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DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DENR, NGOs partner for watershed rehab

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA FEBRUARY 21, 2022

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and DENR-Region 4A announced partnering with various nongovernment organizations (NGOs) to boost the ongoing rehabilitation efforts in the Marikina Watershed.

The partnership was formalized with the signing of a memorandum of agreement (MOA) that will highlight the use of bamboo as planting materials and the application of bamboo production technology and good agro-forest practices.

The signatories are officials and representatives from the Rotary International District 3830, Samahang Kawayan ng Karugo Agri Farmers Association, Philippine Bamboo Foundation Inc. and DENR-Calabarzon during simple ceremonies held at the DENR Central Office on February 16.

The objective of the partnership is to establish bamboo social enterprises while raising crops according to the DENR guidelines.

The program will cover 20 hectares within the Marikina Watershed that will be distributed under the DENR's enhanced "National Greening Program," or NGP.

The initial phase of the project will involve the establishment of the nursery which includes the raising of bamboo planting materials for a period of six to eight months, while the second phase involves the transplanting of grown bamboo planting materials within the 20-hectare land allocated for Rotary International District 3830 with the partnership of Samahang Kawayan ng Karugo Agri Farmers Association.

The MOA sets the protection of the land for a total of five years.

During the ceremony, the DENR and Rotary International District 3830 also led the turnover of checks worth P1 million to the Samahang Kawayan ng Karugo Agri Farmers Association for the funding of the rehabilitation project.

The project was initiated by the Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Council and Task Force "Tayo Ang Kalikasan" (we are the environment).

DENR-Region 4A Executive Director Nilo B. Tamoria said in a statement that agency officials have recognized bamboo as primary species for the NGP. Tamoria also cited that one of the strategies is watershed management in the Upper Marikina River Basin through riverbanks stabilization to prevent soil erosion.

In 2021, a seedling nursery was established in Sitio Karugo, Barangay San Rafael, Rodriguez, Rizal, by the Rotary International Districts 3780 and 3830, he added.

According to Tamoria, the program "will be very instrumental in achieving the total rehabilitation" of the Marikina Watershed.



Battle cannon replica na magsisilbing pisikal na pananda sa laban sa paglilinis ng Manila Bay, ipatatayo ng DENR at DND sa Manila Baywalk

By [RadyoMaN Manila](#) -Feb. 19, 2022 at 2:00pm



Sa hangaring makapag-iwan ng pisikal na pananda sa mga nakamit na tagumpay sa “Battle for Manila Bay” rehabilitation program, nagkasundo ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at ang Department of National Defense (DND) ang pagpapatayo cannon replica sa bahagi ng Roxas Boulevard Baywalk sa lungsod ng Maynila.

Ang cannon replica ay may sukat na 19.04 cubic meters, habang ang original barrel nito ay nasa 37 feet at may timbang na sampung tonelada.

Partikular na ipupwesto ito sa may 251.1-cubic meter concrete platform sa bahagi ng Remedios area.

Target ng DENR at DND na makumpleto ang cannon replica sa April 9, 2022 kasabay ng selebrasyon Araw ng Kagitingan.

Nais ng DENR na katulad ng “heavily fortified” Fort Drum cannon na nagsilbing line of defense ng Maynila noong naval invasion ng Espanya, magsisilbi ring paala-ala ang proyekto sa rehabilitation program na nagproteka historical bay laban sa polusyon at pagkasira.

Source: https://rmn.ph/battle-cannon-replica-na-magsisilbing-pisikal-na-pananda-sa-laban-sa-paglilinis-ng-manila-bay-ipatatayo-ng-denr-at-dnd-sa-manila-baywalk/?fbclid=IwAR1TxDT4Axk_BcEfKHIMD9XLkPwqsA97S3MT2im9CF1SF6xFtTP_Yyi8ka0



DENR OIC to ‘make the most’ of 4 months as Cimatu exits

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA FEBRUARY 21, 2022

WITH the resignation of Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu for health reasons, Undersecretary Jim Sampulna, who takes over as officer-in-charge, vowed to make the most of the next four months.

“I will be serving as OIC in the next four months. It will be a tough job but I plan to make the most of that remaining four months,” he said, adding that he was surprised by Malacañang’s designation of him as DENR OIC.

Sampulna will reach the mandatory age of 65 on June 2, or a good 28 days before the June 30 turnover from the present administration to the next.

While four months will not be enough time to make the changes he has in mind for the DENR, he said it will be enough to make a meaningful change “for the next,” like preparing everything for the DENR chief.

Sampulna said he plans to review the organizational structure of the DENR and make some changes. “I want to make sure that the employees who receive their salary from the taxes paid by the people are deserving,” he said.

Surprised

“I WAS quite surprised,” Sampulna told the BusinessMirror. “I wasn’t really expecting this,” he said.

Sampulna admitted that even him was surprised by the decision of his predecessor to resign.

“I really didn’t expect him to resign. He has done a lot in the DENR,” he said.

Sampulna said that Cimatu never gave any indication to any one in the agency that he is ailing.

“Maybe because of his background as a soldier, that you won’t really notice he is sick,” Sampulna said in a mix of English and Filipino.

The last time they talked, however, the DENR chief confided he is “tired.”

“Maybe because he was affected by the demise of his wife. You know, he loves her very much,” he said.

Sampulna, a forester who joined the then Forestry Bureau in 1977, got his appointment as regular employee under then DENR Secretary Teodoro Q. Peña during the term of President Ferdinand E. Marcos.

Prayer for Cimatu

Environmental group Greenpeace Philippines expressed surprise at Cimatu’s resignation.

“We are praying he recovers from his health situation,” Greenpeace Philippines Country Director Lea Guerrero said in a statement.

Greenpeace Philippines expressed hope that the new DENR OIC will deliver on the agency’s mandates, especially in the areas of climate action, solid waste management, and ensuring safe air quality, among others.”



“We also hope that in the next administration, the new president will appoint a DENR chief who is fit and committed to implementing policies that prioritize the well-being of communities over business interests, particularly in the face of the climate and environmental emergency.

This is especially needed, with communities in Visayas and Mindanao still dealing with the aftermath of Typhoon Odette.

“The next six years is a critical period where climate action must be the country’s central policy agenda. The climate crisis, compounded by pollution and biodiversity crises, will impact food security, water supply, livelihoods, and people’s health—and will undo economic gains and efforts on poverty reduction. The next administration must ensure the DENR will stay true to its mandate to protect the environment and the well-being of all Filipinos,” Guerrero said.

Anti-mining advocates under Alyansa Tigil Mina were also surprised by Cimatu’s resignation. Jaybee Garganera, national coordinator of ATM, appealed to Sampulna “to listen to mining-affected communities and open the lines for discussion on resolving mining issues and concerns.”



Key projects ng DENR, tuloy kahit nagbitiw si Cimat



February 20, 2022 @ 2:40 PM 16 hours ago

MANILA, Philippines – Magpapatuloy ang mga key projects ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) kahit pa nagbitiw na sa pwesto ang kalihim nito na si Roy Cimat noong Biyernes.

Kabilang sa mga proyektong ito ay ang partnership ng DENR at Department of National Defense para sa pagtatayo ng cannon replica sa Roxas Boulevard Baywalk sa Maynila at ang rehabilitasyon ng Marikina Watershed.

Ang pagkumpleto at pagpapasinaya ng Fort Drum Island cannon malapit sa Remedios drainage outfall ay gaganapin sa pagdiriwang ng Araw ng Kagitingan sa Abril 9 upang magsilbing pisikal na paalala sa pangako ng DENR na ayusin ang Manila Bay.

Ang Fort Drum Island, o mas kilala bilang “El Fraile Island,” ay isa sa apat na islang matatagpuan sa bunganga ng Manila Bay na nagsisilbing linya ng depensa at pumrotekta sa Maynila mula sa pagsalakay ng mga Espanyol noong World War II.

“This landmark shall depict the three battles in Manila Bay: the Spanish-American War, Japanese-American War and now, the modern battle for Manila Bay,” saad ng DENR sa inilabas nitong news release kahapon.

Ang cannon replica ay may sukat na 19.04 cubic meters, habang ang orihinal na barrel ay 37 talampakan at may bigat na 10 tonelada.

Itatayo ito sa 251.1-cubic meter concrete platform.

Samantala, nakipagtulungan naman ang DENR-Calabarzon sa ilang non-government organizations (NGOs) para sa rehabilitasyon ng Marikina Watershed sa pamamagitan ng paggamit ng bamboo planting materials.

Saklaw ng programa ang 20 ektarya sa loob ng Marikina Watershed, na ipapamahagi sa ilalim ng Enhanced National Greening Program ng DENR.

Pebrero 16 nang lagdaan ng Rotary International District 3830, Samahang Kawayan ng Karugo Agri Farmers Association, Philippine Bamboo Foundation Inc., at ng DENR Calabarzon sa pangunguna ni Executive Director Nilo Tamera ang MOA para sa mabigyan ang mga katuwang sa programa ng pagsasanay sa bamboo production technology at agro-forest upang makapagtatag ng bamboo social enterprises habang nagpapalago ng mga pananim.

“Bamboo is not just an alternative to construction materials but it also helps in mitigating climate change. This is why I am pushing for the creation of mini bamboo forests in the country which will also spur a vibrant bamboo lumber industry,” saad ni Cimat.



Kasabay nito, pinangunahan din ng DENR at ng Rotary International District 3830 ang turnover ng tseke na nagkakahalaga ng P1 milyon sa Samahang Kawayan ng Karugo Agri Farmers Association para pondohan ang proyekto.

Ang proyekto ay pinasimulan ng Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Council at ng Task Force Tayo Ang Kalikasan.

Ang Marikina Watershed ay ang siyang kumontrol sa daloy ng tubig at binabawasanang panganib ng mga pagbaha at pagguho ng lupa sa mabababang lungsod tulad ng Marikina.

Key projects ng DENR, tuloy kahit nagbitiw na si Cimatu

By [RadyoMaN Manila](#) - Feb. 20, 2022 at 7:41am



Tuloy pa rin ang pagsasakatuparan sa malalaking proyekto ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) kahit pa nagbitiw na sa pwesto ang kalihim nito na si Roy Cimatu.

Kabilang sa mga proyektong ito ay ang pagtatayo ng cannon replica sa Roxas Boulevard Baywalk sa Maynila at ang rehabilitasyon ng Marikina Watershed.

Katuwang ng DENR sa pagtatayo ng Fort Drum Island cannon ang Department of National Defense na target makumpleto at mapasinayaan sa mismong Araw ng Kagitingan sa Abril 9.

Ang Fort Drum Island, o mas kilala bilang “El Fraile Island,” ay isa sa apat na islang matatagpuan sa bunganga ng Manila Bay na nagsilbing depensa ng Maynila mula sa pagsalakay ng mga Espanyol noong World War II.

Samantala, katuwang naman ng DENR-Calabarzon ang ilang Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) para sa rehabilitasyon ng Marikina Watershed sa pamamagitan ng paggamit ng bamboo planting materials.

Ang Marikina Watershed ay ang siyang kumontrol sa daloy ng tubig at binabawasan ang panganib ng mga pagbaha at pagguho ng lupa sa mabababang lungsod sa Kamaynilaan tulad ng Marikina.



Was it really health reasons why Cimatu quit?

FEB 20, 2022, 10:56 AM

Rose De La Cruz
Columnist

Was the hasty departure/resignation of Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu really because of health reasons? Browsing through the net would not yield any medical history of Cimatu. But is he embarking on other missions or plans for the incoming administration?

UPON reading the report from the Palace about Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Agullana Cimatu quitting his post for “health reasons” I browsed long hours searching for any medical report on this bemedaled general, who on June 22, 2020, was assigned by the President to oversee the COVID19 response in Cebu City, which by then had the highest number of infections in the country.

Other than that, no other material linking his family’s medical history to his medical condition now except for his age, he is now 75 (born on July 4, 1946).

Cimatu, who assumed the top post at DENR on May 18, 2017 (until his resignation on February 18) had been harshly criticized in recent months for his lifting of the ban on open pit mining and investing on the dolomite sand beach in Manila Bay, when the country was deep into the pandemic.

Reactions to his resignation

But even his harshest critics were moved by his resignation. The Alyansa Tigil Mina (ATM), which has been critical of the DENR’s policies on mining, said in a statement:

“We are surprised by Sec. Roy Cimatu’s resignation as DENR Secretary. We are praying he recovers from his health situation.”

ATM also called on Undersecretary Jim Sampulna, the OIC,

“to listen to mining-affected communities and open the lines for discussion on resolving mining issues and concerns.”

The nongovernment alliance also aired hopes that the DENR would consider “re-imposing the ban on open-pit mining and the suspension of operations of mining sites that are detrimental to communities.”

Cimatu, a former Armed Forces chief of staff, was tapped by President Duterte to head the DENR in 2017.

Global environmental watchdog, Greenpeace (Phils) country director Lea Guerrero said:



“Greenpeace Philippines wishes Mr. Cimatu good health as he vacates a very crucial role.”

“With only a few months remaining in Mr. Cimatu’s unexpired term, we are hoping that DENR, under the leadership of OIC Jim Sampulna, will deliver on the agency’s mandates, especially in the areas of climate action, solid waste management, and ensuring safe air quality, among others.”

Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles (who announced to palace reporters Cimatu’s resignation) said “we wish Secretary Cimatu good health as he transitions from his decades-long and stellar service in government to private life.” Nograles said.

Cimatu replaced Lopez in 2017 when she was rejected by the congressional Commission on Appointments.

Environmentalists also criticized the DENR under Cimatu's leadership for granting environmental compliance certificates for the New Manila International Airport in Bulacan and the New Centennial Water Source-Kaliwa Dam Project in Rizal and Quezon provinces, which are feared to harm the environment and communities.

Cimatu and mistahs visit Veterans Hospital

Last September 26, 2018 Cimatu, accompanied by Undersecretary Rodolfo Garcia and several mistahs of PMA Class 1970, toured the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in line with PMA Class 1970 members to have their own ward inside VMMC. Was he preparing for his eventual hospitalization?

After the tour, they identified an open area right outside the rooftop of Ward 21 where the Class 1970 ward will be erected.

Several PMA Class Associations had initiated and supported infra projects in the hospital. Recently, the Association of General and Flag Officers (AGFO) funded the renovation of the AGFO Suite at Ward-21. Similarly, PMA “Sandigan” Class of 1982 sponsored the renovation of a private ward at Ward-11. Currently, the construction and extension of six private rooms at the opposite end of Ward 21 is ongoing. This infrastructure project is financially supported by PMA “Matikas” Class of 1983, said a report on VMMC website.

Long list of govt. posts

After graduating at PMA in 1970, Cimatu was immediately assigned in Cotabato City as platoon leader and executive officer of the Alpha Company of the 11th Infantry Battalion under the 3rd Infantry Division.

Then as commander of the 4th ID of the Philippine Army based in Cagayan de Oro from 1999 to 2001, he led the campaign against the MILF which resulted in the capture of most of its 46 camps in Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao. He earned the moniker “General Pacman” for his efficiency during the “all out war” of President Estrada.

In 2001, Cimatu was appointed as the Commanding General of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) based in Zamboanga City (now AFP Western Mindanao Command). During his short stint as Southcom chief, he took part in the first Balikatan 02-1 military exercise between the US and Philippines.

In May 2002, President Arroyo appointed him as the 30th AFP Chief of Staff for his 36 years of military service, when he crafted and implemented a comprehensive anti-terrorist campaign plan to break the backbone of the Abu Sayyaf and to decimate other terror groups. He spearheaded Operation Endgame in Sulu under Operation Enduring Freedom that eventually led to the killing of Abu Sayyaf leader Abu Sabaya in June 2002.[5] Cimatu retired on September 10, 2002 and was replaced by Benjamin Defensor Jr. as AFP chief.



As a former chief of staff, Cimatu was accused by former AFP budget officer Col. George Rabusa of receiving send-off money or pabaon when he retired in September 2002. During the Senate hearing on the 2011 Armed Forces of the Philippines corruption scandal, Rabusa said the retiring AFP chiefs, which also included Diomedio Villanueva and Angelo Reyes, received at least 50 million from the pabaon system. The Department of Justice filed plunder charges against Cimatu and other high-ranking AFP officials in June 2011 for allegedly accumulating ill-gotten wealth sourced from the conversion of military funds. Rodrigo Duterte, then the mayor of Davao City, defended Cimatu from the allegation saying “ I do not believe that Gen. Roy Cimatu has millions.” In April 2013 the Office of the Ombudsman recommended the dismissal of the plunder charges for lack of evidence.

His awards in the military are:

The former military chief-turned-environment secretary oversaw the six-month rehabilitation of Boracay, the country’s most famous tourist island.

He also led the restoration of Manila Bay, which includes transforming a polluted stretch of the bay’s shoreline into an artificial white sand beach made from crushed dolomite rocks.

During his term as environment chief, the retired Army general sought to strengthen the enforcement of the country’s environmental laws by pushing for the creation of Environmental Protection and Enforcement Bureau.

Cimatu also chaired the government’s Task Force Build Back Better, directed by the President to ensure post-disaster rehabilitation efforts in typhoon-hit areas.

Source: https://opinyon.net/national/was-it-really-health-reasons-why-cimatu-quit?fbclid=IwAR3z4eOTxPzS78F09pBYm59DgXjBm1mdOdCms7gcggjWncXIJ30Bo3GSbt_k



DENR sa mga kandidato: Kulong, multa sa pagdidikit ng campaign posters sa puno



February 20, 2022 @ 10:40 AM 20 hours ago

MANILA, Philippines – Nagbabala ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa Eastern Visayas sa mga kandidato sa Halalan 2022 at sa kanilang mga tagasuporta na iwasang maglagay ng campaign materials sa mga puno.

Ipinaliwanag ni DENR-8 Regional Executive Director Tirso Parian, Jr. na ipinagbabawal ng Republic Act 3571 ang pagputol, pagsira, o pagpinsala sa mga nakatanim o lumalaking puno, namumulaklak na halaman at shrubs o mga halaman na may magagandang halaga sa mga pampublikong kalsada, sa mga plaza, parke, paaralan, o sa anumang iba pang lugar ng pampublikong kasiyahan.

Sinabi rin niya na ang lalabag dito ay may kaakibat na parusa na pagkakakulong ng anim na buwan hanggang dalawang taon, o multang hindi bababa sa P500.00, at hindi hihigit sa P5,000.00, o pareho, base sa Section 3 ng Presidential Decree 953.

Idinagdag ni Parian na ang Commission on Elections (Comelec), sa pamamagitan ng Fair Elections Act, ay maaaring magbigay ng awtorisasyon sa mga partidong pampulitika na lumikha ng mga common poster areas para sa kanilang mga kandidato sa mga pampublikong lugar, ngunit sa anumang pagkakataon ay hindi nito dapat italaga bilang poster areas ang anumang mga puno, halaman, o shrubs. sa mga pampublikong kalsada.

“Sa iba’t ibang benepisyo sa ekolohiya at kalusugan na ibinibigay ng mga puno, tulungan natin ang isa’t isa sa pag-iingat at pag-iwas sa ating mga puno sa anumang hindi kanais-nais na pagkilos laban dito,” aniya.

“Ang pagputol o pananakit ng mga puno sa pamamagitan ng pag-post o pagpapako ng mga materyales sa halalan ay mga paglabag na pinapahintulutan ng ating mga batas hindi lamang ngayong panahon ng halalan kundi sa araw-araw,” dagdag niya. **RNT**

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/denr-sa-mga-kandidato-kulong-multa-sa-pagdidikit-ng-campaign-posters-sa-puno/>

Nailigtas na Philippine eagle, nai-turn over na sa PH eagle center

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Feb 20 2022 03:11 PM



Larawan mula sa CENREO 2B, Lanao del Sur.

Inilipat na ang isang nailigtas na Philippine Eagle sa Philippine Eagle Center sa Davao City nitong Pebrero 12.

Naligtas ang Philippine Eagle noong Pebrero 9 sa bayan ng Marogong sa Lanao del Sur at dinala sa Community Environment, Natural Resources, and Energy Office (CENREO) para sa first-aid treatment.

Batay sa initial observation ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources Region 9, ang agila ay may wingspan na 51 centimeters at timbang na limang kilo.

May nakitang bone fracture o bali sa buto sa kanang pakpak ng agila, at may nawawala ring balahibo rito.

Pinangalanan ng mga awtoridad ang Philippine Eagle na si "Bangsa Bae" bilang pagkilala sa kababaihan ng Bangsamoro.

"It is also to commemorate the significant efforts and sacrifices of the mothers, wives, and daughters of the Mujahideens (freedom fighters) of the Bangsamoro people," ayon sa pahayag ng Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources, and Energy ng Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Ayon kay CENREO officer Benjamin Alangca, maaring may nesting site sa bandang Mt. Kalantimon sa Lanao del Sur ang agila.

Nagpaalala ang mga awtoridad sa publiko na ipinagbabawal ang pangangaso at bawal ring saktan ang mga Philippine Eagle, batay sa Republic Act 9147 o Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act.

—Ulat ni Hernel Tocmo

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/02/20/22/nailigtas-na-philippine-eagle-nai-turn-over-na?fbclid=IwAR1xDswLnR6YTOicdM3J2RGwy6PqYXC1ayEYqqf-Q6zLr2K7xltqzMJQRHs>



Krisis sa tubig sa Metro Manila, nagbabadya ngayong summer season

By [RadyoMaN Manila](#) - Feb. 19, 2022 at 1:56pm



Nagbabadya ang 'water crisis' sa National Capital Region (NCR) sa darating na tag-init.

Ito ang kinumpirma ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) kung magpapatuloy ang pagbaba ng water level sa Angat Dam.

Nabatid na 98% ng tubig sa buong Metro Manila ang sinusuplayan ng Angat Dam.

Sa pagtaya ng ahensiya posibleng maranasan ang kakulangan sa suplay ng tubig sa NCR pagsapit ng Abril o Mayo ngayong taon.

Sa ngayon ay sinisikap na ng mga water supplier at mga regulator na mapigilan ang pagbaba pa ng water level sa Angat.



Too many water bodies while supply runs short

[COMMONSENSE](#) - [Marichu A. Villanueva](#) - The Philippine Star February 21, 2022 | 12:00am

At this early part of the year, while we still enjoy the relatively cooler season, alarm bells have already been raised. It is not the summer period yet in our country. But the specter of our water supply shortage looms with the long dry spell ahead. The summer period normally starts in April in the Philippines. However, the palpable effects of climate change have rendered our country's dry and wet season now unpredictable.

The National Water Resources Board (NWRB) reminded the public to start observing water conservation measures. Closely monitoring the water elevation in various dams across the Philippines, the NWRB advised the public "to ensure that there will be enough water during the dry season."

In fact, The Philippine Star splashed a photo in our front page last Friday on the status of water elevation at the La Mesa Dam in Quezon City. Providing for the drinking water needs of the people in the entire National Capital Region (NCR), the water elevation at La Mesa Dam stood that day at 78.78 meters below its normal high-water level of 80.15 meters.

It is quite ironic for Filipinos to live in an archipelagic country surrounded by large bodies of water and yet still suffer the recurring problem of water supply shortage.

Over a breakfast meeting on the same day, Israel ambassador to the Philippines Ilan Fluss pointed to the attention-grabbing photo about the feared water crisis anew here. A half-arid land located in the Middle East, Israel has been known to be self-sufficient in its own water supply primarily with their advanced desalination technology. But according to Amb. Fluss, Israel has also made great strides in the treatment of recycled sewage water.

"Why waste good water for irrigation when treated sewage water can be used?" the Israel ambassador rhetorically asked.

Amb. Fluss disclosed that the Israel Embassy in Manila is putting together a proposal they intend to present before the next Congress of the Philippines to tap into this Israeli treatment technology of sewage water. He noted there are pending bills in the outgoing 18th Congress on a proposed creation of a single body of water authority where this proposal could best fit in for the Philippines.

There are three similar bills pending in various Senate committees. At the House of Representatives, House Bill 9948, or the National Water Act approved by four committees already on Sept. 6 last year but were not tackled at the floor for plenary debate. Both chambers adjourned for the election campaign last Feb. 2 without acting on it.

Aside from La Mesa Dam, the NWRB also supervises the rest of water dams all over the country. Despite the declining water level, the NWRB decided to maintain the current allocation of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) from the Angat Dam in Bulacan. The NWRB earlier urged the public to conserve and use water wisely due to Angat Dam's lower-than-expected water level to ensure that sufficient water is available for municipal irrigation and hydropower uses in the subsequent months.

This brings into the picture the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) which is primarily responsible for irrigation development and management as created by Republic Act (RA) 3601 on June 22, 1963. But aside from the NIA, some of the biggest dams in the country are also controlled by the National Power Corp. (NPC) to run these hydro-electric plants.



The primary function of the NWRB was spelled out in the Water Code of the Philippines under Presidential Decree (PD) 1067. This martial law edict signed in 1976 by the late president Ferdinand Marcos amended a previously PD issued in 1974 that first created a National Water Resources Council. Under the Water Code, it provided among others that the utilization, exploitation, development, control, conservation, or protection of water resources shall be subject to the control and regulation of the government through the Council.

Subsequently, the late president Corazon Aquino reorganized the Council when she signed Executive Order No. (EO) 124 in 1987 that renamed and reorganized the Council into NWRB. At the same time, it transferred all its technical functions to a Bureau of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

Fast forward. When president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo took over the government, she issued EO 123 in 2002 that reconstituted the membership of the NWRB and transferred it to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). The NWRB continues to be attached to the DENR up to present as a bureau for purposes of administrative control and supervision. Incidentally, erstwhile DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu resigned last week due to poor health.

As a policy-making, regulatory and quasi-judicial body, the NWRB was mandated by Mrs. Arroyo's EO 860 in 2010 to desist from regulating the water tariffs on all Water Districts. Henceforth, this was given to the Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA) in accordance with PD 198 issued in 1973.

Like the NIA, the LWUA is a government-owned and controlled corporation (GOCC). But LWUA has a specialized lending function mandated by law to promote and oversee the development of water supply systems in provincial cities and municipalities outside of Metro Manila.

For the NCR, it is the MWSS – under the Office of the President – that regulates the two private water concessionaires, Manila Water and the Maynilad Water, in supplying the water needs in Metro Manila.

The NWRB alert on anticipated water supply shortage was based from the forecasts of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA). The weather experts of PAGASA said the La Niña phenomenon, or long rainy period, is still upon us. It was only on Dec. 16 last year when we had the most devastating force of too much water due to typhoon "Odette."

The La Niña phenomenon would only last until March, per PAGASA forecast. Then the El Niño phenomenon, or the long dry spell, will persists for the rest of this year.

With so many government agencies on top of the water situation, who needs summer?



Lifting of ban on open pit mining a good start

By [Jed Macapagal](#) -February 21, 2022



Balabag mines in Zamboanga del Sur is operated by Canadian mining firm TVI Resource Developments Philippines Inc.

Lifting of ban on open pit mining a good start The lifting of the ban on open pit mining is a good start in generating interest among global players but more help from the government is needed to make them invest in the Philippines, according to Jose Leviste Jr., governor of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (CanCham Philippines).

“Clearly, we could do more... This relaxation of the open pit mining ban is something positive because it will certainly catch the interest of people not only locally but also abroad,” Leviste said in a forum hosted by the chamber last week.

Citing studies, Leviste said 30 percent of the country is potentially rich in mineral ores but only 3 percent is covered with rights, claims and leases to mine.

“With this development... what we must do is make it happen. Lobby the government, get the support of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Finance so that we can really proceed and move a little faster on this industry,” Leviste added.

The national government recently lifted the open pit mining ban that was first implemented by the DENR in 2017.

Last year, it also lifted the moratorium on new mineral agreements between the government and the private sector which was prohibited since 2012.

Earlier, Leviste, as special advisor to the Australia-Philippines Business Council, said other areas of opportunity in the country include mineral exploration, mining equipment supply, engineering services, specialist software and industry education and training.

The Philippines is the fifth most mineralized country in the world, with the third largest deposits of gold, fourth for copper and fifth for nickel.

The country’s mineral resource assets, valued at approximately A\$1.32 trillion, are largely untapped.



Masungi Georeserve deploras attack on forest rangers

(Philstar.com) - February 20, 2022 - 9:51am



This Feb. 19, 2022 screengrab shows the windshield of one of the vehicles of Masungi rangers, which was smashed with a large rock. A group of 30 people associated with illegal resorts in the Upper Marikina Watershed attacked seven forest rangers who were merely eating at a carinderia. Screengrab from Masungi Georeserve

MANILA, Philippines — Masungi Georeserve on Saturday asked for protection and support from the government following an attack on seven forest rangers.

"We deplore in the strongest terms yesterday's horrific attack on our park rangers by people associated with illegal resorts in the Upper Marikina Watershed," Masungi Georeserve said in a statement.

What happened: On February 18, the park rangers based in the watershed were eating at a carinderia when they were attacked by about 30 people, according to Masungi.

- The mob "ganged up, clobbered and mauled" the seven rangers when they refused to get accosted without a warrant.
- Two rangers were injured and sent to the hospital after the mob of 30 people surrounded the rangers' vehicles. One of the vehicles of the rangers was smashed with a large rock.

Who did this: Masungi said the mob were people linked to illegal resorts in the Upper Marikina Watershed.

- Jay Sambilay, one of the leaders of the mob, is a suspect in the shooting of two other park rangers in July 2021.
- Employees of Erin's Resort were also involved, whose employer Erwin Lomio earlier received a cease-and-desist order from the DENR for putting up structures inside the protected area.
- Another leader of the attack was Rey Guiriba, a supposed caretaker for properties in a PNP general. In January, the rangers confiscated 34 freshly cut trees from him.

Masungi, a conservation area in Baras, Rizal, said the harassment and attack on rangers likely stemmed from "underhanded moves" from the DENR to endorse clearances to the illegal resorts.

"We decry this despicable violence against forest defenders and we will do everything in our power to hold the criminals responsible, including filing criminal complaints against all those involved in this attack immediately," it said. — Patricia Lourdes Viray

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2022/02/20/2162071/masungi-georeserve-deploras-attack-forest-rangers/amp/>



Mangrove planting launched

Published 4 hours ago on February 21, 2022 03:20 AM

By Jonas Reyes



Photo: pangasinan.gov.ph

BOLINAO, Pangasinan — The Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPAg) recently conducted a mangrove planting activity as well as benchmarking activity at the Provincial Mangrove Information Center and Hatchery in Barangay Arnedo here.

A total of 2,500 mangroves were planted as part of their support for the environmental protection and rehabilitation and coastal resource management program of the provincial government under the leadership of Governor Amado Espino III.

OPAg Bolinao field station presented their 10-point programs, projects, and activities to other members from the San Quintin, Sta. Barbara and Mangatarem field stations.

The provincial government is hoping that the best practices of the OPAg Bolinao field station would be copied by other field stations in the province.

The activity was participated in by Provincial Agriculturist Dalisay Moya, OPAg Bolinao Center Chief Alvin Soriano, OPAg San Quintin Center Chief Aurelia Cariaga, OPAg Sta. Barbara Center Chief Gloria de Guzman, and OPAg Mangatarem Center Chief Evangeline Gonzales.



ONE News February 19 at 8:30 AM · 🌐 ⋮

"With this recent issuance, LGUs can no longer turn a blind eye to dump-and-fill projects that cause irreversible impact on the fisheries and rich biodiversity of our coastal and marine ecosystems from which many Filipinos depend on for food and livelihood," said Atty. Rose-Liza Eisma-Osorio, Oceana's Legal and Policy Director.

February 18, 2022

DILG MEMO EMPHASIZES LGUS' ROLE IN PROTECTING PH AND OCEAN — OCEANA

International advocacy group Oceana commends the Department of the Interior and Local Government to seriously uphold their critical role in protecting the environment and complying with the safeguards provided by existing laws and regulations including the Philippine Environmental Impact Statement System (PEISS) Act to projects which compromise the right of the people to an ecologically balanced environment.

OneNewsPH

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21 FEBRUARY 2022, MONDAY



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DENR, NGOs partner for watershed rehab

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

[@jonlmayuga](#)

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and DENR-Region 4A announced partnering with various nongovernment organizations (NGOs) to boost the ongoing rehabilitation efforts in the Marikina Watershed.

The partnership was formalized with the signing of a memorandum of agreement (MOA) that will highlight the use of bamboo as planting materials and the application of bamboo production technology and good agro-forest practices.

The signatories are officials and representatives from the Rotary International District 3830, Samahang Kawayan ng Karugo Agri Farmers Association, Philippine Bamboo Foundation Inc. and DENR-Calabarzon during simple ceremonies held at the DENR Central Office on February 16.

The objective of the partnership is to establish bamboo social enterprises while raising crops according to the DENR guidelines.

The program will cover 20 hectares within the Marikina Watershed that will be distributed under the DENR's enhanced "National Greening Program," or NGP.

The initial phase of the project will involve the establishment of the nursery which includes the raising of bamboo planting materials for a period of six to eight

months, while the second phase involves the transplanting of grown bamboo planting materials within the 20-hectare land allocated for Rotary International District 3830 with the partnership of Samahang Kawayan ng Karugo Agri Farmers Association.

The MOA sets the protection of the land for a total of five years.

During the ceremony, the DENR and Rotary International District 3830 also led the turnover of checks worth P1 million to the Samahang Kawayan ng Karugo Agri Farmers Association for the funding of the rehabilitation project.

The project was initiated by the Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Council and Task Force "Tayo Ang Kalikasan" (we are the environment).

DENR-Region 4A Executive Director Nilo B. Tamera said in a statement that agency officials have recognized bamboo as primary species for the NGP. Tamera also cited that one of the strategies is watershed management in the Upper Marikina River Basin through riverbanks stabilization to prevent soil erosion.

In 2021, a seedling nursery was established in Sitio Karugo, Barangay San Rafael, Rodriguez, Rizal, by the Rotary International Districts 3780 and 3830, he added.

According to Tamera, the program "will be very instrumental in achieving the total rehabilitation" of the Marikina Watershed.



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'Battle of Manila Bay' rehab to feature replica cannon

By **CORY MARTINEZ**

A CANNON replica will soon be installed along the Roxas Boulevard Baywalk in Manila to mark the challenges and achievements of the "Battle for Manila Bay" rehabilitation program.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has partnered with the Department of National Defense (DND) for the construction of a replica of a Fort Drum Island cannon near Manila's Remedios drainage outfall to "serve as a physical reminder of the DENR's commitment and willpower in our battle to rehabilitate Manila Bay."

Fort Drum Island, otherwise known as El Fraile Island, is one of the four islands located at the mouth

of Manila Bay that serves as a formidable line of defense protecting the capital city of Manila from naval invasion from Spanish colonial rule until World War II.

The landmark shall depict the three battles in Manila Bay—the Spanish-American War, Japanese-American War, and now, the modern Battle for Manila Bay.

The cannon replica will be 19.04 cubic meters, while the original barrel will be 37 feet and weighs 10 tons. This will be built on a 251.1-cubic meter concrete platform along the Remedios area.

The DENR and DND projected the completion and inauguration of the cannon replica on April 9, 2022, during the celebration of the Araw ng Kagitingan (Day of

Valor).

The "heavily fortified" Fort Drum cannon defended and protected the entrance of Manila Bay against invaders—"similar to the Battle for Manila Bay rehabilitation program as it protected the historical bay against pollution and degradation."

Undersecretary Ernesto Carolina of the DND's Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) said that "visitors who will be strolling along the Manila Baywalk will be reminded of the historical battles and unnamed heroes who defended our country through the Fort Drum cannon."

"Likewise, this project will bring an added perspective of what the Manila Baywalk and the Manila Bay

Dolomite Beach is all about," Carolina said.

He also expressed hope that the new landmark will "give balikbayans (returning Filipinos) and the youth a sense of nationalism and pride on their origins and the heroism from their ancestors."

The Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program, dubbed as "Battle for Manila Bay," started on Jan. 27, 2019, and is in line with the Writ of Continuing Mandamus on Manila Bay issued by the Supreme Court in 2008.

It directed 13 government agencies to clean up, rehabilitate and preserve the historic bay and maintain its waters to Class SB level which means the bay will be "fit for swimming, skin-diving, and other forms of contact recreation."



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DENR OIC TO 'MAKE THE MOST' OF 4 MONTHS AS CIMATU EXITS

WITH the resignation of Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu for health reasons, Undersecretary Jim Sampulna, who takes over as officer-in-charge, vowed to make the most of the next four months.

"I will be serving as OIC in the next four months. It will be a tough job but I plan to make the most of that remaining four months," he said, adding that he was surprised by Malacañang's designation of him as DENR OIC.

Sampulna will reach the mandatory age of 65 on June 2, or a good 28 days before the June 30 turnover from the present administration to the next.

While four months will not be enough time to make the changes he has in mind for the DENR, he said it will be enough to make a meaningful change "for the next," like preparing everything for the DENR chief.

Sampulna said he plans to review the organizational structure of the DENR and make some changes. "I want to make sure that the employees who receive their salary from the taxes paid by the people are deserving," he said.

Surprised

"I WAS quite surprised," Sampulna

told the BUSINESSMIRROR. "I wasn't really expecting this," he said.

Sampulna admitted that even him was surprised by the decision of his predecessor to resign.

"I really didn't expect him to resign. He has done a lot in the DENR," he said.

Sampulna said that Cimatu never gave any indication to any one in the agency that he is ailing.

"Maybe because of his background as a soldier, that you won't really notice he is sick," Sampulna said in a mix of English and Filipino.

The last time they talked, however, the DENR chief confided he is "tired."

"Maybe because he was affected by the demise of his wife. You know, he loves her very much," he said.

Sampulna, a forester who joined the then Forestry Bureau in 1977, got his appointment as regular employee under then DENR Secretary Teodoro Q. Peña during the term of President Ferdinand E. Marcos.

Prayer for Cimatu

ENVIRONMENTAL group Greenpeace Philippines expressed surprise at Cimatu's resignation.

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DENR

CONTINUED FROM A10

"We are praying he recovers from his health situation," Greenpeace Philippines Country Director Lea Guerrero said in a statement.

Greenpeace Philippines expressed hope that the new DENR OIC will deliver on the agency's mandates, especially in the areas of climate action, solid waste management, and ensuring safe air quality, among others.

"We also hope that in the next administration, the new president will appoint a DENR chief who is fit and committed to implementing policies that prioritize the well-being of communities over business interests, particularly in the face of the climate and environmental emergency.

This is especially needed, with communities in Visayas and Mindanao still dealing with the aftermath of Typhoon Odette.

"The next six years is a critical period where climate action must be the country's central policy agenda. The climate crisis, compounded by pollution and biodiversity crises, will impact food security, water supply, livelihoods, and people's health—and will undo economic gains and efforts on poverty reduction. The next administration must ensure the DENR will stay true to its mandate to protect the environment and the well-being of all Filipinos," Guerrero said.

Anti-mining advocates under Alyansa Tigil Mina were also surprised by Cimatu's resignation. Jaybee Garganera, national coordinator of ATM, appealed to Sampulna "to listen to mining-affected communities and open the lines for discussion on resolving mining issues and concerns."

Jonathan L. Mayuga



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PHOTOGRAPH BY ROY PELOVELLO FOR THE DAILY TRIBUNE
BIKE enthusiasts enjoy roaming around Harbor Square in Pasay City especially during weekends.

DENR key projects to continue

The program will cover 20 hectares within the Marikina Watershed, which will be distributed under the DENR's Enhanced National Greening Program

Following the resignation of Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu recently, the agency announced that its key projects will still continue, which includes the DENR-Department of National Defense partnership for the installation of a cannon replica along the Roxas Boulevard Baywalk in Manila and the rehabilitation of the Marikina Watershed.

The agency stressed that the completion and inauguration of the Fort Drum Island cannon near the Remedios drainage outfall will be held during the celebration of the Araw ng Kagitingan on 9 April to serve as a physical reminder of the DENR's commitment to rehabilitate Manila Bay.

Fort Drum Island, otherwise known

as El Fraile Island, is one of the four islands located at the mouth of Manila Bay that served as line of defense and protected the capital city from naval invasion by the Spanish and during World War II.

The cannon replica will be 19.04 cubic meters, while the original barrel will be 37 feet and weighs 10 tons. It will stand on a 251.1-cubic meter concrete platform.

Meantime, the DENR-CALABARZON has joined forces with various non-governmental organizations for the rehabilitation of the Marikina Watershed through the use of bamboo planting materials.

The program will cover 20 hectares within the Marikina Watershed, which will be distributed under the DENR's Enhanced National Greening Program.

Rotary International District 3830, the Samahang Kawayan ng Karugo Agri Farmers Association, and the Philippine Bamboo Foundation Inc., and DENR-CALABARZON, led by Executive Director Nilo Tamoria, signed the agreement at the central office in Quezon City last 16 February to provide program partners with bamboo production technology training and good agro-forest practices to establish bamboo social enterprises while raising crops.

The initial phase of the project will establish a nursery, which includes the raising of bamboo planting materials for a period of six to eight months, while the second phase involves the transplanting of grown bamboo planting materials within the 20-hectare land.

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DENR-Calabarzon promotes tree-hugging campaign

By Gemi Formaran

LUCENA CITY— The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) through its Forest Management Bureau has introduced an alternative way of celebrating Valentine's Day.

The initiative dubbed "The Tree Hugging Campaign," which originated with the Chipko Movement in the 1970s, emphasizes the interdependence of humans and the environment.

DENR- Calabarzon Regional Executive Director Nilo B. Tamoria, together with his Assistant Regional Directors, Provincial and Community Environment and Natural Resources Officers, has shown solidarity by hugging native trees in various locations.

The tree-hugging initiative is a five-day campaign, from February 14-18, that aims to promote social, as well as possible health benefits from nurturing our forest and the environment.

It also aims to raise awareness of the tree-hugging movement, as well as introduce an alternative way of spending Valentine's Day.



NURTURING TREES. DENR- Calabarzon Regional Executive Director Nilo B. Tamoria (left) and PENRO- Quezon chief Raymond Rivera lead the tree hugging drive.

Photo by GEMI FORMARAN



Lifting of ban on open pit mining a good start

BY JED MACAPAGAL

LIFTING of ban on open pit mining a good start The lifting of the ban on open pit mining is a good start in generating interest among global players but more help from the government is needed to make them invest in the Philippines, according to Jose Leviste Jr., governor of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (CanCham Philippines).

"Clearly, we could do more... This relaxation of the open pit mining ban is something positive because it will certainly catch the interest of people not only locally but also abroad," Leviste said in a forum hosted by the chamber last week.

Citing studies, Leviste said 30 percent of the country is potentially rich in mineral ores but only 3 percent is covered with rights, claims and leases to mine.

"With this development... what we must do is make it happen. Lobby the government, get the support of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Finance so that we can really proceed and move a little faster on this industry," Leviste added.

The national government recently lifted the open pit mining ban that was first implemented by the DENR in 2017.



Balabag mines in Zamboanga del Sur is operated by Canadian mining firm TVI Resource Developments Philippines Inc.

See LIFTING > Page A2

LIFTING

Last year, it also lifted the moratorium on new mineral agreements between the government and the private sector which was prohibited since 2012.

Earlier, Leviste, as special advisor to the Australia-Philippines Business Council, said other areas of opportunity in the country include mineral exploration, mining equipment

supply, engineering services, specialist software and industry education and training.

The Philippines is the fifth most mineralized country in the world, with the third largest deposits of gold, fourth for copper and fifth for nickel.

The country's mineral resource assets, valued at approximately A\$1.32 trillion, are largely untapped.

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Catholic Church leads protest vs plan to lift mining ban in South Cotabato

Groups warn of impending environmental disasters if open-pit operation is allowed

By Bong S. Sarmiento
@InqNational

DAVAO CITY—The Catholic Church in South Cotabato is once again at the forefront of the fight against the possible lifting of the ban in the province on open-pit mining, the method that will be employed in the controversial Tampakan project, the largest untapped copper-gold minefield in Southeast Asia.

Fr. Jerome Millan, director of the Social Action Center of the Diocese of Marbel, said the local Catholic Church and its multi-sectoral support groups strongly opposed moves to amend the provincial government Environment Code that bans open-pit mining in South Cotabato.

"The lifting of the ban will open our province to all mining methods, including large-scale open-pit mining operations with huge and irreversible impacts to the environment and the communities, not only in our province but also in neighboring provinces and munic-

palities," he said in a statement.

The diocese and its allied groups held a protest on Friday in Tampakan town to express their dismay over the public hearing recently held at the municipal gym geared toward the lifting of the ban provided by the Environment Code, the province's landmark ordinance.

Rene Pamplona, advocacy officer of Convergence of Initiatives for Environment Justice Inc., one of the Church's support groups, said they would consider legal actions if the ban would be lifted.

The provincial board has been deliberating petitions by promising advocates to lift the open-pit mining ban in the Environment Code, which was approved 12 years ago.

Vice Gov. Vicente de Jesus, the provincial board's presiding officer, earlier said they decided to hold the public hearing in bigger venues to accommodate more people to hear the arguments of pro- and anti-mining proponents.

He said the next public forum would be on Feb. 24 in



ROAD TO MINE SITE Sagittarius Mines Inc. funds the road repair leading to its mine site in Barangay Danlag, Tampakan, South Cotabato, as seen in this photo taken on Jan. 16, 2020.

—BONG S. SARMIENTO

Koronadal City, the capital of South Cotabato.

Unconvinced

In August last year, the diocese launched a signature campaign to support its calls against the lifting of the ban on open-pit mining.

The group submitted 93,453 signatures to the provincial board in December last year. But the diocese has yet to receive an

official response on their signature campaign from the provincial board, Millan said.

The petitioners said the provincial board should hold more public hearings in other towns in the province and for the board members to "listen to the voice of the people and ensure that this legislative process is toward protecting the people of the present and the generations to come, and providing all with

a balanced ecology to live in."

Millan said the Tampakan project "failed to convince them that it will bring genuine, sustainable and equitable development to the area."

"It threatens our food supply, watersheds, water sources, the safety and well-being of the people," he added. "[It] disregards environmental regulations. It even increases the risks of disasters due to climate change," he said.

Tribes' consent

Bae Dalena Samling, chief of Danlag Tribal Council backing the Tampakan project, pointed out that the indigenous peoples within the project site had "given their consent" to Sagittarius Mines Inc. (SMI) to mine the area through the certification precondition (CP), which the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples granted in September 2020 to SMI.

The CP is a certification that the indigenous communities have given their consent to the mining venture within their an-

cestral domain and that the free and prior informed consent process has been satisfactorily complied with by the company.

"Let the Tampakan project proceed commercial production," Samling told the Inquirer earlier, noting the mining project's economic benefits not just to tribal members but also to surrounding localities.

The project has the potential to yield an average of 375,000 tons of copper and 360,000 ounces of gold in concentrate per annum in the 17-year-life of the mine, according to a company study.

In 2017, the late Environment Secretary Gina Lopez banned open-pit mining across the country but her directive was lifted in December last year by Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, who resigned recently due to health reasons.

Cimatu's order came eight months after President Duterte signed Executive Order No. 130, lifting the moratorium on new mining agreements to spur economic growth in the country, no



COMMONSENSE

MARICHU A. VILLANUEVA

Too many water bodies while supply runs short



At this early part of the year, while we still enjoy the relatively cooler season, alarm bells have already been raised. It is not the summer period yet in our country. But the specter of our water supply shortage looms with the long dry spell ahead. The summer period normally starts in April in the Philippines. However, the palpable effects of climate change have rendered our country's dry and wet season now unpredictable.

The National Water Resources Board (NWRB) reminded the public to start observing water conservation measures. Closely monitoring the water elevation in various dams across the Philippines, the NWRB advised the public "to ensure that there will be enough water during the dry season."

In fact, **The Philippine Star** splashed a photo in our front page last Friday on the status of water elevation at the La Mesa Dam in Quezon City. Providing for the drinking water needs of the people in the entire National Capital Region (NCR), the water elevation at La Mesa Dam stood that day at 78.78 meters below its normal high-water level of 80.15 meters.

It is quite ironic for Filipinos to live in an archipelagic country surrounded by large bodies of water and yet still suffer the recurring problem of water supply shortage.

Over a breakfast meeting on the same day, Israel ambassador to the Philippines Ilan Fluss pointed to the attention-grabbing photo about the feared water crisis anew here. A half-arid land located in the Middle East, Israel has been known to be self-sufficient in its own water supply primarily with their advanced desalination technology. But according to Amb. Fluss, Israel has also made great strides in the treatment of recycled sewage water.

"Why waste good water for irrigation when treated sewage water can be used?" the Israel ambassador rhetorically asked.

Amb. Fluss disclosed that the Israel Embassy in Manila is putting together a proposal they intend to present before the next Congress of the Philippines to tap into this Israeli treatment technology of sewage water. He noted there are pending bills in the outgoing 18th Congress on a proposed creation of a single body of water authority where this proposal could best fit in for the Philippines.

There are three similar bills pending in various Senate committees. At the House of Representatives, House Bill 9948, or the National Water Act approved by four committees already on Sept. 6 last year but were not tackled at the floor for plenary debate. Both chambers adjourned for the election campaign last Feb. 2 without acting on it.

Aside from La Mesa Dam, the NWRB also supervises the rest of water dams all over the country. Despite the declining water level, the NWRB decided to maintain the current allocation of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) from the Angat Dam in Bulacan. The NWRB earlier urged the public to conserve and use water wisely due to Angat Dam's lower-than-expected water level to ensure that sufficient water is available for municipal irrigation and hydropower uses in the subsequent months.

It is quite ironic for Filipinos to live in an archipelagic country surrounded by large bodies of water and yet still suffer the recurring problem of water supply shortage.

This brings into the picture the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) which is primarily responsible for irrigation development and management as created by Republic Act (RA) 3601 on June 22, 1963. But aside from the NIA, some of the biggest dams in the country are also controlled by the National Power Corp. (NPC) to run these hydro-electric plants.

The primary function of the NWRB was spelled out in the Water Code of the Philippines under Presidential Decree (PD) 1067. This martial law edict signed in 1976 by the late president Ferdinand Marcos amended a previously PD issued in 1974 that first created a National Water Resources Council. Under the Water Code, it provided among others that the utilization, exploitation, development, control, conservation, or protection of water resources shall be subject to the control and regulation of the government through the Council.

Subsequently, the late president Corazon Aquino reorganized the Council when she signed Executive Order No. (EO) 124 in 1987 that renamed and reorganized the Council into NWRB. At the same time, it transferred all its technical functions to a Bureau of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

Fast forward. When president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo took over the government, she issued EO 123 in 2002 that reconstituted the membership of the NWRB and transferred it to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). The NWRB continues to be attached to the DENR up to present as a bureau for purposes of administrative control and supervision. Incidentally, erstwhile DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu resigned last week due to poor health.

As a policy-making, regulatory and quasi-judicial body, the NWRB was mandated by Mrs. Arroyo's EO 860 in 2010 to desist from regulating the water tariffs on all Water Districts. Henceforth, this was given to the Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA) in accordance with PD 198 issued in 1973.

Like the NIA, the LWUA is a government-owned and controlled corporation (GOCC). But LWUA has a specialized lending function mandated by law to promote and oversee the development of water supply systems in provincial cities and municipalities outside of Metro Manila.

For the NCR, it is the MWSS – under the Office of the President – that regulates the two private water concessionaires, Manila Water and the Maynilad Water, in supplying the water needs in Metro Manila.

The NWRB alert on anticipated water supply shortage was based from the forecasts of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA). The weather experts of PAGASA said the La Niña phenomenon, or long rainy period, is still upon us. It was only on Dec. 16 last year when we had the most devastating force of too much water due to typhoon "Odette."

The La Niña phenomenon would only last until March, per PAGASA forecast. Then the El Niño phenomenon, or the long dry spell, will persists for the rest of this year.

With so many government agencies on top of the water situation, who needs summer?



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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES BOARD
8th Floor NIA Bldg., EDSA, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines 1100

LANDGROUP, INC.,
Applicant. Case No. 21-3228

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NOTICE OF HEARING

This is an application for Certificate of Public Convenience to operate and maintain a waterworks system within Nueva Estancia Subdivision, Barangay Santiago, General Trias, Cavite, with the following proposed rates:

PROPOSED TARIFF

Public Tap

Pipe Size	0-5 m3 (min)	6-10 m3	11-20 m3	21-30 m3	31-40 m3	Over 40 m3
1/2"	₱ 228.50	50.20	54.80	63.90	73.10	77.60

Residential and Institutional

Pipe Size	0-5 m3 (min)	6-10 m3	11-20 m3	21-30 m3	31-40 m3	Over 40 m3
1/2"	₱ 239.50	52.50	56.60	74.00	82.60	91.30

Commercial and Industrial

Pipe Size	0-15 m3 (min.)	16-30 m3	31-500 m3	501-1000 m3	Over 1000 m3
1/2"	₱ 1,369.50	114.20	137.00	137.00	137.00

This application will be initially heard by the Board on **14 March 2022**. The hearing will start at **9:00 o' clock in the morning** at the NWRB-WUD Conference Room, 8th Floor, NIA Building, EDSA, Quezon City, at which time applicant shall present its evidence.

At least **fifteen (15) days prior to the scheduled hearing**, applicant shall publish this notice once in a newspaper of general circulation in the province of Cavite and serve by personal delivery or registered mail a copy of the (i) application and its attachments, and (ii) this notice, to all affected parties appearing on page 2 hereof.

Parties opposed to the granting of the application must file their written opposition supported by documentary evidence on or before the above scheduled date of hearing, furnishing a copy of the same to the applicant.

Failure on the part of any person affected to file its opposition on time and to appear at the hearing will be construed as a waiver of their right to be heard. The Board will proceed to hear and decide the application based on the evidence submitted.

Likewise, failure by the applicant to appear at the hearing shall amount to lack of interest on its part and the instant application shall be dismissed accordingly.

Witness the Honorable Executive Director of the National Water Resources Board this 27th day of December 2021.

By Authority of the Board:
Dr. SEVILLO D. DAVID, Jr., CESO III
Executive Director

Affected Parties:

The Secretary Sanguniang Bayan General Trias, Cavite	The Homeowners Assn. President Nueva Estancia Subdivision Barangay Santiago General Trias, Cavite
The Barangay Chairman Barangay Santiago General Trias, Cavite	

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES BOARD
8th Floor NIA Bldg., EDSA, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines 1100

BP WATERWORKS, INC.,
Applicant. Case No. 21-3229

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NOTICE OF HEARING

This is an application for Certificate of Public Convenience to operate and maintain a waterworks system within Deca Homes Meycauayan Subdivision, Barangay Saluysoy, Meycauayan, Bulacan, with the following proposed rates:

PROPOSED TARIFF

Public Tap

Pipe Size	0-5 m3 (min)	6-10 m3	11-20 m3	21-30 m3	31-40 m3	Over 40 m3
1/2"	₱ 184.00	40.40	44.10	51.50	58.80	62.50

Residential and Institutional

Pipe Size	0-5 m3 (min)	6-10 m3	11-20 m3	21-30 m3	31-40 m3	Over 40 m3
1/2"	₱ 193.00	42.30	45.60	59.60	66.60	73.60

Commercial and Industrial

Pipe Size	0-15 m3 (min.)	16-30 m3	31-500 m3	501-1000 m3	Over 1000 m3
1/2"	₱ 1,104.00	92.00	110.30	110.30	110.30

This application will be initially heard by the Board on **14 March 2022**. The hearing will start at **9:00 o' clock in the morning** at the NWRB-WUD Conference Room, 8th Floor, NIA Building, EDSA, Quezon City, at which time applicant shall present its evidence.

At least **fifteen (15) days prior to the scheduled hearing**, applicant shall publish this notice once in a newspaper of general circulation in the province of Bulacan and serve by personal delivery or registered mail a copy of the (i) application and its attachments, and (ii) this notice, to all affected parties appearing on page 2 hereof.

Parties opposed to the granting of the application must file their written opposition supported by documentary evidence on or before the above scheduled date of hearing, furnishing a copy of the same to the applicant.

Failure on the part of any person affected to file its opposition on time and to appear at the hearing will be construed as a waiver of their right to be heard. The Board will proceed to hear and decide the application based on the evidence submitted.

Likewise, failure by the applicant to appear at the hearing shall amount to lack of interest on its part and the instant application shall be dismissed accordingly.

Witness the Honorable Executive Director of the National Water Resources Board this 27th day of December 2021.

By Authority of the Board:
Dr. SEVILLO D. DAVID, Jr., CESO III
Executive Director

Affected Parties:

The Secretary Sanguniang Panlungsod Meycauayan, Bulacan	The Homeowners Assn. President Deca Homes Meycauayan Subdivision Barangay Saluysoy, Meycauayan, Bulacan
The Barangay Chairman Barangay Saluysoy Meycauayan, Bulacan	The General Manager Meycauayan Water District MWD Bldg., Poblacion, City of Meycauayan, Bulacan 3020



PUBLIC NOTICE



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES
CALACA

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office at Calaca, Batangas will accept oral or written bids not later than 10:00 AM on April 29, 2022 for the lease for Industrial Port purposes of the tract of land herein below described:

Location	Brgy. San Rafael, Calaca, Batangas
Description	Miscellaneous Lease Application No. 041007-4
Area	2,483 sqm.
Applied for by	Holcim Mining and Development Corp represented by Nihil S. Panandit

The right to lease the land will be awarded to the person offering the highest annual rental, which shall not be less than three per centum (3%) of the value of land plus one per centum (1%) of the value of the proposed and / or existing improvements. In order that a person may be entitled to participate in a bidding, he must be a qualified public land applicant, and must, before the commencement of the same, make a deposit of equivalent to three (3) months rental. Only deposit in cash, money order treasury warrant, certified checks, cashier's check or manager's check can be accepted. A person bidding in representation of another may do so under a duly executed power of attorney. During the bidding, the bidder has to make an additional deposit every time his bid is raised, to complete the three (3) months rental, otherwise, such bid as raised shall not be accepted. The right is reserved to reject any or all bids.

FEB 15 2022

Date

ISIDRO O. AMATORIO
CENR Officer



TITLE:

10 endemic PHL species victims of Odette's ferocity

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

AT least 10 Philippine species were seen to have been seriously affected by Typhoon Odette (international name Rai) that devastated the Visayas and Mindanao last December, an official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said.

Natividad Y. Bernardino, OIC director of the DENR's Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB), said despite the lack of exact figures on the extent of the damage, "Typhoon Odette has undeniably posed serious damages to wildlife and its habitats."

Odette has severely affected the Siargao Island Protected Landscape and Seascape.

Severely affected

INTERVIEWED via e-mail, Natividad said that while the DENR-BMB is in the process of assessing the damage brought about by the typhoon to all affected areas, she noted that it is apparent that it has caused severe destruction not only to protected areas but also to other important ecosystems in the Visayas and Mindanao.

"Important wildlife species and ecosystems are being monitored by the DENR and its conservation partners. But due to limited resources, there has been no extensive research or study conducted in the country yet regarding the impact of natural calamities to ecosystems and wildlife," she explained.

"Ultimately, just like humans, other living organisms, including wildlife species, are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters," she said.

Severely affected species

THE endemic threatened species that were seen affected by Odette in the Visayas and Mindanao include the Philippine tarsier, one of the world's smallest primates; bird species, such as the Mindanao hornbill, southern rufous hornbill, writhed hornbill, Camiguin hanging parrot, and reptile species, including the Philippine crocodile and sailfin lizard.

Natividad said flying foxes, such as the golden-crowned flying fox and giant fruit bat are also feared to have been severely affected by the devastating typhoon.

It was reported on television news a few days after the typhoon that some residents failed to see tarsiers on trees where they used to perch.

Important species

THE endemic species affected by Odette are considered important because of their uniqueness and the ecosystem function they provide.

Philippine tarsier is one of the tourist attractions in Bohol, the site of the famous Chocolate Hills.

The Mindanao hornbill, southern rufous hornbill and writhed hornbill are endangered species, the same with the Camiguin hanging parrot, because their populations in the wild is dwin-



A RUFIOUS hornbill, a unique bird found on Mount Busa Sarangani LGJ PHOTO



A JUVENILE Philippine crocodile. PHOTO BY GREGG YAN

dling due to habitat loss and hunting and poaching.

The Philippine crocodile, specifically the *Crocodylus mindorensis*, is endemic to the Philippines. It is also on the brink of extinction due to habitat loss and hunting.

The population of the sailfin lizard is declining due to the same reasons. They are hunted by illegal wildlife traders for the multi-billion-peso illegal pet trade.

Considered as keystone species, the importance of the golden-

crowned flying fox and giant fruit bat can never be overemphasized. They are considered as the forest's natural farmers, because their droppings, that include seeds of the fruits they eat, enhance forest vegetation, plus the bonus of the natural fertilizer their feces bring to forests.

Vulnerable protected areas

NATIVIDAD said the protected areas and the wildlife species they host are vulnerable to natural calamities or extreme



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THE Philippine tarsier is one of the world's smallest primates. This tarsier from Bohol province is about 5 inches long, with a tail longer than its body. WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

weather events.

Natural calamities are considered serious threats and detrimental to the biodiversity of the country's protected areas because of the damages that they may cause to the important and unique ecosystems and wildlife in the areas.

The DENR-BMB, she said, has been actively involved in conducting assessment in affected protected areas after the occurrence of devastating natural calamities to determine the extent of the damage to its ecosystem, flora and fauna species and the communities that are dependent on them.

DENR, BMB monitoring activities

"A NOTABLE initiative of the DENR-BMB in the assessment of a protected area after a natural calamity was when a destructive phreatomagmatic eruption of Taal Volcano in January 2020 that greatly damaged a huge part of the Taal Volcano Protected Landscape," she said.

"Unfortunately, the assessment activity was halted when Covid-19 pandemic hit the country in early 2020 [starting in March]," she pointed out.

Natividad said the DENR-BMB has been involved in

similar activities before.

After the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses (international name Vamco) in the latter part of 2020, she said, the Environment department created a composite team represented by the DENR Calabarzon, Bicol Region, Central Luzon and Regional Offices of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, Environmental Management Bureau and the DOST-BMB to monitor, evaluate and recommend appropriate measures to be undertaken for the recovery of affected legislated and proclaimed protected areas in Cagayan, Marikina and Bicol River Basin.

"The initiatives of the DENR is in line with the issuance of Executive Order 120, or the 'Strengthening Rehabilitation and Recovery Efforts in the Typhoon-hit Areas through the Creation of Build Back Better Task Force,'" she said.

The DENR, she said, is focused on the key areas that focus on intensified water management.

The objective is primarily focused on the enhancement of existing forest cover, easement recovery and riverbank stabilization, establishment of series of check dams and gabions, intensification of forest protection, she noted.



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Turtle hatchlings released

BY JONAS REYES

BOTOLAN, Zambales – A total of 90 Olive Ridley sea turtle hatchlings were released at the coastal area of this town on Saturday.

The release of the turtles (scientific name: *Lepidochelys Olivacea*) was made possible by the Pawikan Project, MEAD Foundation, and Sundowners in partnership with City Environment & Natural Resources Office Masinloc, officials from the Zambales Maritime Police, local government units, volunteers, beachgoers, and members of the community.

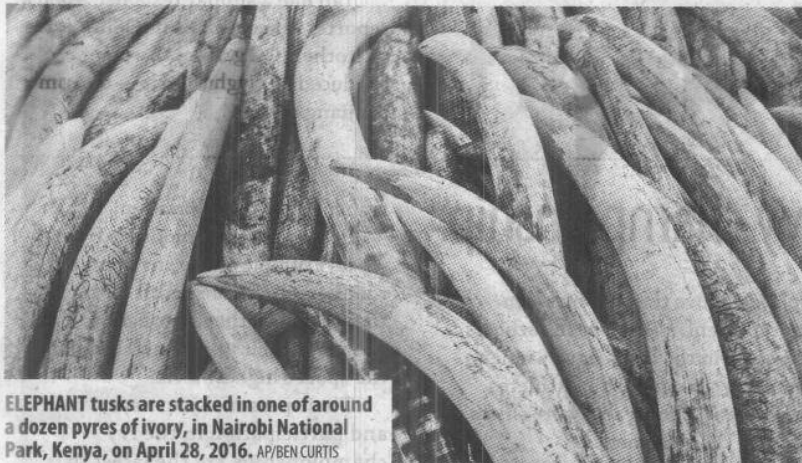
The Department of Environment and Natural Resources Zambales encourages the conservation of marine resources. It also seeks the communities' help to report illegal activities that endanger marine turtles and their nesting grounds.



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ELEPHANT tusks are stacked in one of around a dozen pyres of ivory, in Nairobi National Park, Kenya, on April 28, 2016. AP/BEN CURTIS

DNA analysis of elephant ivory reveals trafficking networks

WASHINGTON—As few as three major criminal groups are responsible for smuggling the vast majority of elephant ivory tusks out of Africa, according to a new study.

Researchers used analysis of DNA from seized elephant tusks and evidence, such as phone records, license plates, financial records and shipping documents to map trafficking operations across the continent and better understand who was behind the crimes.

The study was published last week in the journal *Nature Human Behavior*.

"When you have the genetic analysis and other data, you can finally begin to understand the illicit supply chain—that's absolutely key to countering these networks," said Louise Shelley, who researches illegal trade at George Mason University and was not involved in the research.

Conservation biologist Samuel Wasser, a study co-author, hopes the findings will help law enforcement officials target the leaders of these networks instead of

low-level poachers who are easily replaced by criminal organizations.

"If you can stop the trade where the ivory is being consolidated and exported out of the country, those are really the key players," said Wasser, who co-directs the Center for Environmental Forensic Science at the University of Washington.

Africa's elephant population is fast dwindling. From around 5 million elephants a century ago to 1.3 million in 1979, the total number of elephants in Africa is now estimated to be reduced to around 415,000.

A 1989 ban on international commercial ivory trade hasn't stopped the decline. Each year, an estimated 1.1 million pounds (500 metric tons) of poached elephant tusks are shipped from Africa, mostly to Asia.

For the past two decades, Wasser has fixated on a few key questions: "Where is most of the ivory being poached, who is moving it, and how many people are they?"

He works with wildlife authorities in

Kenya, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia and elsewhere, who contact him after they intercept ivory shipments.

He flies to the countries to take small samples of tusks to analyze the DNA. He has now amassed samples from the tusks of more than 4,300 elephants trafficked out of Africa between 1995 and today.

"That's an amazing, remarkable data set," said Princeton University biologist Robert Pringle, who was not involved in the study. With such data, "it becomes possible to spot connections and make strong inferences," he said.

In 2004, Wasser demonstrated that DNA from elephant tusks and dung could be used to pinpoint their home location to within a few hundred miles.

In 2018, he recognized that finding identical DNA in tusks from two different ivory seizures meant they were harvested from the same animal—and likely trafficked by the same poaching network.

The new research expands that approach to identify DNA belonging to elephant parents and offspring, as well as siblings—and led to the discovery that only a very few criminal groups are behind most of the ivory trafficking in Africa.

Because female elephants remain in the same family group their whole life, and most males don't travel too far from their family herd, the researchers hypothesize that tusks from close family members are likely to have been poached at the same time, or by the same operators.

Such genetic links can provide a blueprint for wildlife authorities seeking other evidence—cell phone records, license plates, shipping documents and financial statements—to link different ivory shipments.

Previously when an ivory shipment was intercepted, the one seizure wouldn't allow authorities to identify the organization behind the crime, said Special Agent John Brown III of the Office of Homeland Security Investigations, who has worked on environmental crimes for 25 years. **AP**



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PROTEST FUN Artists in Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental province, show their creativity during a protest against a proposed 174-hectare reclamation project in this photo taken in July 2021. They wore handmade headpieces, depicting the different species of marine animals found in the waters off Dumaguete. —PHOTO COURTESY OF HERSLEY VEN CASERO

SPECIAL REPORT

By Ador Vincent Mayol
and Connie Fernandez-Brojan
@inquirervisayas

(Last of two parts)

CEBU CITY—For many local governments around the country, reclamation projects can be their ticket to economic progress.

According to lawyer Janilo Rubiato, Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) general manager and chief executive officer, more than a hundred local governments around the country have expressed their intent to undertake reclamation activities to expand areas that can be developed into new business hubs.

Only a few, however, have complied with the requirements, like securing an environmental compliance certificate and an area clearance from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

"Generally, local governments pursue their reclamation projects to provide sustainable development in their areas. As an economic driver, they aim to reclaim in order to trigger growth of the local economy and for expansions of business and residential areas within their jurisdiction," said Rubiato in a statement sent to the Inquirer.

"For some local governments, reclamation activities are intended for coastal protection as mitigating measures against natural disasters," he added.

A bigger land area also means higher internal revenue allotment (IRA), or the local government's share of revenues from the national government.

"By expanding their land area [through reclamation], their IRA will also increase," said lawyer Rose-Liza Eisma-Osorio, legal and policy director of Oceana Philippines, a nonprofit ocean conservation organization.

No surprise

It does not come as a surprise that local governments look at reclamation projects as key to economic progress, regardless the cost.

Take for instance the proposed projects in Consolacion town and Toledo City in Cebu province and Dumaguete City in Negros Oriental province.

Dumaguete Mayor Felipe Remollo believes the 174-hectare, P23-billion reclamation project, dubbed as "Smart City," will bring a bustling economy to an otherwise sleepy city with an annual income of P500 million.

The project is envisioned to be a mixed-use commercial and residential area featuring shopping malls, condominiums, hospitals, business hubs and a docking port for a planned yacht club, among others.

Consolacion Mayor Joannes Alegado also has the same vision for his 235.8-ha reclamation project, called "Seafrost City," that will be for industrial, commercial, tourism, residential and institutional use.

In Toledo City, also in Cebu, the local government wants to build an 11.76-

stands to gain from the projects once completed, based on the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Executive Order No. 74.

"For projects initiated by LGUs (local government units) and NGAs/GOCCs (national government agencies or government-owned or -controlled corporations), the government share in the reclaimed land shall in no case be less than 51 percent, inclusive of roads and open spaces, provided that the PRA shall be entitled to 60 percent of the government share in the saleable area," the IRR states.

EO 74, signed by President Duterte on Feb. 1, 2019, transferred the power to approve reclamation projects from the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) to the PRA. It repealed Executive Order No. 146

signed in 2013, which gave the Neda the power to approve reclamation projects and reduced PRA's authority to mere recommendatory.

But under EO 74, Neda is just one of three agencies whose "advisory opinions" will be sought to guide the PRA in evaluating and approving proposed projects. The two others are the Department of Finance and the DENR.

According to Eisma-Osorio, the purpose of EO 74 is to fast-track and rationalize approval process for reclamation projects based on the government's "ease of doing business" principle and for the purpose of "increasing competitiveness."

Asked if the approval process was indeed faster, Eisma-Osorio replied: "We're verifying *pa* [because] what we have in our data is the number of applications only and there are no dates

to show when most of these started and when they were approved."

ha reclamation project to host malls, a water treatment facility and other commercial spaces that will generate jobs and income for residents.

These projects, however, face opposition, not just from environmentalists who raise concern over their impact on the environment, but also from community members expected to be displaced, among them fishermen.

Gov't gain

Oceana particularly pointed out the project in Toledo, which will affect Tañon Strait, a protected seascape that is an important migration corridor and habitat for marine mammals, said lawyer Gloria Estenzo Ramos, the group's vice president.

Aside from the local government and the developer, the PRA also



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Better planning

Gordon Alan Joseph, chair of the infrastructure development and power subcommittees of the Regional Development Council in Central Visayas, urged local governments wanting to pursue reclamation projects to study their plans well.

He said any dump-and-fill project should be backed up with concrete plans and environmental impact studies before implementing it.

"Reclamation projects and the reasons for these projects need to be studied carefully. Why exactly is a particular reclamation project being proposed? I am not against reclamation projects per se. I am against poorly planned, poorly executed and unnecessary projects," he told the Inquirer over Facebook Messenger.

Joseph cited as an example South Road Properties (SRP), which was built three decades ago but still not fully used by the Cebu City government.

SRP is a 300-hectare reclaimed property owned by the city government. It was developed through a loan acquired by the city government from the Japan International Cooperation Agency in the 1990s.

"The SRP started out as a modern urban center and ended up draining the city's coffers for well over a decade and that until today, has no plans for evolving into a world-class, modern, smart urban center. It's just another place to build buildings," Joseph said.

Joseph lamented the government's lack of planning and foresight that leads to what he called as disorganized systems.

"Our towns and cities are poorly planned, poorly zoned and for the most part have yet to be managed using the best practices of the most livable and competitive cities and towns in the world. It feels like all we do is react, without solving the root causes of the problems we have: traffic, flooding, pollution, garbage, sewage, water, and so on and so forth. Sometimes we don't even react and the problems [worsen]," he said.

"I really do not see any significant initiatives to fix existing problems. All I see are the same, old *kanya-kanya* (individualistic) methods that have done nothing to modernize our towns and cities," he added.

Joseph, president of Cebu Business Club, believes reclamation projects are not what is needed at this point.

"What is interesting is that there are so many LGUs [that] want reclamation projects. Are they necessary? I really don't think so and I would prefer focusing on solving the urban problems we face ... before investing in a massive project that may take decades to achieve return of investment," he said.

"Let's fix what land assets we have first. Let's fix our terrible urban problems first. Our last hope is that this ... would be designed as a green, world-class project, and not just another unplanned landfill," he added. INQ



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RECLAMATION PROJECTS: BOOM OR BUST?



DIVINE INTERVENTION Even the clergy is against the Dumaguete reclamation project. In September last year, Bishop Julito Cortes braved the rains to join a penitential walk. —PHOTO COURTESY OF MELISSA PAL



WORKERS' VOICE Workers of a shipyard company stage a protest in October last year against a reclamation project in Consolacion, Cebu province, that is feared to shut down nine shipyards operating in the town. —PHOTO COURTESY OF EDWARD LIGAS



FAMILY CONCERNS Children of fisherfolk affected by a reclamation project in Consolacion, Cebu, join protests as they share their families' concern about displacement and loss of livelihood. —CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



UNDER THE SEA In November 2021, divers scoured the waters off Minglanilla, Cebu, and discovered large corals and rich marine life in the general area where a reclamation project would be implemented. —PHOTO COURTESY OF OCEANA PHILIPPINES



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Education key to better ocean protection



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF UN

Education needs to be one of the key pillars for action by countries across the world to better protect the seas and oceans from damaging climate change, the head of the United Nations Scientific, Educational and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) said.

"If we want to protect the ocean better, we must teach it better," Audrey Azoulay, UNESCO's Director-General, said, as she spoke at the One Ocean Summit, which took place in the French city of Brest.

Setting it as a common objective for UNESCO's 193 memberstates, she asked them to include ocean education in school curricula by 2025.

To achieve the goal, the UN agency is making available to public decision-makers a toolkit with a shared reference framework of educational content on the subject.

Ocean education should not only involve the transmission of scientific knowledge and awareness of contemporary issues; it should also promote traditional skills and knowledge.

The step will allow all countries to be in an "equal position to quickly place the ocean at the heart of teaching and increase students' knowledge in this area, so that they become responsible and committed citizens," Stefania Giannini, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General in charge of education, added.

Tools and good practices

The new educational tools UNESCO provided reflect the conviction the way society interacts with the ocean needs to change in order to achieve a more sustainable model.

In its reference tool, UNESCO highlights the good practices of member-states already working on ocean education, such as Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Kenya, Portugal and Sweden.

The results achieved by these countries have been presented by the agency in the form of case studies, as well as the opportunities and challenges met when seeking to include ocean knowledge in a structured way in the curriculum.



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Traditional skills and knowledge

"Ocean education should not only involve the transmission of scientific knowledge and awareness of contemporary issues; it should also promote traditional skills and knowledge, such as those protected by the 2003 Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage, which promotes ancestral fishing techniques, for example," UNESCO reiterated in its statement.

The new toolkit leaves it to member-states and regions to adapt the "theory of change" to their specific practices, situations and needs.

The agency aims to monitor the implementation of this objective by its 193 member-states, with a first progress report planned for COP27, which will be held in November 2022 in Egypt.

UNESCO and the ocean
UNESCO is leading the United Nations

Decade of Ocean Sciences for Sustainable Development (2021 to 2030), which this year will see the organization of several major international summits to promote ocean health.

At the same time, UNESCO has launched a campaign to empower concerned citizens to join the Generation Ocean global movement.

The idea is to use transformative storytelling to connect citizens with more knowledge and drive to restore, protect and live better with the ocean.

Later this year, Portugal will be hosting the UN Ocean Conference, which will seek to propel much needed science-based innovative solutions aimed at starting a new chapter of global ocean action.

Pledge to map the seabed

During the One Ocean Summit, UNESCO also pledged to have at least 80 percent of the seabed mapped by 2030, up from the current figure of just 20 percent.

Fully understanding the depth and relief of the fragile seabed worldwide is essential to better protect the ocean, the agency said.

That knowledge is critical to understand the location of ocean faults, the workings of ocean currents and tides, and the transport of sediments.

Such data would help protect populations as seismic and tsunami risks are assessed to identify natural sites that need to be safeguarded and fishing resources for sustainable exploitation. They also have a major role to play in assessing the future effects of climate change, whether it be temperature increases or sea level rise.

Goal with an action plan

Azoulay called for efforts to be stepped up by mobilizing the 150 member-states of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) and the private sector.

According to IOC experts, the total funding requirement for the project stands at \$5 billion, and will be one of the legacies of the UN Decade of the Oceans.



World must protect seas from climate crisis

The planet is facing the triple crises of climate disruption, biodiversity loss and pollution, United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres told the recent One Ocean Summit, warning that “the ocean shoulders much of the burden.”

As the ocean serves as a giant carbon and heat sink, it is growing warmer and more acidic, causing its ecosystems to suffer.

“Polar ice is melting and global weather patterns are changing,” the UN chief said in his video message to the conference, which took place in the northern French coastal city of Brest.

Ripple effect

The communities who rely on the ocean are hurting as well. He added, “More than three billion people depend on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods.”

He painted a grim picture of dwindling marine species, dying coral reefs and coastal ecosystems turned into “vast dead zones,” as they serve as dumping grounds for sewage, and nutrients and seas choked by plastic waste.

Moreover, fish stocks are being threatened by over and destructive fishing

practices, along with illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

“We must change tack,” Guterres underscored.

Adhering to the law

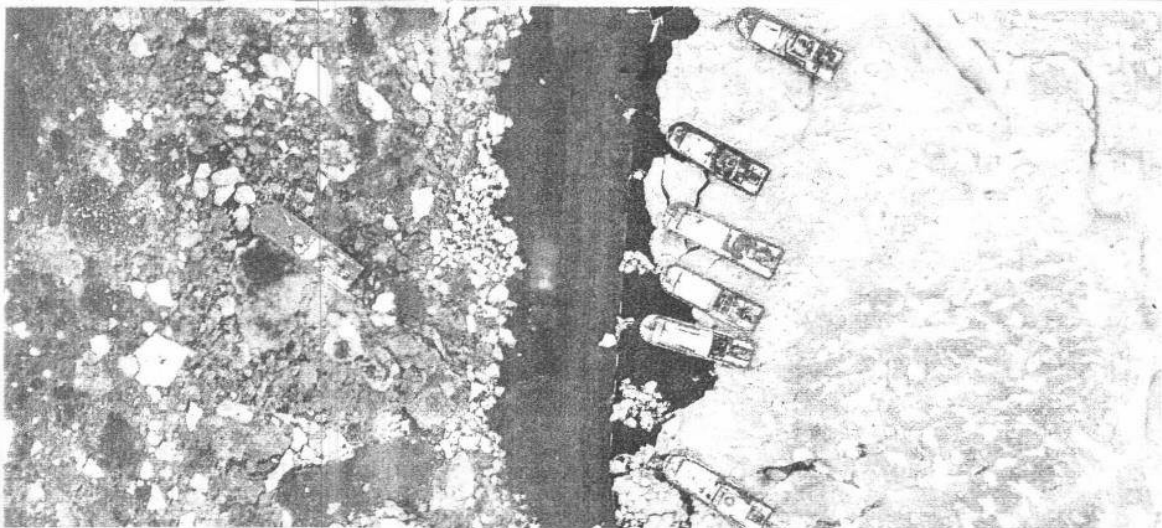
It is 40 years since the signing of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. “The importance of legal certainty in the ocean is paramount” the UN chief said.

He upheld the second UN Ocean Conference, which will be held in Lisbon from 27 June to 1 July this year, is “an opportunity to cement the role of the ocean” in global efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and implement the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Blue economy

The UN chief stressed intensified efforts must be made to protect the ocean, saying that a “sustainable blue economy can drive economic progress and job creation,” while protecting climate.

“We need more and more effective partnerships to address land-based sources of marine pollution... urgency in the deployment of offshore renewable energy, which can provide clean power and employment, and... (less) fossil fuels in the ocean economy,” he said.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF WMO

WARMER temperatures mean melting sea ice, increasing ocean temperatures, and warmer water — affecting ecosystems and global weather patterns.

21 FEBRUARY 2022, MONDAY



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DOH logs 1.7K new Covid-19 cases, 3.6K new recoveries

By Ma. Teresa Montemayor [February 20, 2022, 5:12 pm](#)



File photo

MANILA – The Department of Health on Sunday logged 1,712 new cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19), pushing the nation's overall tally to 3,652,203.

This record is just 89 cases higher than the lowest number of daily infections since Dec. 30, 2021 at 1,623.

The latest Covid-19 bulletin indicated 60,532 active cases while total recoveries rose to 3,538,987 after 3,686 new recovered cases were recorded.

Out of the active cases, 55,102 are mild, 2,848 are moderate, 856 are asymptomatic, 1,421 are severe, and 305 are critical.

“Of the 1,712 reported cases today, 1,611 (94 percent) occurred within the recent 14 days -- Feb. 7 to 20, 2022,” the DOH reported.

The regions with the most cases in the recent two weeks were the National Capital Region (NCR) with 316 or 20 percent, Calabarzon with 221 or 14 percent, and Western Visayas with 180 or 11 percent of the new infections.

The death toll has reached 55,684 with 77 new deaths, representing 1.52 percent of overall cases.

“Of the 77 deaths, 51 occurred in February 2022 (66 percent), 20 in January 2022 (26 percent), 3 in October 2021 (4 percent), and 3 in September 2021 (4 percent) due to the late encoding of death information to COVIDKaya,” the DOH said.

COVIDKaya is a digital application used by healthcare workers to collect and share data about Covid-19 cases.

According to the February 18 data, about 8.8 percent of 28,500 who were tested turned out positive for coronavirus.

“Some 257 duplicates were removed from the total case count as 246 of these are recoveries and one is a death,” the DOH said.

Meanwhile, 61 cases previously tagged as recoveries were reclassified as deaths after validation.

All laboratories were operational on February 18 but three were not able to submit their data to the Covid-19 Document Repository System.



The DOH said the three laboratories contributed, on average, 0.7 percent of samples tested, and 0.5 percent among positive individuals based on data in the past 14 days.

To date, 30 percent of 3,800 intensive care unit (ICU) beds, 26 percent of 20,500 isolation beds, 20 percent of 14,500 ward beds, and 15 percent of 2,100 ventilators are used by patients with Covid-19 nationwide.

In the NCR, 27 percent of 1,200 ICU beds, 23 percent of 4,500 isolation beds, 26 percent of 4,100 ward beds, and 17 percent of 1,000 ventilators dedicated to patients with Covid-19 are in use. **(PNA)**



#OneDENR

**Covid-19
Situation and Response**



DOH COVID-19 CASE BULLETIN # 708

PEBRERO 20, 2022

Para sa kumpletong detalye at impormasyon,
bisitahin lamang ang aming pampublikong site:
<https://ncovtracker.doh.gov.ph/>

PORSYENTO NG AKTIBONG KASO

1.7%

TOTAL NG AKTIBONG KASO
60,532

PORSYENTO NG GUMALING

96.8%

TOTAL NG GUMALING
3,535,987

PORSYENTO NG NAMATAY

1.52%

TOTAL NG NAMATAY
55,684

MGA BAGONG KASO **1,712**

MGA BAGONG GUMALING **3,686**

MGA BAGONG NAMATAY **77**

KABUANG BILANG NG KASO **3,652,203**

MGA NAGPOSITIBO HULING PEBRERO 18

DATOS NGAYONG PEBRERO 20
AYON SA REPORTS NOONG PEBRERO 18

8.8%

PORSYENTO NG MGA
NAGPOSITIBO

28,500

BILANG NG
TINEST

HALOS
92.4%
ANG MILD AT
ASYMPTOMATIC
NA KASO!

**SANITIZE ANG
KAMAY AT IWASAN
ANG KULOB NA LUGAR**

KABUANG PILIPINAS

PUNO NA BA ANG ATING MGA OSPITAL?

ICU BEDS (3.8K TOTAL BEDS)
30% Utilized

ISOLATION BEDS (20.5K TOTAL BEDS)
26% Utilized

WARD BEDS (14.5K TOTAL BEDS)
20% Utilized

VENTILATORS (3.1K TOTAL VENTILATORS)
15% Utilized

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

PUNO NA BA ANG ATING MGA OSPITAL?

ICU BEDS (1.2K TOTAL BEDS)
27% Utilized

ISOLATION BEDS (4.6K TOTAL BEDS)
23% Utilized

WARD BEDS (4.1K TOTAL BEDS)
26% Utilized

VENTILATORS (1.0K TOTAL VENTILATORS)
17% Utilized

KALAGAYAN NG MGA AKTIBONG KASO

856 Asymptomatic

55,102 Mild

2,848 Moderate

1,421 Severe

305 Critical

DOH HOSPITAL HOTLINES

For health concerns and emergencies, you may access
here the DOH hospital hotlines across the country:

bit.ly/DOHHospitalHotlines

DOH ONE HOSPITAL COMMAND CENTER (OHCC) HOTLINES

• 1555 • 0915-777-7777
• 02-886-505-00 • 0919-977-3333

bit.ly/OHCCHotline

DOH TELEMEDICINE CONTACT DETAILS

bit.ly/DOHTelemedicine

SeeYouDoc

✉ seeyoudoc.com
🗨 SeeYouDoc

KonsultaMD

✉ konsulta.md
🗨 KonsultaMD

CloudPx

✉ cloudpx.ph/

Telimed and Medgate

✉ medgate.ph/shop/telimedplan/purchase

MedCheck

✉ medcheck.com.ph/find-a-doctor/SeeYouDoc

TelAventusMD

✉ TelAventusMD@aventusmedical.com.ph
🗨 TelAventusMD

HealthNow

🌐 healthnow.ph/
✉ help@healthnow.ph
🗨 HealthNow



Manatiling ligtas!

I-download ang StaySafe App
o gamitin ang WEBAPP
at pumunta sa Staysafe.ph



Walang internet or load?
Report via SMS

2158-5779 (for Globe users)
225-655-779 (for other users)



May tanong ukol sa COVID-19?
I-chat na si KIRA!

VIBER: Kira Kontra COVID by DOH
MESSENGER: Department of Health PH
KONTRACOVDPH: kontracovid.ph

MAYROON PANG KATANUNGAN? SUMANGGUNI LAMANG SA SUMUSUNOD:

[OfficialDOHgov](https://www.facebook.com/OfficialDOHgov)

[@DOHgovph](https://twitter.com/DOHgovph)

[doh.gov.ph](https://www.doh.gov.ph)

[02\) 894-COVID / 1555](tel:02894COVID)

21 FEBRUARY 2022, MONDAY



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

VLOGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Please click this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=60Q35xhqBZA>

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maraming salamat po, keep safe everyone

#SaveManilaBay

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MANILA

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#dolomitesand

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Miz July

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[#SaveManilaBay](#)

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SeEZ-RZku1U>

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#MANILABAY

#SAVEMANILABAY

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