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Marcos sees stronger PH-EU ties

Green economy deal signed; free trade talks to resume

By ARGYLL CYRUS GEDUCOS
and JOSEPH PEDRAJAS

President Marcos said his bilateral meeting with European Commission (EC) President Ursula von der Leyen was successful and productive and he hopes that this would be the start of a deeper relationship between the Philippines and the European Union (EU).

Marcos said this as he welcomed von der Leyen to Malacañang on Monday, July 31.

In their joint statement, the President said their meeting was a testament to their desire to strengthen the relationship between the two regions.

"The continued exchanges between Her Excellency and myself, ▶ 6



BILATERAL AGREEMENTS – President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen pose after the signing of bilateral agreements between the Philippines and the European Union in Malacañang on Monday, July 31, 2023. (PPA)

EUROPEAN
COMMISSION
PRESIDENT
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which started in Brussels last year, is a testament to our joint desire to bring our bilateral relationship to greater heights," Marcos said.

The chief executive likewise described the Philippines and the EU as like-minded partners.

"As I mentioned to President von der Leyen, the Philippines and the EU are like-minded partners through our shared values of democracy, sustainable and inclusive prosperity, the rule of law, peace and stability, and human rights," Marcos said. "Let this be a new beginning for the strengthening and the deepening of all our ties with the EU and the Philippines."

Green Economy Program

During the visit, President Marcos and President von der Leyen witnessed the signing of a bilateral agreement on the Joint Declaration of the Green Economy Program between the Philippines and the EU.

Signatories of the bilateral agreement are Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga and EU's Ambassador to the Philippines Luc Veron.

In their joint statement, Marcos said revealed that he and von der Leyen sealed the deal on Europe's role in the Philippines' transition to a circular economy and the generation of green energy.

"I welcome your ambition to put the Philippines on the path to a cleaner and greener future. We have the same ambition," she said. "We want to partner with you on this path. Notably with a team Europe initiative on the green economy that we just signed here."

Free trade talks

Meanwhile, the Philippines and the EU will resume talks on the Free Trade Agreement (FTA)—a deal seen to bolster economic ties between the two sides.

Top of President von der Leyen's priorities is to take trade relations "to the next level," she said in her speech after the bilateral meeting with President Marcos.

"The European Union is already your fourth largest trading partner, and we are the first foreign investor. But we can do so much more. So, I'm very glad that we have decided to relaunch negotiations for free trade agreement," she said.

She said teams from both sides will start working on setting the right conditions so that the Philippines and the EU can get the FTA talks rolling.

Trade and Industry Secretary Alfredo E. Pascual said that with the country's positive trajectory toward reaching upper-middle income status, it is high time for the Philippines and the EU to resume FTA negotiations.



Marcos sees stronger PH-EU ties ◀

"On development cooperation, we committed to conclude a financing agreement on the green economy program in the Philippines, a grant worth 60 million euros which aims to support the Philippines in areas such as circular economy, renewable energy, and climate change mitigation," he said.

Aside from financing, von der Leyen said Europe would also provide expertise, training, and technology transfers to empower local communities, which is part of the EU's Team Europe Initiative on Green Economy.

According to the European Commission (EC), Team Europe Initiative on Green Economy will develop an industry-led alternative to the plastic waste management approach to achieve more sustainable plastic value chains and a reduction of plastic waste and marine litter.

"In close cooperation with Philippine authorities, the initiative will help to develop a circular economy policy, in particular tackling plastic waste, to complement the national strategy to combat marine litter," the EC said.

The EC added that there would be a policy dialogue platform at the government level to promote the circular economy, renewable energy, and energy efficiency.

Before the ceremonial signing, the two leaders held a bilateral meeting to discuss mutual interests in trade, investment, and cooperation within the Global Gateway strategy.

Fight vs climate change

Under the Global Gateway strategy, the 27-member EU will support the Philippines' fight against climate change by contributing about half-a-billion-euros in initiatives that will provide its beneficiaries, including the Philippine government, the expertise and access to its technologies.

The regional bloc's move was announced by President von der Leyen when she discussed with President Marcos the country's efforts in addressing climate concerns.

"To maintain strong economic relations with the EU, it is important that we solidify our economic relations through the PH-EU FTA before the Philippines eventually loses its GSP+ status due to our continued economic growth," said Pascual.

Under the leadership of President Marcos, the DTI, along with its inter-agency negotiating team, will start scoping discussion next month and complete it before the end of this year. Formal FTA negotiations will start in 2024.

Based on this timetable, Pascual said it is possible that the Philippines would be enjoying the benefits of the renewal of the EU-GSP+ over a three-year period and the FTA on one hand.

"A Free Trade Agreement has huge potential for both of us in terms of growth and in terms of jobs," the EC chief said.

Von der Leyen said the world already "learned the hard way" in terms of economic dependencies. So, she added, "we need to diversify our supply lines and make them resilient."

"This is a lesson we have learned and that is what we call 'de-risking' our trade relations," she said. "An FTA is the basis for that. But it's also much more. An FTA can be a springboard for a new technology cooperation to modernize the broader economy."

According to the recent information from Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the following are the proposed chapters of the Philippines-EU FTA:

- Trade in Goods
- Rules of Origin
- Customs and Trade Facilitation
- Trade in Services
- Investments
- Government Procurement
- Intellectual Property Rights
- Competition
- Trade and Sustainable Development
- Legal and Institutional Issues (With a report from Bernie Cahiles-Magkilat)



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'SUSTAINABLE FUTURE' THROUGH ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

EU PLEDGES 60M EUROS FOR PH PATH TO 'GREEN ECONOMY'

By Tina G. Santos
@santostinaINQ

The European Union (EU) is providing 60 million euros (\$66.2 million or P3.6 billion) to help the Philippines' transition to a "green economy" through environment protection and climate change mitigation.

The grant was among the issues discussed during President Marcos' meeting with European Commission (EC) President Ursula von der Leyen in Malacañang on Monday.

Both leaders witnessed the signing of the Joint Declaration of the Green Economy Program, which aims to support the Philippines' journey to a "sustainable future."

"On the development cooperation, we committed to conclude an agreement for the Green Economy Program in the Philippines (GEPP), a grant worth 60 million euros, which aims to support the Philippines in areas such as circular economy, renewable energy, and climate change mitigation," Mr. Marcos said.

"We are also joining forces to fight climate change," said von der Leyen in a post on Twitter shortly after the signing of the agreement.

Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo Loyzaga represented the Philippines in the sealing of the deal, while Ambassador Luc Veron, head of the delegation of the EU to the Philippines, signed on behalf of the commission.

Mr. Marcos said the agreement was in line with the



AGREEMENT Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo Loyzaga (seated, right) and Ambassador of the European Union (EU) in the Philippines Luc Veron sign the bilateral agreement on the Joint Declaration on the Green Economy Program between the Philippines and the EU in Malacañang on Monday. President Marcos and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen served as witnesses. —DENR FACEBOOK PAGE

GEPP, a flagship project of the EU's Global Gateway.

According to a statement issued by the Presidential Communications Office, both sides have agreed to sign a financing agreement "in the near future" to formalize the cooperation on the GEPP.

Through the GEPP, the two sides agreed to sustain green infrastructure development, trade, investments, including private sector engagement in green and sustainability measures in urban areas and micro, small and medium enterprises in the country.

Technical assistance

The GEPP will "support the Philippines' transition to green economy by mobilizing additional funding from European Union member states, European financial institutions, and the European private sector to support the Green Economy

Transition, while generating local value, quality and decent jobs, and lasting growth."

To implement this, both the Philippine government and the European Commission also agreed to sustain technical education and skills development to enhance human capital and build a skilled "green" workforce capable of driving sustainable development in the Philippines.

Both sides also agreed on sharing information on best practices and innovations toward improving resource use efficiency, minimizing waste generation, and scaling up renewable energy and energy efficiency.

The joint declaration added that there should be "investments in climate change adaptation, mitigation and environmental protection measures, including development and transfer of green technologies

and innovations," among other relevant cooperation areas which may be later agreed upon.

"Toward this end, the European Union will provide grant support in the form of technical assistance as deemed necessary to support the implementation of the GEPP, small-scale grants (to civil society organizations, business associations and incubators), equipment and infrastructure," the joint declaration read.

The joint declaration also stated initiatives under the GEPP "will insure inclusivity and promote gender equality, and seek to empower people living in vulnerable conditions."

Tackling plastic waste

According to the European Commission, the Team Europe Initiative on Green Economy will develop an industry-led alternative to the plastic waste management approach to achieve more sustainable plastic value chains and a reduction of plastic waste and marine litter.

"In close cooperation with the Philippines authorities, the initiative will help to develop a circular economy policy, in particular tackling plastic waste, to complement the national strategy to combat marine litter," the EC said.

The circular economy is defined as a model of production and consumption, which involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible. In this way, the life cycle of products is extended and waste is minimized. INQ


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Green Economy: Phl, EU sign deal

The Philippines and the European Union signed yesterday an agreement for a 60-million-euro Green Economy Program, which aims to support Manila in various areas, including circular economy, renewable energy and climate change mitigation.

The Green Economy Program in the Philippines (GEPP) is a flagship project of the EU's Global Gateway. Launched in 2021, it is aimed at contributing to the development of emerging markets and developing countries, which are EU partners, particularly in the fields of digital technology, energy and the environment.

"On the development cooperation, we committed to conclude an agreement on the Green Economy Program in the Philippines, a grant worth 60 million euros, which aims to support the Philippines in areas such as circular economy, renewable energy and climate change mitigation," President Marcos said in his speech following his meeting with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen at Malacañang.

Von der Leyen is in the country for a two-day visit on the invitation of Marcos. The two leaders met during the EU-ASEAN Commemorative Summit in Brussels, Belgium in December last year.

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Green From Page 1

This was the first ever visit of a president of the European Commission to the Philippines.

A Joint Declaration on the Green Economy Program was signed by EU Ambassador Luc Veron, head of the delegation of the European Union to the Philippines, and Environment Secretary Maria Antonio Yulo-Loyzaga during von der Leyen's visit to Malacañang on Monday.

"Global Gateway is the EU's investment plan for the world for sustainable infrastructure. We want to partner with you on this path," von der Leyen said in her speech.

"We will provide financing expertise and access to technologies to support you in the transition to a circular economy and the generation of green energy team Europe, that is the European Union and the member states will contribute almost half a billion euros into this green initiative," she said.

The EU is also supporting the Philippines' fight against climate change and extreme weather events, with its "eyes in the sky" or Copernicus satellites, she said.

"We're currently setting up a so-called Copernicus data mirror site within the Philippine space agency. And we have just signed an agreement to boost the flow on Earth observation data," she said.

This is a first in-space cooperation in Asia, according to the European Commission president.

The regional bloc will also assist the Philippines into becoming a digital hub in the region, von der Leyen said.

"Global Gateway will also play a crucial role here, and European companies are ready to come and invest in the Philippines," she said.

The EU will launch this year the digital economy package for the Philippines.

"We will work together on fast and reliable connectivity with submarine cables on cybersecurity training, and on deployment and development of 5G," she said.

She said EU is working on a possible extension on a submarine cable that it plans to build between Europe via the Arctic to Japan. This cable, she said, could go all the way down to Southeast Asia.

"And we believe that it could go via the Philippines that would give you a strategic position on an infrastructure that could be instrumental, both for your prosperity and national security. We will stay in close contact on this," she said.

She said EU sees the Philippines' great potential in clean and digital economy.

"So, let us start by identifying projects that we want to develop - your local mining industry, supporting your communities - and that contributes to a secure global supply of critical raw materials," she said.

The GEPP will "support the Philip-

pinies' transition to green economy by mobilizing additional funding from European Union member states, European financial institutions, and the European private sector to support the green economy transition, while generating local value, quality and decent jobs, and lasting growth."

They also agreed to sustain technical education and skills development to enhance human capital and build a skilled "green" workforce capable of driving sustainable development in the Philippines.

Moreover, initiatives on capacity-building for Philippine institutions, including local government units, to enhance governance and institutional capacities in implementing policies and programs supporting green economy will likewise be pursued.

Both sides also agreed on sharing information on best practices and innovations toward improving resource use efficiency, minimizing waste generation, and scaling up renewable energy and energy efficiency.

The joint declaration added that there should be "investments in climate change adaptation, mitigation and environmental protection measures, including development and transfer of green technologies and innovations," among other relevant cooperation areas which may be later agreed upon.

- Helen Flores, Evelyn Macairan



EDITORIAL

Another Pasig rehab

Fidel V. Ramos liked to reminisce about the days when he could swim in the Pasig River. Before motor vehicles became ubiquitous, the river was widely used for passenger and cargo transport. By the time Ramos assumed the presidency, however, the river had become a dumping ground for garbage, industrial effluvia, and even aborted fetuses and the corpses of murder victims. The stench from the river made people avoid it for mass transportation.

Almost every administration has pursued some form of campaign to revive the Pasig River. Success has been spotty, with progress depending on the person in charge of the program. Cleaning up the river gained headway during the Ramos administration when the effort was led by then first lady Amelita Ramos, and then in the early stages of the Duterte administration when the campaign was spearheaded by his first environment secretary, Gina Lopez. Duterte, however, also "disestablished" the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission, created during the short-lived Estrada presidency.

In the current administration, President Marcos has revived the initiative, with the creation of an "Inter-Agency Council for the Pasig River Urban Development." Constituted by virtue of Executive Order No. 35 that was issued last week, the council is

tasked, among other things, to enforce easement rules along the Pasig riverbanks. This will include the relocation of informal settlers and elimination of illegal structures.

The now abolished Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission was tasked to restore the river to its "historically pristine condition conducive to transport, recreation and tourism." The failure to carry out this mandate is evident in the shutdown of several private and government-operated ferry services, due to the proliferation of water lilies and the river pollution that turned off passengers.

The river cleanup, however, was intensified, with regular clearing of water lilies. In December 2019, the Pasig River Ferry Service was relaunched by the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority. But the COVID lockdowns interrupted the service.

In the latest rehabilitation effort, the government aims not only to continue cleaning up the river, but also to improve liveability along the riverfront communities. This is an ambitious goal that will require enormous resources and multisectoral cooperation. It will also require sustained commitment from the government. Merely laying the groundwork for the envisioned riverside urban development, which will be difficult to roll back in succeeding administrations, will be achievement enough.



Averting a water crisis

As an archipelago separated by miles of oceans and seas from its neighboring countries, the context of the Philippine initiative to have a dedicated government office to oversee the management of water resources is far from the urgency of continents that are home to many countries.

It is, nonetheless, an important move that attempts to create order in foreseen and anticipated disorders. Water, after all, is a resource that is more precious than oil, not when given a monetary value, but as a source of life and livelihood.

Climate change is driving the speed by which conflicts over water are shaping up or escalating. Globally, two hotspots are worth mentioning. In Asia, China wields an upper hand being in control of the source of 10 major rivers that flow into India, Bangladesh, and Vietnam.

BIZLINKS



REY GAMBOA

The Middle East is also shaping up to be another water-stressed region, facing issues of water scarcity, over-extraction, and competition between countries sharing transboundary water resources. The Nile River Basin, Jordan River Basin, and Tigris-Euphrates River Basin are some areas with historical water-related tensions.

Signs of water resource-related issues are building up too in other parts of the world where rivers are shared by two or more countries. Aggressive dam building projects by countries where water flows originate are a source of irritation. Turkey comes to mind after more than 20 dams built on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers significantly reduced water flows to Syria, Iran, and Iraq.

While some affected communities choose to migrate, others put up a fight. For example, in response to threats by China to build a dam that would curb water flow into India, a border conflict between the two countries has erupted and caused heightened militarization in the affected areas.

Fragmented

The Philippines shares no river sources with other countries, but provinces and regions do. And while potential conflicts may arise in determining the allocation of water to the different local government territories, such have not seriously escalated to warrant the taking up of arms.

During his recent State of the Nation Address (SONA), the President has certified as urgent the need for Congress to pass the creation of a department that will focus solely on water resource management, even after issuing just three months earlier an executive order (EO) creating a water management office under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The EO instructed all water-related agencies like the National Water Resources Board (NWRB), Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA), as well as local water districts to be under the DENR on a transitory basis pending the creation of a new department.

The Philippines has long taken for granted its water resources, and many Filipino households still pay almost nothing for their daily household water needs. Those who do not have access to private or local government water distribution systems continue to rely on deep wells or rivers and streams.

At present, the country's water resource management system is fragmented, with no overarching governance system that had bred a motley of different and sometimes conflicting local ordinances. The National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) has been battling for the longest time to harmonize the planning and management of land, water, and coastal resources.

Unclean water

The Water Resources Management Office (WRMO) created through the EO will have its hands full pending the formation of a water department. Its biggest mandate will be the formulation of a water resources master plan that ultimately will dictate how the nation accesses and uses water.

A few of its priorities will be to resolve conflicts between water-related government agencies and to implement stalled water supply projects worth P14.6 billion in rural areas.

The most critical task, though, will be to address what the President deems as the biggest crisis: providing some 11 million Filipino families, or about half of the population, with access to clean water.

Affected families currently tap their water needs from tainted deep wells or unsanitary surface water run-offs that definitely pose a threat to the health of people, especially if used for drinking. These most vulnerable are at the outskirts of urban areas where sedimentation and pollution have started to creep into traditional water sources.

Poor waste management has also become the source of water pollution, where human waste thrown in canals and rivers breed waterborne diseases that affect the health of whole communities mostly reliant on underground aquifers for their water needs.

Enhanced private sector participation

Without doubt, ensuring access to safe and sufficient water for domestic, agricultural, industrial, and environmental needs requires proper planning, regulation, and allocation of water resources, and a dedicated department may be seen as a way to centralize efforts and expertise in managing water resources more efficiently.

With multiple stakeholders, including government agencies, local authorities, private companies, and communities involved, the task of coordinating for a master plan will be complex. Among the policies that bear watching will be related to water pricing, sanitation, and water-related infrastructure.

The entry of the private sector, for one, has already significantly expanded investments not only in distributing water to communities, but also in building dams and watersheds in recent years as pressure to supply adequate water to expanding cities continues.

Clearly, the establishment of a water department is a step to dictating a sense of reason and rhyme on how our country deals with the increasing water demand of more Filipinos.

Facebook and Twitter

We are actively using two social networking websites to reach out more often and even interact with and engage our readers, friends and colleagues in the various areas of interest that I tackle in my column. Please like us on www.facebook.com/ReyGamboa and follow us on www.twitter.com/ReyGamboa.

Should you wish to share any insights, write me at Link Edge, 25th Floor, 139 Corporate Center, Valero Street, Salcedo Village, 1227 Makati City. Or e-mail me at reydgamboa@yahoo.com. For a compilation of previous articles, visit www.BizlinksPhilippines.net.



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Egay improves Angat's water level

By BELLA CARIASO

The water level in Angat Dam in Bulacan has risen to 195.05 meters due to rains brought by Super Typhoon Egay and the monsoon, which is being enhanced by Typhoon Falcon, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

PAGASA said that as of 6 a.m. yesterday, the dam's water level had increased by 1.21 meters from its previous level of 193.84 meters.

The water elevation is still 14.95 meters below Angat's normal high level of 210 meters, state weather forecasters said.

In a text message to **The STAR**, Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System deputy administrator Jose Dorado Jr. said the MWSS is hopeful that Angat's water level would reach the maximum before yearend.

"This is a good development. Based on our protocol, we target to reach 212 meters at the end of the year," Dorado said.

PAGASA deputy administrator Nathaniel Servando said at least one to two more strong typhoons are needed to ensure that Angat would achieve its maximum capacity level.

Angat supplies more than 90 percent of Metro

Manila's potable water needs and irrigates 25,000 hectares of farmlands in Bulacan and Pampanga.

With the improvement of the water level in Angat as well as in Ipo Dam, the Maynilad Water Services Inc. suspended its water interruption scheme.

On July 12, Maynilad started implementing daily water cutoffs of nine to 11 hours in Calocan, Malabon, Manila, Valenzuela, Navotas and Quezon City after the National Water Resources Board reduced the water allocation of the water concessionaire by two cubic meters.

The water allocation cut for Maynilad and Manila Water was due to Angat's falling water level, which had dropped to 180 cms at the time.

Aside from Angat, the water level in other dams in the country such as Magat in Isabela, Caliraya in Laguna, San Roque in Pangasinan and Pantabangan in Nueva Ecija also increased due to rains spawned by Egay and the monsoon.



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OPINION

FIRST PERSON

ALEX MAGNO

Inundated

A few days ago, we were told to prepare for a possibly crippling drought. Today, after two storms skirted Luzon, the very same areas identified as prone to drought are completely inundated. Many roads in Metro Manila and nearby Bulacan province are rendered impassable by floods.



The immediate peril is the need to release water from the overflowing dams nearby. The Ipo Dam in Norzagaray has exceeded its maximum holding capacity. The La Mesa Dam in Quezon City is nearing its spilling level. When it begins releasing water, this will swell the Tullahan River and cause flooding in Valenzuela and Malabon.

The abundance of water is deceptive. If the rains stop, we could return to water rationing within weeks. The El Nino weather phenomenon is unusually severe this year and next. The episodes of drought will likely outlast the episodes of heavy rain. Severe weather caused by climate change includes both severe rain and long droughts.

The present situation where our dams are dry one week and overfilled the next will likely become the usual pattern. The UN Secretary-General declared last week that we have moved beyond global warming and entered into "global boiling." This is most evident off the coast of Florida where seawater approximates the temperature of a hot tub.

This year, the South Pole did not build ice as it usually does every year during the winter months in the southern hemisphere. In Siberia, melting permafrost resulted in the discovery of 46,000-year-old worms that revived with just a splash of water. Imagine what other organisms might be revived as the permafrost melts. This might include Jurassic viruses.

The El Niño phenomenon is caused by warm ocean currents. With global warming, this phenomenon could become protracted episodes.

In the North Atlantic, the system of water currents that regulate weather patterns and moderate the salinity of the ocean is threatened with collapse. Science has yet to fully understand the implications of this collapse on weather across continents and on the survival of ocean life.

Coral reefs in many areas are bleaching because of rising sea temperatures. When the corals die, a whole chain of adverse events happen. Fish would have no place to breed. Smaller organisms on which fishes feed would deplete. Our marine sources of food will be greatly reduced.

For us here in Luzon, the succession of excessive rainfall and longer droughts is bad news for our already fragile agriculture. Flooding and dryness in succession spells lower farm output and more expensive food for our people.

Already, President Marcos has ordered importation of rice from India to build our buffer stock in anticipation of a long El Niño episode. The order came after India restricted rice exportation in anticipation of food shortages – especially as Russia has taken to bombing Ukraine's food silos to prevent the country from exporting. If Ukraine is unable to export its grains, there will be food shortages in many parts of the world.

Somehow, over the years, we always assumed there will be grains available for us to buy whenever we face shortages. That is no longer true. Our traditional sources of rice are restricting what they export to ensure supplies at home. The margin of tradable rice has always been thin to begin with. Now it is even thinner. Our diplomacy will be exercised trying to secure rice supplies in a thinning market.

There is one insight we draw from the rapidly changing situation in our dams. Built many decades ago, our existing dams are too small to service the needs of a substantially larger population. They fill up and then dry up too quickly. We need a volume of stored water much larger than what our existing reservoirs could deliver.

Building dams and other impoundment infra are not politically sexy things. But someone with a much longer view of the situation should be fretting about them.

For years, we have talked about setting up a separate government agency, possibly a full-fledged department, to look after everything concerning our water supply. We have tended to think of its scope of work mainly in terms of ensuring the availability of potable water for our people.

In actuality, the envisioned water agency's scope of responsibilities must be broader. It includes: overseeing the integrity of our watershed areas, the construction of water impoundment facilities to support our irrigation needs during the dry months, the regulation of land use affecting our catch basins and streams and the enforcement of existing regulations regarding the provision of cisterns to capture rainwater.

We all know that the Marikina River overflows quickly because of the degradation of its watershed areas. We do not know exactly who is responsible for repairing the watershed.

A large aquifer was supposed to be built under the UST campus. It was touted as the solution to the flooding of areas around the campus. Has it?

We are notorious for lacking respect for the commons. For this reason, streams and creeks and catch basins are so flagrantly stolen and built over. How many creeks have disappeared in the Metro Manila area alone? Who is responsible for recovering them?

The more we think about it, the wider the scope of responsibilities the envisioned Department of Water should be. It will take over some regulatory functions from the DENR, the DPWH and the existing regulatory boards.

It will have to be an empowered agency, looking after matters ranging from irrigation to flood control. In a word, everything that has to do with water security.

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106 areas under calamity state

Cagayan, Pampanga, Bulacan join group; 'Egay' deaths rise to 25

By Vince Lopez, Vito Barcelo, Othel V. Campos, Joel E. Zurbano and Macon Ramos-Araneta

A TOTAL of 106 places across the country are now under a state of calamity, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council said Monday, as Cagayan, Pampanga and Bulacan joined the list of provinces declaring a calamity state to tap their emergency funds after the onslaught of typhoon "Egay" last week and the incessant rains due to the southwest monsoon or "habagat"

The three provinces joined Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, Abra, Mountain Province, Bataan and Cavite in declaring a state of calamity along with various cities and municipalities, mostly in Luzon, the NDRRMC said in a briefing.

Egay unleashed strong winds and rains when it made landfall in Cagayan last week and pummeled other areas in Luzon, killing 25 at last count.

The state weather bureau said more rains are expected in parts of Luzon and the Visayas in the next few days due to the southwest monsoon, enhanced by another storm, "Falcon."

In its latest report, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) said the death toll from Egay had reached 25, while 52 others were injured and 23 remained missing, including four Philippine Coast Guard personnel whose boat capsized in Abulug, Cagayan last week.

Some 2.3 million people or 654,837 families were affected by the storm across 13 regions in the Philippines, the NDRRMC said.

The total damage left by Egay was adjusted to P5.4 billion, with damage to infrastructure worth P3.5 billion and agricultural damage pegged at P1.9 billion.

The government has so far given out assistance worth P146.6 million, most



'HABAGAT' EFFECTS. In this aerial photo, houses are seen submerged in flood waters in Brgy. San Miguel, Calumpit, Bulacan, as residents wade through them or use bancas to move to drier ground (inset right). In Ilocos Norte, US Marines help their Philippine counterparts in loading generators for use at clear the Laoag International Airport and nearby communities (inset left) in Ilocos Sur, local police and disaster responders carry the body of John Paul Sabuden, 19, who was reported missing since July 26 at the start of the rains triggered by Typhoon Egay. Maria Tan/ABS-CBN grab, PMC, MDRRMC photos

106 areas...

From A1

of which were food packs distributed by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

The Department of Agriculture (DA) also said it has given a total 111,873 bags of rice seeds, 14,426 bags of corn seeds and 2,582 kilograms of assorted vegetable seeds to Egay-affected farmers.

A quick response fund of P500 million has also been prepared for the rehabilitation of farms damaged by the typhoon, the DA added.

At least P5.198 billion of roads and bridges were destroyed by Typhoon Egay in Luzon province, the Department of Public Works and Highways said Monday.

In a statement, the DPWH said it has intensified numerous clearing operations of major roads in Luzon province, and is actively working on the immediate reopening of 17 roads rendered impassable due to combined effects of southwest monsoon and Egay.

The Bureau of Maintenance of the department said at least 43 roads have been cleared and reopened, despite incessant rainfall especially in parts of Central Luzon.

The DA said Typhoon Egay caused P1.54 billion worth of damage to agriculture as of July 30.

Reports from DA regional field offices (RFOs) in Cordillera Administrative Region, Ilocos region, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, CALABARZON, MIMAROPA, Western Visayas, and Caraga, said the storm damage affected the livelihood of 99,272 farmers and fishers.

Production loss due to the super typhoon totaled 66,075 metric tons from 110,086 hectares of affected agricultural areas.

Agricultural commodities that were damaged were rice, corn, high-value crops, livestock and poultry, and fisheries.

The damage is expected to go higher as more reports come in, officials said.

In Region 3 (Central Luzon), a total of 341,242 families or 1,195,866 people were affected by the continuous rains brought by Typhoon Egay and the enhanced southwest monsoon.

The Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council-3 (RDRRMC-3) on Monday said a total of 8,862 families or 32,404 individuals were still staying in various evacuation centers in the region.

Some 18 houses were destroyed while 334 were damaged.

A total of 13 roads in the region, of which eight are in Pampanga, three are in Bulacan and one each in Zambales and Tarlac, are still not passable to light vehicles due to flooding.

Also, a total of 438 areas in the region were flooded due to moderate to heavy rains in the past days.

The estimated damage in agricultural areas and fisheries and aquatic resources in the region was initially pegged at P454 million and P141.59 million, respectively, for a total of over P596 million.

Ten local government units (LGUs) in the region have so far declared a state of calamity due to the extent of damage caused by Typhoon Egay and the southwest monsoon.

These are the province of Bataan, five municipalities in Pampanga - San Simon, Macabebe, San Luis, Minalin and Sto. Tomas and the towns of Pulilan, Calumpit, Hagonoy and Paombong in the province of Bulacan.

A total of over P31 million worth of assistance was provided by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and LGUs to the affected individuals and families.


Due to massive floods caused by the southwest monsoon (habagat) rains, some LGUs in the region canceled work and classes on Monday.



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DATE


 Republic of the Philippines
 Department of Environment and Natural Resources
 Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
 Tel Nos. 929-6626 to 29; 929-6633 to 35
 929-7041 to 43; 9296252; 929-1669
 Website: <http://www.denr.gov.ph> E-mail: web@denrgov.ph

03 NOV 2011

DENR ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
No. 2011 - 12

SUBJECT : ESTABLISHING SNAKE ISLAND AS THE DENR NATIONAL COASTAL AND MARINE CENTER FOR RESEARCH

Pursuant to Executive Order No. 192 and consistent with the Integrated Coastal Management Strategy provided under Executive Order No. 533, Snake Island or Kalumpang of approximately 09° 54.192N 118° 49.490E, an island within Honda Bay, Palawan is hereby designated as the DENR National Coastal and Marine Center for Research (NCMCR).

As such, it shall have the following functions:


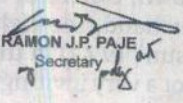
1. Serve as field station for applied research for the marine and coastal environment, ecotourism, as well as terrestrial biodiversity;
2. Serve as a field laboratory for the implementation of the Integrated Coastal Marine Program pursuant to Executive Order 533 adopting Integrated Coastal Management as a national strategy to ensure the sustainable development of the country's coastal and marine resources; and
3. Serve as a model for sustainable coastal and marine management, as well as the proper implementation of the principles of ecotourism.

The Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB), under its Coastal and Marine Management Office shall coordinate with the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) and appropriate DENR units such as the Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB), DENR Regional Office for Region 1V-B, the academe and other partners to formulate an Operations Plan including a research agenda for the NCMCR pursuant to the above functions.

Relative to this, all applications for Foreshore Lease Agreement (FLA) and other instrumentalities inconsistent with the functions of the NCMCR shall be denied or shall no longer be accepted.

In addition, the Department's Finance and Management Service Office shall ensure that the budget and funds for the establishment and operation of the DENR NCMCR is provided for the purpose.

This Order shall take effect immediately and shall supersede, amend or revoke all previous orders and instructions inconsistent herewith.



RAMON J.P. PAJE
 Secretary

M. Bulletin - Aug. 1, 2023



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PAGE

DATE



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
MINES AND GEOSCIENCES BUREAU
Regional Office No. XIII
Km. 2 National Highway, Surigao City
Tel. No. (+6386) 826-5256; Fax No. (+6386) 826-1058 E-mail: info@mgb13.ph

NOTICE OF APPLICATION
OF
CORE MINING CORPORATION
FOR
MINERAL PRODUCTION SHARING AGREEMENT
(for directly undertaking development and utilization)

Notice is hereby given to **CORE MINING CORPORATION** with office address at 23rd Floor, High Street, South Corporate Plaza, Tower 1, 26th Street corner 9th Avenue, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City and who has filed an application for Mineral Production Sharing Agreement for the exploration, development and utilization of nickel and other associated minerals pursuant to Section 38 of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Administrative Order (DAO) No. 2010-21 in re: "Providing for a Consolidated Department of Environment and Natural Resources Administrative Order for the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 7942, otherwise known as the Philippine Mining Act of 1995", and DAO No. 2012-07 in re: "Rules and Regulation to Implement Executive Order No. 79, Entitled: Institutionalizing and Implementing Reforms in the Philippine Mining Sector, Providing Policies and Guidelines to Ensure Environmental Protection and Responsible Exploration of Mineral Resources", particularly describe as follows:

- I. **Application Number** : **AMPSA-SMR-014-96-B**
- II. **Date of Filing** : **16 March 1993**
- III. **Location** : **Brgys. Imelda, Mabini and Navarro, Municipality of Tubajon, Province of Dinagat Islands**
- IV. **Technical Description** : **See attached Sketch Plan/Location Map**
- V. **Size of the Area** : **2,187.54 hectares**
- VI. **Duration** : The Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) is valid for twenty-five (25) years from the date of approval thereof and renewable for like period subject to compliance with the terms and conditions of the contract.
- VII. **Extent of the Operation** : To conduct mining operation within the confines of its contract/mining area without interfering with the rights of other Contractors/Lessees/Operator/Permittees/Permit Holders.

Possession of the contract area with full right of ingress and egress and the right to occupy the same, subject to surface and easement rights.

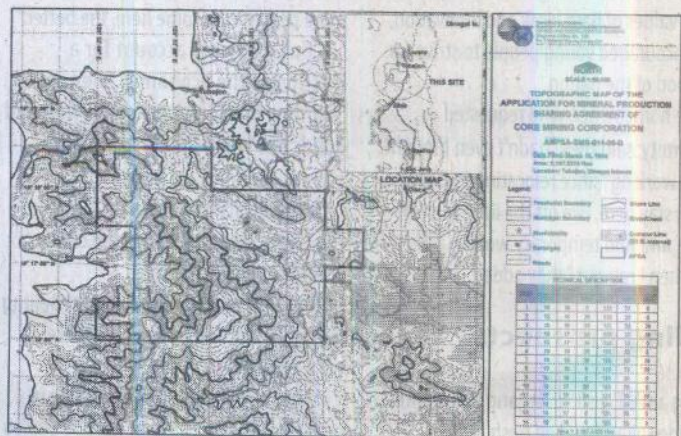
To enjoy easement rights and use of timber, water and other natural resources in the contract area subject to pertinent laws, ruled and regulations and the rights of third parties.

Any and all persons having adverse claims, protests and/or oppositions to the subject application are hereby notified that such adverse claims, protest, and/or oppositions should be filed for purposes of resolution by the Panel of Arbitrators concerned pursuant to Section 38 of DAO No. 2010-21 within ten (10) days from the last date of posting hereof, directly with the Mines and Geosciences Bureau Regional Office (RO) No. XIII or through DENR RO No. XIII, DENR-Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office of Dinagat Islands.

For further particulars, course your inquiries to the Regional Director of MGB RO No. XIII located in Km. 2 National Highway, Surigao City or call at (086) 826-1058 or email us at region13@mgb.gov.ph.

Issued this 26th day of June, 2022 in Surigao City, Philippines.

LARRY M. KERADEZ
Regional Director



MT - July 25 & Aug. 1, 2023