preparation for the construction of the SM San Lazaro Mall. At that time, the law made an AIA mandatory before the issuance of an Environment Clearance Certificate (ECC). An ECC is needed before construction is allowed to begin. Unfortunately, this requirement was scrapped by former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo during her administration. The AIA would have

B-7▶

Road, is said to have gotten its name from an old bus transit line called Dangwa Tranco Terminal, which would ply the Baguio-Manila route ferrying flowers harvested from the Cordilleras in the 1950s. It was one of three places where city folks would get their flowers, the other two being Quiapo and Baclaran. According to reports, Dangwa grew in popu-

Dangwa is said to have gotten its name from an old bus transit line called Dangwa Tranco Terminal, which would ply the Baguio-Manila route ferrying flowers harvested from the Cordilleras in the 1950s.



CLASSIC ARCHITECTURE The Manila Jockey Club Art Deco facade as designed by Juan Nakpil



RACING FOR ALL A new grandstand and 1,200-meter track was built in 1912 by the Manila Jockey Club for the public to enjoy horseracing (Photo The American Magazine)

love, especially during the early days of my marriage when everything was so new and I was still gung-ho about DIY tablescapes I would put together from scratch for when I would entertain at home. It is called the Bulaklakan ng Maynila (fresh flower market), popularly known as Dangwa, in Sampaloc, Manila.

Dangwa, which is on Dimasalang

larity since it became the source of flowers for Malacanang Palace during the Marcos years. Since then, it has become the go-to place for flowers, with the volume and variety of flowers, from places as far as Davao and even from abroad, at cheap prices. Although I discovered it in my 20s, I only began to rely on it for my flower needs as a wife and mother in my early 30s. I still do, but now, being a little bit wiser, I just send my staff to go to our suki. You can also now rely on a courier service if you want your flower without having to brave the traffic in Sampaloc.



TITLE:

PAGE

AUG 26 2023

UN report: Tap wastewater for alternative energy

WASTEWATER is a growing health and environmental threat, accounting for almost as much planet-warming emissions as the aviation industry. Yet with the right policies, wastewater could provide alternative energy to half a billion people, supply over 10 times the water provided by current global desalination capacity and offset over 10 percent of global fertilizer use. These findings appear in an analysis published by the UN Environment Program (UNEP) and GRID-Arendal with the Global Wastewater Initiative (GWWI).

The report, "Wastewater: Turning problem to solution," urges governments and businesses to treat wastewater as a circular economy opportunity, rather than a problem to be disposed of. There are multiple benefits for effectively collecting, treating and reusing wastewater — including new jobs and revenue streams. Additional advantages would result from reducing the volume of wastewater produced.

From challenge to resource

Today, only 11 percent of the world's treated wastewater is reused and around half of the world's untreated wastewater still enters rivers, lakes and seas. To safely fulfill the potential of wastewater as a valuable resource, the report calls to reduce the volume of wastewater being produced, prevent and reduce contamination, and manage wastewater to capture the resources that can be safely reused.

"Globally, wastewater is full of potential, yet it is currently allowed instead to contaminate the ecosystems we rely on," said Leticia Carvalho, principal coordinator of the Marine and Freshwater Branch of UNEP. "We must not let the opportunity simply disappear down the drain: it's time to realize the promise of wastewater as an alternative source of clean water, energy and important nutrients."

The global water crisis is made worse by wastewater, which originates from kitchens, bathrooms and toilets, industrial effluent, agricultural effluent, stormwater and urban run-off. Chemicals and excessive nutrients in wastewater degrade ecosystems, including soil, freshwater sources and oceans, contributing to food insecurity and other social issues.

Through the release of potent greenhouse gases such as methane and nitrous oxide, wastewater accounts for about 1.57 percent of global emissions, just below the climate harm caused by the global aviation industry.

Yet wastewater can become a climate solution: in generating biogas, heat and electricity, it can produce about five times more energy than is required for its treatment — enough to provide electricity for around half a billion people per year. By reducing water insecurity, good management of wastewater can also support countries' efforts to adapt to climate change.

Reusing nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium from wastewater would also help reduce dependence on synthetic fertilizers, offsetting 13.4 percent of the global agricultural nutrient demand. Proper management of wastewater also has the potential to irrigate around 40 million hectares — an area equal to almost the size of Paraguay.

Industry benefit

The following additional resources can be recovered from wastewater and benefit various industries: raw material for producing paper, polymers, pesticides, rubber, paint, biodiesel, food preservatives and flavors, fireproofing and waterproofing fabrics, medical products, jewelry and packaging of food, hygiene and other products.

Improving water management and reuse is a complex challenge. Yet countries worldwide have experience to build on and scale up, and solutions may be adapted for different socio-environmental contexts. The report highlights examples of successful wastewater management from both high- and low-income countries, including in the Caribbean, China, Colombia, Denmark, Egypt, Germany, India, Israel, Namibia, Senegal, Sweden, Singapore, the Solomon Islands and Tunisia.

"We need to keep the pressure up to improve some critical underlying conditions if these actions are to succeed," says Peter Hamis, director of GRID-Arendal. "For that to happen, we need more effective governance, investment, supporting innovation, strengthening data, improving capacity to implement and — critically shifting our behavior — all of us as individuals and institutions."

The Global Wastewater Initiative (GWWI) is the only global platform bringing together different United Nations agencies, nongovernmental organizations, the private sector, development banks and other stakeholders to implement and scale up efforts to protect freshwater and marine ecosystems from wastewater pollution worldwide.

UNEP provides leadership and encourages partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

GRID-Arendal is a nonprofit environmental communications center based in Norway. It transforms environmental data into innovative, science-based information products and provides capacity-building services that enable better environmental governance. It aims to inform and activate a global audience and motivate decision-makers to effect positive change. GRID-Arendal collaborates with UNEP and other partners around the world.

A copy of the report can be downloaded here: <https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/43142?sessionid=956348B172532432F2693A59E682FFCC> THE MANILA TIMES



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

Trusted Since 1858

The Manila Times

Page

UPPER
LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

OPINION

AUG 26 2023
DATE

TITLE:

PAGE

NbS for climate challenges, disaster management, etc.

TO introduce nature-based solutions (NbS) to environmental challenges, notably climate change adaptation and mitigation, and disaster risk reduction, figure out the following: 1) construction of dunes, marshes, islands and reefs that protect coastal communities against typhoons; 2) forest management to reduce flooding and purify water for downstream communities; and 3) restoring wetlands to buffer local communities from floodwaters or conserving mangrove forests that provide nurseries for fish and protect nearby homes against the onslaught of strong winds and waves.

As succinctly described by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, nature-based solutions are "actions to protect, conserve, restore, sustainably use and manage natural or modified terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems which address social, economic and environmental challenges effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being, ecosystem services, resilience and biodiversity benefits."

To be more specific, NbS is about working with nature to solve environmental problems and provide actions for issues and concerns about natural



AMBASSADORS'
CORNER

AMADO S.
TOLENTINO JR.

resources leading to benefits for both human well-being and biodiversity to ensure food security. It relates to the protection and restoration or management of natural ecosystems and working on land use as croplands or timberlands, or the creation of novel ecosystems in and around cities. They are activities that are underpinned by biodiversity conservation and are designed and usually implemented with the participation of local communities and Indigenous peoples.

The solutions referred to make use of protecting, restoring and sustainably managing ecosystems that will increase their resiliency while also safeguarding biodiversity and improving human well-being.

To illustrate, mangroves along coastlines are for sustainable fisheries and provide protective natural barriers against erosion and strong typhoons. They filter water, provide valuable timber and food resources to coastal communities and can store large amounts of carbon.

NbS is based on the notion that when the ecosystem is healthy and well-managed, essential benefits and services to people are ensured such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions, securing safe water use and likewise making air safe and breathable. Nature-based solutions extend to building greener cities by making use of scientific, technological and engineering solutions that bring about green spaces, green roofs, rain gardens, towering rooftop-trees that keep cities cooler during summer.

For those involved with the attainment of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it is a common thought that the ecosystem-based approach for the SDGs is somehow similar to the NbS as they refer to climate change which is the main reason for biodiversity loss and degradation of the environment and natural resources.

Thus, experts say planting 1.2 million trees could undo 10 years of climate change damage; renewable energy use (solar, wind wave, hydroelectric, etc.) could counter negative effects of greenhouse gases; protecting and restoring coral reefs dissipate wave energy and protect communities; organic farming for nutrition-filled food availability; sustainable fishing

to maintain marine diversity.

In the midst of the attention to NbS vis-à-vis climate challenges and disaster management is Ramsar Regional Center-East Asia (RRC-EA), recognized by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands as a Ramsar regional initiative. Based in South Korea, the center serves as a regional platform for international cooperation, networking, funding and capacity building, and assists countries in East, Southeast and South Asia in implementing the 1971 Convention on Wetlands.

With activities that relate to new NbS available options in its agenda, RRC-EA works directly with governments, national and international nongovernment organizations, academic institutions, business organizations and Ramsar Sites, and wetland managers and stakeholders for further implementation of the Convention on Wetlands. It maintains close coordination with the Ramsar Convention Secretariat to ensure complementarity of its activities with national initiatives and the Ramsar Strategic Plan on NbS approach while adapting to climate change, protecting biodiversity, strengthening economy and ensuring protection of the health of people.