

24 AUGUST 2022, WEDNESDAY



NEWS ALERTS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service
SUMMARY OF NEWS ALERTS
24 AUGUST 2022

TOP STORIES

- I. **2 dead, hundreds flee as 'Florita' lashes Luzon (Philippine Daily Inquirer, A11)**
'Florita' pounds Northern Luzon (Daily Tribune, A1 & A6)
Mga opisina, iskul kinandado kay 'Florita' (Abante, 2)
Marikina River rises due to Florita (Philippine Star, 5)
Malawakang pagbaha sa MM, naitala; coding, suspindido (Pilipino Star Ngayon, 8)
Pasok sa klase, gov't offices sa NCR, 6 probinsya suspindido (Pilipino Star Ngayon, 2)
Residente sa Cagayan Valley binakwit (Abante Tonight, 2)
TS Florita slightly weakens; Signal no. 3 up in Ilocos Norte (Manila Bulletin, 1 & 7)
Army HADR units deployed (Business Mirror, A3)
Palace suspends govt work, classes in NCR, 6 provinces due to 'Florita' (Business Mirror, A3)
'Florita' disrupts work, suspends classes (Manila Times, 1)
2 dam nagbabadyan umapaw (Abante, 3)

Tropical Storm 'Florita' made landfall over Maconacon, Isabela and affected several Northern Luzon Provinces. 14 barangays in Cagayan Valley were greatly hit, prompting the swift evacuation of residents. Classes and government work were suspended in NCR and 6 other provinces. Water level of the Marikina River reached its first alarm yesterday due to the heavy rains brought by the tropical storm.

- II. **Wrestling the plastic monster** (Column by Ben Krits, 1st of 3 parts, The Manila Times, A1)

Presents a comprehensive look into government's strides to address plastic pollutants, and situates gains made within the global context through specific programs such as the 2012-2020 National Solid Waste Management Strategy, National Action Plan for Marine Litter and the recent passage into law of the Extended Producer Responsibility Act (RA 11898).

- III. **A step back in our climate change effort** (Column, "The Oracle Corner" by Andrew Masigan, The Phil. Star, 7)

Underscores the dire repercussions to PHL's efforts, including that of the global campaign, on climate resilience and against green house gases of a recent US Supreme Court ruling that removes from the US Environmental Protection

Agency its authority to regulate emissions from fossil fuel power plants and facilitate US' transitioning to renewable energy sources.

Masigan paints a partisan slant in reaching said decision which, he argues, should be devoid of political expediencies favorable to a particular faction within the US republican party known for its ravid conservatism and business-as-usual agenda vis-a-vis climate change.

IV. **PCSD sounds the alarm** (Column, "Maroon Blooded" by Jose Bayani Baylon, Malaya Business Insight, 5)

On the main drivers of forest loss in Palawan as cited by Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Council executive director Jose Matta , namely agricultural expansion, human settlement and urbanization in his presentation at the Palawan Planning Summit (Aug. 17-19).

The author stresses Matta's call on Palawan's provincial, city and town , Governor Dennis Socrates in particular, to give reforestation a prominent place in their respective development plans.

V. **Compel barangays to collect rainwater** (Column, "Gotcha" by Jaruis Bondoc, The Phil. Star, 7)

On the advantages/benefits that can be had if the Rainwater Collector and Springs Development Act of 1989 (RA 6716) which "hardly any has complied" except for a few such as former Bataan Rep. Feliciano Payumo and Atty. Tony Oposa.


The article laments the insistence of the Mines and Geosciences on the inevitability of flooding in certain areas in the Marikina Valley, Rizal province and Quezon City on which the authors agrees, but notes that quarrying operations in the Marikina Watershed "worsen and hasten the floods."

Submitted by:



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Editor
Robert Jaworski L. Abala



THEY'RE SAFE Farmers in the City of Ilogan in Isabela province are glad their work animals are safe while they wait for relief from riverside communities hit by floods as Severe Tropical Storm "F" (international name, Mirant) batters northern Luzon on Tuesday. —VILLAMOR VISAYA/AG.



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2 dead, hundreds flee as 'Florita' lashes Luzon

More than 600 people in Cagayan Valley, Cordillera evacuated; local execs suspend classes in north, central and south Luzon

By Villamor Visaya Jr.
@VillVisayaJrINQ

NAGUILIAN, ISABELA—A passenger bus skidded off a slippery road here before crashing into an electric post and landing on its side, killing two people and injuring six others during the onslaught of Severe Tropical Storm "Florita" (international name: Ma-on) on Tuesday.

Police Maj. Junnell Perez, Naguilian police chief, said the bus came from Tuguegarao City and was heading to Metro Manila when it tipped over, narrowly missing a roadside house in Barangay San Manuel around 11 a.m.

In an interview, Perez identified the fatalities as Oliver Corpuz and his wife Myrna, both from Diffun town, Quirino province. The driver, conductor and four other passengers were taken to a hospital.

Florita dumped heavy rains in most parts of Luzon, displacing at least 150 families (500 people) in Cagayan province.

The heavy rainfall triggered widespread flooding in at least 10 low-lying villages in Cagayan, according to the regional office of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

Rogello Sending Jr., Cagayan provincial information officer, said the displaced families were from the towns of Baggao, Gonzaga, Gattaran, Lal-lo and Iguig.

He said strong winds uprooted trees in Tuguegarao and toppled power lines, cutting off the supply of electricity to 15 of 28 towns in Cagayan.

At least 76 residents in low-lying areas in Isabela's coastal town of Divilacan sought refuge in temporary shelters due to the threat of flooding, according to Constan- te Foronda, Isabela provincial



IMPASSABLE The Baculod overflow bridge in the City of Ilagan, Isabela province, is rendered impassable on Tuesday as water level in Pinacanauan River rises due to heavy rain dumped by Severe Tropical Storm "Florita." —VILLAMOR VISAYA JR.

disaster risk reduction and management officer.

Flooding in the City of Ilagan rendered the Baculod Bridge impassable.

Landfall

Florita made landfall in the vicinity of Maconacon town in Isabela at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa). (See related story on Page A10)

Tropical Cyclone Wind Signal No. 3 was hoisted over mainland Cagayan, the northeastern portion of Isabela, the northern portion of Ilocos Norte, Apayao and the southern portion of Babuyan Islands as of 2 p.m. on Tuesday.

Mark Timbal, spokesperson for the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), advised those who have leisure travel plans in storm-affected areas to postpone their trips.

"Some local government units might close some roads as a precautionary measure to avoid accidents, especially

in areas prone to flooding and landslides," Timbal said.

The Philippine Army said it mobilized its 5th Infantry Division based in Isabela for disaster response in Cagayan and Apayao, while its ready reserve units in the region were on alert.

The NDRRMC has around P848 million funds on standby for storm victims as part of the quick response fund, while some 480,000 family food packs worth P283 million are on the stockpile.

In the Cordillera, 29 families (116 people) in Abra and Mountain Province sought refuge in various evacuation centers due to the threat of flash floods and landslides, reports from DSWD in the region showed.

Classes suspended

Classes at all levels, both in public and private schools, were suspended in Cagayan and Isabela.

In Dagupan City, the elementary schools in the villages of Malued, Bacayao Sur, Carael, Calmay and Lomboy were also submerged in floodwater, ac-

ording to Aguedo Fernandez, city schools superintendent.

Classes at all school levels in Dagupan were suspended on Tuesday due to the flooding that was worsened by the high tide, inundating the city's central business district.

In Pampanga province, high tide, monsoon rains and water draining from the upper Pampanga River flooded 26 villages in Masantol town and eight villages in Macabebe town, the provincial disaster risk reduction and management council said.

Floodwater was up to 1.52 meters (5 feet) high in Macabebe's Barangay Tacasan, San Gabriel and San Esteban.

As of 1 p.m. on Tuesday, classes at all levels in public and private schools were suspended in Pampanga's 16 towns and two cities.

Water from the Pampanga River overtopped the banks and spilled into riverside areas in Zaragoza, Nueva Ecija, and in Candaba and Apalit, Pampanga, according to the Pampanga River Flood Forecasting Center.

Classes were also suspended in the provinces of Zambales, Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Aurora, Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur due to incessant rain.

In Southern Luzon, classes in public and private schools in Camarines Sur, Camrines Norte and Albay provinces in Bicol region and Quezon and Laguna provinces in Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon) region were suspended on Tuesday. —WITH REPORTS FROM FRANCES MANGOSING, YOLANDA BOTELO, KIMBERLIE QUITASOL, TONETTE OREJAS, JOANNA ROSE AGLIBOT, GREG REFRACTION, JUN MALLIG, CARMELA REYES-ESTROPE, ARMAND GALANG, JOHN MICHAEL MUGAS, MA. APRIL MIER-MANJARRES AND DELFIN T. MALLARI JR. INQ



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'Florita' pounds Northern Luzon

BY LADE KABAGANI, ALVIN MURCIA
AND ALLWIN QUITASOL

Tropical storm "Florita" pounded Northern Luzon on Tuesday, bringing rains to much of the main island, forcing the suspension of work and classes and inducing landslides in Ilocos and Bicol.

Turn to page A6

'Florita' pounds Northern Luzon

'Florita' was moving generally northwestward and was forecast to traverse the northern portion of Isabela and mainland Cagayan. It is expected to exit the Philippine Area of Responsibility on Wednesday

From page 1

The storm, packing maximum sustained winds of 110 kilometers per hour near the center and gustiness of up to 150 km/hour, made landfall over Maconacon, Isabela early in the morning.

"Florita" was moving generally northwestward and was forecast to traverse the northern portion of Isabela and mainland Cagayan. It is expected to exit the Philippine Area of Responsibility on Wednesday.

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council reported that 15 areas in Ilocos were underwater while at least three roads and one bridge remained unpassable in Bicol.

The storm also suspended work and classes in the Ilocos region, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Bicol and Cordillera Administrative Region.

Hundreds fled to evacuation centers in Abra, the Mountain Province and Isabela after their homes were damaged by strong winds and heavy rains.

The storm also closed the courts

in several Northern Luzon provinces. In Cagayan Valley, 14 barangays were hardest hit, prompting the swift evacuation of residents.

Capt. Rigor Pamitan, spokesperson of the Army's 5th Infantry Division, said the number of affected families rose to 156, most of them staying in evacuation centers.

The Supreme Court suspended work in Santiago, Isabela; Cordon-Dinapigue, Isabela; Ramon-San Isidro, Isabela; and Vigan, Ilocos Sur.

Metro Manila and neighboring provinces were not spared.

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. suspended classes at all levels in public schools as well as operations in government offices in Metro Manila, Laguna, Rizal, Bulacan, Zambales and Bataan until Wednesday.

"The heavy rains pose possible risks to the general public based on the recommendations of the Office of Civil Defense," the Office of the Press Secretary announced.

Meanwhile, the Department of Social Welfare and Development said relief stockpiles and disaster operation funds are on standby.



MGA OPISINA, ISKUL KINANDADO KAY 'FLORITA'

SINUSPINDE ni Pangulong Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. ang pasok sa mga paaralan at mga tanggapan ng gobyerno sa Metro Manila at ilang lalawigan dahil sa bagyong Florita.

Ang suspension ay epektibo kahapon at ngayong araw dahil sa posibleng pangaulit sa mamamayan ng malakas na bagsak ng ulan.

Sinabi ni Press Secretary Trixie Cruz-Angeles na inirekomenda ng Office of the Civil Defense ang suspensyon sa pasok ng mga estudyante at mga kawani ng gobyerno sa Metro Manila, Cavite, Laguna, Rizal, Bulacan, Zambales at Bataan.

Kaugnay nito ay hinimok ng Malacañang ang pribadong sektor na suspendihin ang pasok ng kanilang mga kawani, gayundin sa mga pribadong paaralan tulad ng pagsuspinde ng gobyerno sa mga tanggapan at ahensya ng pamahalaan, pati na sa pasok sa mga pampublikong paaralan.

Sinabi ni Angeles na bagama't mayroong diskresyon, inirekomenda nila sa pribadong sektor na magsuspinde rin sa kanilang pasok para hindi mahirapan ang kanilang mga empleyado.

Luzon binayo

Maliban sa mga lugar na idineklarang walang pasok ay maraming lugar sa Luzon ang apektado ng pananalasa ng bagyong Florita.

Gayunman matapos ang landfall sa Isabela ay



Nahirapan sa pag-uwi ang mga estudyante ng Almarino Elementary School sa Tondo, Maynila dahil sa patuloy na pag-ulan dala ng bagyong Florita dahil para ideklara ni President Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. na walang pasok sa mga eskuwelahan at tanggapan ng gobyerno. (Jonas Sulit)

labagyang humina ang bagyo na tinatahak ang direksiyong patungo sa Apayao na isinailalim sa storm signal no. 3.

Sa 5:00 weather update ng Pagasa kahapon ay sinabi nito na nakataas pa rin ang heavy rainfall sa Cagayan kabilang ang Babuyan Islands, Cordillera Administrative Region, Ilocos Region, Zambales at Bataan habang katamtaman hanggang malakas na pag-ulan ang mararanasan sa loob ng 24 oras sa Metro Manila, Isabela, Tarlac, Pampanga, Cavite, Cagayan Valley at Calabarzon.

Nakataas ang signal no. 3 sa Apayao, Ilocos Norte, Cagayan kabilang ang Babuyan Island habang umiiral ang storm warning signal no. 2 sa Ifugao, Mountain Province, Kalinga, Abra at Ilocos Sur samantala signal no. 1 sa La Union, Pangasinan, Benguet, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino, Northern Portion ng Nueva Ecija at Aurora.

Sa pinakahuling monitoring ng Pagasa ang bagyong Florita ay nasa Kabugao, Apayao, taglay ang lakas ng hangin na 100kph at bugso na 165kph, kumikilos ito sa bilis na 20kph.

Sa forecast ng Pagasa, alas-2:00 ng madaling-araw, Agosto 24 ay nasa bisinidad ng Calayan, Cagayan ang bagyo at alas-2:00 ng hapon ng Miyekofes ay nasa Basco, Batanes sa labas na ng Philippine Area of Responsibility.

Nagbabala ang Pagasa na sa magdamag ay babayuhin pa rin ng malalakas na ulan ang mga nasa ilalim ng storm warning signal no. 3 at 2 kaya ibayong pag-lingat ang gawin. Nakataas pa rin ang gale warning signal sa Northern at Central Luzon kaya ipinagbabawal ang paglalayag.

Daan-daang naman ang inilikas, ayon sa National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council. (Aileen Taliping/Tina Mendoza/Kiko Cueto)



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Marikina River rises due to Florita

By EMMANUEL TUPAS

The water level at the Marikina River reached first alarm yesterday afternoon due to heavy rains brought by Tropical Storm Florita.

The Marikina City public information office said the river's water level reached 15 meters at around 4:48 p.m. and further rose to 15.2 meters

The water level first rose to 13.7 meters at 12:45 p.m. and 14 meters by 1 p.m.

Mayor Marcelino Teodoro earlier said a pre-emptive evacuation was still not necessary as the river's water level was still at 13 meters.

Due to the yellow warning advisory from the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration, Teodoro suspended classes at all levels in all public and private learning institutions in the city at 12:30 p.m.

by 5:43 p.m.

It prompted a first alarm warning from the city government, which means residents near the river should prepare for possible evacuation.

The river would reach critical level at 19 meters.



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Malawakang pagbaha sa MM, naitala; coding, suspindido

Nakapagtala ang Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) ng malawakang pagbaha sa ilang lugar sa Metro Manila kahapon bunsod ng pananalasa ng

bagyong Florita.

Kaugnay nito, sinuspinde rin ng MMDA ang implementasyon ng number coding scheme kahapon matapos ang suspensyon ng Malacañang

sa klase at trabaho sa rehiyon at mga kajapit na lalawigan.

"In view of the suspension of work and classes by Malacañang and

Nina MER LAYSON at DANILO GARCIA

due to heavy rains, the number coding scheme is suspended [Tuesday and Wednesday,]" anang MMDA.

Anang ahensiya, ka-

bilang sa mga lugar na nakaranas ng mga pagbaha ay ang ilang lugar sa Quezon City.

Nakapagtala rin umano sila ng gutter-deep flooding sa EDSA Dario Bridge Northbound lane hanggang alas-12:00 ng tanghali.

Binaha rin ang Commonwealth Tandang Sora patungong Elliptical, Commonwealth Dona Carmen, Commonwealth

Regalado at maging ang EDSA Aurora tunnel southbound.

Nakaranas din ng pagbaha sa Sgt. Rivera gayundin sa Araneta Victory Liner at iba pang mga lugar.

Alas-12:39 ng tanghali nang umakyat sa 12 pulgada ang baha sa may interseksyon ng Sgt. Rivera at A. Bonifacio, ngunit nadaraanen pa rin naman ng mga behikulo.

Ala-1:59 nang tu-

maas din ang baha sa may Araneta Victory ng hanggang gutter deep (8 inches).

Dahil din sa lakas ng agos sa Ilog Pasig, sinuspinde rin kahapon ng MMDA ang operasyon ng Pasig River Ferry Service.

Sa Maynila, sinabi ng Information Office nito na wala silang namonitor na pagbabaha sa siyudad maging sa mga lugar na regular na nilulubog ng baha.



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Pasok sa klase, gov't offices sa NCR, 6 probinsiya suspindido - Palasyo

Nagdeklara si Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos Jr. ng suspensiyon ng trabaho at klase sa lahat ng antas mula kahapon hanggang ngayon, Agosto 24 para sa lahat ng tanggapan ng gobyerno at public schools sa National Capital Region, Cavite, Laguna, Rizal, Bulacan,

Zamboales at Bataan dahil sa Severe Tropical Storm Florita.

Ayon kay Press Secretary Trixie Cruz-Angeles, batay sa abiso ng Office of Civil Defense (OCD), makakaranas ng matinding pag-ulan sa mga

nabanggit na lugar hanggang ngayong araw kaya inaprubahan ng Pangulo ang deklarasyon na suspensyon ng klase at trabaho sa gobyerno.

Inirerekomenda naman ng Malacañang sa mga private schools at pribadong opisina ang pagdedeklara rin ng suspensyon.

"Sa pribadong sektor, base 'yun sa diskresyon ng employers, pero rekomendado na isuspendi na rin," ani Cruz-Angeles.

Ayon sa PAGASA, si Florita na isa na ngayong severe tropical storm ay nag-landfall sa Maconacon, Isabela alas-10:30 ng

umaga kahapon.

Ang mata ng bagyo ay nasa coastal waters ng Maconacon, at patuloy ang pagkilos pahilaga hilagang kanluran sa bilis na 20 kilometro bawat oras taglay ang lakas ng hangin na umaabot sa 110 km bawat oras at bugso na 150 km bawat oras.

Dulot nito, naketaas ang signal number 3 ng bagyo sa northern portion ng Ilocos Norte, southern portion ng Babuyan Islands, mainland Cagayan, northeastern portion ng Isabela.

Signal number 2 naman sa nalalabing bahagi ng Babuyan Islands, nala-

labing bahagi ng Isabela, Quirino, northern at eastern portion ng Nueva Vizcaya, Abra, Kalinga, Mountain Province, Ilogao, northern portion ng Benguet, nalalabing bahagi ng Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, at northern portion ng Aurora.

Signal number 1 sa Batanes, nalalabing bahagi ng Nueva Vizcaya, nalalabing bahagi ng Benguet, La Union, eastern portion ng Pangasinan, northeastern portion ng Tarlac, Nueva Ecija at nalalabing bahagi ng Aurora.

Inaasehang lalabas ng Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) si Florita ngayong umaga ng Miyerkules.



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Residente sa Cagayan Valley binahawit

Magtatapos ang pre-employment examination sa ibang bayang ng Cagayan Valley dahil sa kasamang epekto ng severe tropical storm Floid (Flo) sa Office of Civil Defense Region 2 (OCD-R2).
Ayun kay OCD-R2 spokesperson Michael Comag simula noon Lunes ay natala ang mga paghihiwalay sa ibang mga barangay para sa kultura ng bayang Baguio, Atantun, at Alitayn.
Simula ng opisyal na nasa 75 pamilya o katumbas ng mahigit 200 katao na

ang amil sa mga kamakapang gabi hanggang ka-apan ng madaling araw sa Bay, Dintay at Bagumbayang Baguio, Cagayan dahil sa mabig-bahag-bahag pagguho ng lupa.
Dahil walang ligilang ulan, mula kabanadon halos hanggang tulhod ang lebel ng tubig-bahag-bahag sa mga silid-aralan sa Libertad National High School sa Abulug, Cagayan dahil upang suspendin ang pasang mga estudyante. (Allm Bergonia)



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PHOTOGRAPH BY AL PADILLA FOR THE DAILY TRIBUNE
TUESDAY'S heavy rains caused by tropical depression 'Florita' prevent fishermen to get on the waters of Manila Bay.



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THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
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TS Florita slightly weakens; Signal No. 3 up in Ilocos Norte,

By ELLALYN DE VERA - RUIZ

Heavy to torrential rains continued to lash northern Luzon hours after severe tropical storm Florita (international name: Ma-on) made landfall over Maconacon, Isabela Tuesday morning, Aug. 23.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) in its 5 p.m. bulletin said Florita has slightly weakened and was now packing maximum sustained winds of 100 kilometers per hour (kph) near the center and gustiness of up to 125 kph.

Florita was located in the vicinity of Kabugao, Apayao at around 4 p.m. "Severe tropical storm Florita will continue moving generally north-westward or west-northwestward and is forecast to traverse the northern portions of Apayao and Ilocos Norte. Afterwards, Florita will emerge over the West Philippine Sea tonight (Aug. 23)," PAGASA said.

PAGASA warned of heavy ►7



TS Florita slightly weakens; Signal No. 3 up in Ilocos Norte, Apayao, Cagayan ◀

to intense with, at times, torrential rains in Cagayan, including Babuyan Islands, Cordillera Administrative Region, and Ilocos Region.

Zambales and Bataan may also receive heavy to intense with, at times, torrential rains due to the enhanced southwest monsoon or "habagat."

Moderate to heavy rains may also prevail over Metro Manila, Isabela, Tarlac, Pampanga, Cavite, and the rest of Cagayan Valley, while light to moderate with at times heavy rains may persist in Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon, and the rest of Central Luzon.

PAGASA said the habagat may also bring rains in Oriental Mindoro, Occidental Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan, and Western Visayas.

Wind warnings still up in several Luzon areas As of 5 p.m., Signal No. 3 remained hoisted over Ilocos Norte, Apayao, southern portion of Babuyan Islands, and mainland Cagayan.

Moreover, Signal No. 2 was still up over Ifugao, Mountain Province,

Kalinga, Abra, Ilocos Sur, and the rest of the Babuyan Islands.

La Union, eastern portion of Pangasinan, Benguet, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino, northern portion of Nueva Ecija, and the northern and central portions of Aurora were still under Signal No. 1.

"Throughout the passage of Florita, winds may reach storm-force in strength in any of the areas where wind Signal No. 3 is hoisted, while winds may reach gale-force in strength in any of the areas where wind Signal no. 2 is hoisted. Strong winds (strong breeze to near gale strength) will be experienced within any of the areas where wind Signal no. 1 is currently in effect," PAGASA said.

Florita made landfall over Maconacon, Isabela at around 10:30 a.m., Aug. 23. It will likely leave the Philippine area of responsibility on Wednesday morning, Aug. 24.

From quake to floods
Still reeling from the devastating

effects of the magnitude 7.0 earthquake last month, hundreds of residents in Northern Luzon evacuated anew due to flooding and landslides caused by Severe Tropical Storm 'Florita,' the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) said Tuesday.

At least 180 families (543 individuals) were preemptively evacuated in Cagayan Valley (Region 2) and Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) as 'Florita' dumped heavy rains that flooded 18 areas and caused three rain-induced landslides.

The evacuees came from Sta. Fe, Nueva Vizcaya; Baggao, Cagayan; Bucay, Malibcong, San Quintin, and Villaviciosa in Abra; and Barlig, Besao, and Sadanga in Mountain Province.

"Atin pong tinututukan ang mga areas na landslide-prone at flood-prone dito po sa area na tatahakin ng bagyo sa Northern Luzon. A lot of those areas na binabagyo ngayon ay niyanig nitong nakalipas na Abra



PRECARIOUS CROSSING — Students of Alibadbad National High School in San Mariano, Isabela end up crossing the swelling river on their way home after their banca broke down. Classes were suspended on Monday, Aug. 22, 2022, as tropical storm Florita approached Isabela province. (Jervel Tion/Lezle Basa Iñigo)



THE IS FLORITA (SUG HIJY MONTANA; SIGNAL NO-3 UP IN
LOWAL NODRE / NODRE, CAGAYAN)

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earthquake at mataas po ang tsansa ng pagguho ng lupa sa mga areas na 'yan lalo na po sa kabundukan (We are monitoring landslide-prone and flood-prone areas along the typhoon track in Northern Luzon. A lot of those areas were rocked by the Abra earthquake and there is a high chance of landslides occurring especially in mountainous areas),"

NDRRMC spokesperson Mark Timbal said in a Laging Handa briefing. The July 27 earthquake in Abra killed 11 persons and injured over 600.

Combined infrastructure and agricultural damage were estimated at ₱1.8 billion.

Timbal reminded local DRRM councils and local government units (LGUs) to be prompt in conducting pre-emptive evacuation, inventory of relief items, and preparation of search and rescue (SAR) teams and road clearing equipment and personnel so these can immediately be deployed when the need arises.

Timbal said the council has prepositioned 480,000 units of family food packs for the affected individuals while a standby fund of ₱800 million is readily available for use.

Effects

The NDRRMC has yet to receive any report of casualty on the ground.

There were three rain-induced landslides in Bagulin, La Union; and in two portions of Daang Maharlika Road in Ligao City and Guinobatan, both in Albay.

Flooding was also recorded in 18 areas in Calasiao, Pangasinan; Legazpi City, Albay; and Caramoan, Camarines Sur.

There were 11 roads and one bridge initially rendered impassable to motorists due to flooding and landslides. These were in Cagayan, Albay, Camarines Sur, Sorsogon, Apayao, Benguet, Ifugao, Kalinga, and Mountain Province. As of press time, eight roads were already

cleared and opened to the public.

Meanwhile, classes in 162 cities and municipalities were suspended while work in 60 cities and municipalities were suspended in Ilocos (Region 1), Cagayan Valley (Region 2), Central Luzon (Region 3), Bicol (Region 5), and Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR).

Sea trips were also suspended while fishermen were barred to sail in the eastern seaboard and northern portion of the country due to the typhoon.

Timbal reminded local health units in the affected areas to observe Covid-19 protocols in the evacuation centers to prevent the spread of the contagious disease.

"Maulan po tapos may binabantayan tayong sakit kasabay ng usual na mga sakit like ubo, sipon, at pag-sakit ng tiyan. Lahat ito ay inaagapan ng ating LGUs at camp managers (We know that it's rainy season and we are monitoring [Covid-19] disease along with other illnesses with the same symptoms such as cough, colds, and stomachache. All of these are being addressed by our LGUs and camp managers)," he assured the public.

In Ilocos Norte, a bridge in Mapili town collapsed due to continuous rain spawned by Florita.

At least 68 houses, including 59 in Brgy. Badio, six in Pagdilao, two in Barbar, and one in Salanap, were submerged in floodwaters.

Two families of Purok River Side of Brgy. Bulbulala were evacuated to the Barangay Hall.

Two farm animals - a cow in Brgy. Pagdilao and a carabao in Brgy. Cabaruan - drowned.

Two puroks in Brgy. Capangdangan-Centro and Anaraar- were isolated due to overflowing water from the spillway, according to the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office. (With a report from Liezle Basa Inigo)



Army HADR units deployed

THE Philippine Army through the 5th Infantry Division (5th ID) mobilized on Tuesday its humanitarian assistance and disaster response (HADR) units and equipment as Florita barreled toward the coastal areas of Cagayan and Isabela provinces.

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) reported that at least 180 families in the Cordillera Ad-

ministrative Region and in Region 2 were preemptively evacuated as the government stepped up its response operations.

Several areas in Northern Luzon and Bicol regions were flooded due to heavy rains ahead of Florita's landfall, but the NDRRMC said the flooding in some of the affected areas have already receded.

The NDRRMC said classes in the provinces of Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte, Rizal and Quezon and in most parts of La Union and Pangasinan and some parts of Laguna have been suspended due to the typhoon.

Army spokesman Col. Xerxes Trinidad said the 501st Infantry Brigade of the 5th ID mobilized HADR teams and equipment in the towns of Lallo, Lasam and Rizal in Cagayan and Flora Apayao.

On the other hand, the 77th Infantry Battalion (IB) and the 17th

IB marshaled HADR teams that are now on standby in the towns of Alcala, Baggao, Gattaran and Santa Teresita, all in Cagayan.

Trinidad said the 502nd Infantry Brigade also mobilized HADR teams in the town of Echague, Isabela, while the 88th Infantry Battalion and the 95th Infantry Battalion prepared HADR teams in the towns of Jones and San Mariano and the City of Hagonoy in Isabela.

The 203rd Infantry Brigade and its five units likewise mobilized HADR teams and equipment in disaster-risk areas of Isabela.

Ready reserve units in the region are also on alert. The 202nd, 203rd and 204th Community Defense Centers of the 2nd Regional Community Defense Group mobilized reservists who will be deployed for possible rescue and relief efforts in Isabela, Quirino and Nueva Vizcaya provinces, Trinidad reported.



Palace suspends govt work, classes in NCR, 6 provinces due to 'Florita'

BY SAMUEL P. MEDENILLA

✉ sam.medenilla

& RENE ACOSTA

✉ @rpenacosta111

PRESIDENT Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. suspended government offices and classes in all levels in the National Capital Region (NCR) and six provinces in Luzon due to the heavy rains brought about by severe tropical storm "Florita" (international code name Ma-on) in the said areas.

Press Secretary Beatrix "Trixie" Cruz-Angeles said the President made the decision based on the recommendation of the Office of Civil Defense (OCD).

The President has declared a suspension of work and classes in all levels today until tomorrow (Wednesday, August 24) for all government offices and public schools in NCR, Cavite, Laguna, Rizal, Bu-

lacan, Zambales and Bataan, due to Severe Tropical Storm Florita, Angeles said in a brief statement issued on Tuesday.

This was contained in Memorandum Circular No. 5 issued by Executive Secretary Victor D. Rodriguez.

Exempted from the said declaration are frontline agencies which are providing basic and health services, preparedness/response to disaster and calamities, and/or performance of other vital services.

The OCD said the suspension will prevent any outward incidents and will ensure the safety of the general public in the affected areas.

Angeles noted private schools and offices would be given the discretion to also implement a similar suspension of operations.

Tropical Storm Florita made landfall over Matconon, Isabela at 10:30 am last Tuesday and is

expected to leave the Philippine Area of Responsibility the following day.

It caused the preemptive evaluation and issuance of flood warnings in Zambales, Tarlac, Bataan and Pampanga.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has over 100,000 available food packs, which can be distributed to storm victims in regions 1 and 2.



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'Florita' disrupts work, suspends classes



DANGER ZONE This photo provided by the Philippine Information Agency in Tuguegarao City shows the Buntun Bridge nearing alert level. At 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 23, 2022, the water level had reached 4.9 meters, the Tuguegarao City Command Center said.

PRESIDENT Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. suspended government work and public school classes in all levels in Metro Manila (National Capital Region or NCR) and several other provinces beginning Tuesday afternoon until Wednesday, August 24, due to Severe Tropical Storm "Florita."

Upon recommendation of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), the President declared the suspension of government work and classes in the NCR, including the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Rizal, Bulacan, Zambales and Bataan starting at 1 p.m., according to Press Secretary Rose Beatrix "Tisie" Cruz-Angelès.

"The President has declared a suspension of work and classes in all levels today until tomorrow for all government offices and public schools in the NCR, Cavite, Laguna, Rizal, Bulacan, Zambales and Bataan, due to severe tropical storm Florita," Cruz-Angelès said in a statement.

"The heavy rains pose possible risks to the general public based on recommendations of the Office of Civil Defense," she added.

Florita, though, has slightly weakened while traversing the northern portion of Apurao province, but Signal

► Classes A8



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CLASSES FROM AT

'Florita' disrupts work, suspends classes

But, it remains in power at least four areas in Luzon, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said in its 5 p.m. advisory on Tuesday.

The tropical storm made its first landfall in Marikina on Isabela on Tuesday.

"The recommended suspension will prevent any untoward incidents and will ensure the safety of the general public," the NDRRMC said.

Meanwhile, Cruz-Angeles said suspension of work for private companies and offices is left to the discretion of their respective heads.

"The same course of action for private schools and offices is left to the discretion of their respective heads," she added.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development Field Office 2 (DSWD-FO2) has been placed on alert status together with the provincial/city/municipal actions teams, social welfare and development teams and quick response teams to closely monitor impact of Florita in the regions.

As of now, three provinces had been impacted, with 342 families or 1,162 people affected.

Twenty evacuation centers are now ready to accommodate distressed families.

"The DSWD-FO2 is on full force to monitor adverse effects of the typhoon in the regions. Agency personnel are also on stand-by and are ready to facilitate immediate distribution of relief goods and other forms of assistance to LGUs (local government units) if and when they need augmentation," Officer in Charge and Regional Director Celso Atao II said.

A total of 22,372 family food packs, which include canned goods, coffee, rice and powdered cereal drinks, as well as 8,510 non-food items, including kitchen, hygiene, sleeping and clothing kits and family tents, are available and ready for distribution to meet basic emergency needs of the affected individuals and families.

Personnel from the Philippine National Police (PNP), Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), Bureau of Fire Protection and 201st Cagayan Ready Reserve Infantry Battalion-2RDCC RESCOM, Philippine Army are assisting in the repacking of additional relief items.

"Even if we are second responders, we must take the initiative and stop waiting for the local authorities to contact us. We still need to keep



WET DAY Parents wait for their children to come out of the President Corason Elementary School in Quezon City on Tuesday, Aug. 23, 2022. President Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. suspended classes because of Tropical Storm 'Florita'. PHOTO BY MIKE DE JUAN

an eye on the flooding and casualties. Give them (displaced folks) if they need assistance or food," DSWD secretary Edwin Tuñi said during an online briefing with the DSWD regional directors.

The NDRRMC also on Tuesday said a total of 180 families or 543 individuals from the Cagayan Valley and CAR had been evacuated.

Of the number, 110 families or 391 persons were from CAR and 70 families or 152 persons came from Cagayan Valley.

Classes were suspended in 162 cities and municipalities: 77 in CAR, 58 in Ilocos Region, 21 in Cagayan Valley and three each in Central Luzon and Bicol Region.

The NDRRMC said work was suspended in 60 cities and municipalities — 58 in Ilocos Region and two in Cagayan Valley.

At least three rain-induced landslides hit Ilocos Region and Bicol Region, and two flash floods struck Ilocos Region.

Three roads in the Bicol Region and one bridge in Cagayan Valley were not passable as of press time.

Some domestic flights scheduled for Tuesday, August 23, were canceled, according to the Manila International Airport Authority.

Dam officials released water from Magat Dam in Isabela and Baga Dam in Benguet amid continuous rains brought by Florita.

In an advisory from the Nation-

al Irrigation Administration-Magat River Integrated Irrigation System (NIA-Maris), water from the reservoir was released at a rate of 554 cubic meters per second (cms).

As of 5 a.m. on Tuesday, the opening of the spillway gate was at 64 cms.

Magat's water level was at 186.62 meters, 3.3 meters less from its spilling mark of 190 meters.

Water from the Baga dam was released at a rate of 92.61 cms.

Baga's water level was at 574.16 meters, less than a meter from its normal high-water level of 575 meters.

The NIA-Maris advised residents of low-lying areas along Cagayan River to avoid fishing and other water activities to ensure their safety.

Authorities also cautioned residents along Agno River to take necessary precautions.

The PCG District North Eastern Luzon was on full alert status to ensure capability and preparedness of its personnel and assets against the storm.

It said deployable response teams, composed of personnel from various Coast Guard stations, sub-stations and operational control units of the district, were immediately activated after the Department of Science and Technology-Pagasa advised against allowing passenger vessels from

sailing particularly in the Isabela-Cagayan area.

"Once Pagasa declares storm signal No. 1, we will enforce the no-sail policy in accordance with our policy of movement of vessels during heavy weather," PCG Lt. Miguel Angelo Gangan said.

The district, in partnership with the Municipal Disaster and Risk Reduction Management Office in Aparri, the PNP Maritime Group and other volunteers successfully assisted 197 passengers who were stranded at Dappa Wharf in the town of Aparri who were about to return to their respective homes in Barangay Linao, Aparri.

Most of the passengers were students from Cagayan State University who were on their way home after the suspension of classes at all levels was declared also on Tuesday.

Gangan said no maritime incidents have been reported in their area of responsibility, but they continue to coordinate with their stations in Aurora, Cagayan, Batanes and Calayan so that they can continue to implement their "no-sail policy" while storm warning signals remain hoisted throughout the region.

**CATHERINE S. VALENTE,
ARLIE O. CALALO,
FRANCIS EARL CUETO,
FRANCO JOSE C. BARONA,
BELLÁ CARIASO
AND MOISES CRUZ**



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

Abante
UNA SA BALITA



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EDITORIAL



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2 dam nagbabadyang umapaw

NAGBABALA ang Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) ng pagbaha sa malaking bahagi ng Luzon dahil sa nagbabadyang pag-apat ng tubig sa mga dam sa Benguet at Isabela bukod ng pananalasa ng bagyong Florita.

Ayon sa Pagasa, kapwa nakabukas na ang mga gate ng Bings Dam sa Benguet na umaabot na ngayon sa 572.76 metro ang lebel ng tubig at Magat Dam sa Isabela na sumirit na ang lebel ng tubig sa 186.59 metro.

Pareho anilang sapaw at magapapakawala ng

tubig ang mga ito pag-umabot sa 575 meter na spilling level ang Bings Dam sa Benguet at 190 meter na spilling level naman sa Isabela.

Sinabi ng weather bureau na isa ng sever tropical storm ang bagyong Florita kaya asahan pa ang malalakas na buhos ng ulan sa susunod na 18

oras.

Huli itong namatnang kumikilos sa Casiguran, Aurora sa bilis na 10 kilometer per hour na may lakas ng hangin na 95kph at buhos na 11.5kph.

Ibinabala rin ng abensya ang malalaking pagbaha at pagguho ng lupa sa madaraan ng bagyo. (Tina Mendoza)



Wrestling the plastic monster

BY BEN KRITZ

First of 3 parts

FOR its size, and despite being otherwise considered more a victim of the climate-change problem than a source of it, the Philippines is a prodigious producer of plastic waste. While characterizations of the country as being “among the world’s worst” in this regard may be unfair, Filipinos have long recognized the problem. Despite this, efforts to curb plastic pollution through national — and local-level — laws have only had modest results.

SPECIALREPORT

But several recent and planned initiatives are being hailed as steps toward changing that, leading to real reductions in plastic use and better management of plastic waste. Not everyone agrees, however. While the new measures may have good intentions, some critics charge, they are misdirected, inadequate or in some cases even amount to “greenwashing,” solutions that do not have any measurable positive impact or create other environmental problems.

The scale of the plastic waste problem
► **MonsterA8**

MONSTER FROM A1

Wrestling the plastic

in the Philippines is difficult to describe in relatable terms. According to a World Bank report in March 2021, which uses the word “staggering” a couple of times to describe the Philippines’ volume of plastic waste, the country generates 2.7 million metric tons of plastic waste annually, much of it in the form of unrecyclable, single-use sachets. “By some estimates,” the World Bank says, “the Philippines consumes a staggering 163 million sachets every day.”

To put that into an individual perspective, that means that every one of the 113,419,913 people in this country (the estimated population as of Aug. 15, 2022) creates 23.8 kilograms of plastic waste — in other words, an amount (by mass) just a bit smaller than a half-sack of rice — every year.

A study published by the World Wildlife Fund in 2020 estimated that up to 35 percent, or about 945,000 metric tons of the plastic waste find their way into the Philippines’ environment every year, and of that volume, according to the World Bank study, about 750,000 metric tons are discarded in the ocean. Estimates of how much plastic waste is recycled vary between 10 and 15 percent; the remainder is disposed of in landfills.

law with the “Solid Waste Act of 2001” (Republic Act 9003), but full implementation and enforcement of the law has never been achieved. In the years since, the government has developed several large-scale strategy “road maps” to improve waste management, all of which have been predicated on more stringent enforcement of RA 9003.

These plans include the National Solid Waste Management Strategy 2012-2016, which set a target of diverting 50 percent of solid waste by 2016; an updated strategy in the 2017-2022 Philippine Development Plan (PDP), which reset the target to 80 percent solid-waste diversion by 2022; and the Philippine Action Plan for Sustainable Consumption and Production (PAP4SCP) published by the National Economic and Development Authority in 2019, which was essentially a detailed revision of the strategy set forth in the 2017-2022 PDP. In addition, in November of last year the Department of Environment and Natural Resources adopted the National Plan of Action for Marine Litter it developed with the UN Development Program. That initiative targets zero waste in Philippine waters by 2040, but, as a result of the change in administration after

While the problem is small in comparison to the huge amount of plastic waste it generates on its own, the Philippines nevertheless also has to contend with plastic waste imported from other countries, primarily the United States, South Korea and Hong Kong. In 2019, the last year for which there is reliable data, the Philippines imported an additional 11,761 metric tons of plastic waste, more than half of them from the US. And this is just the amount imported legally; no real estimates exist for the amount of plastic waste illegally imported each year, usually by misclassifying it in customs declarations. High-profile seizures of smuggled waste in recent years, most notably from Canada, South Korea and the US, suggest that the true volume of imported plastic waste is likely much higher than official data indicates.

Management of solid waste in the Philippines according to the “3 Rs” principle — Reduce, Re-use, Recycle — was codified into

the May 2022 elections, is still awaiting implementation.

For now, the PAP4SCP is the main blueprint for the Philippines’ waste management strategy and the new initiatives to manage plastic waste are either direct or indirect results of it. While they may be considered progress, what has been accomplished so far has already fallen behind the schedule envisioned by the plan.

The PAP4SCP sets forth short-term (2020-2022), medium-term (2022-2030) and long-term (2030-2040) actions to be taken in policy and regulation; research, innovation and technology; infrastructure; and promotion and education. One key difference between the PAP4SCP and earlier road maps is that the action plan places more emphasis on private-sector involvement in waste reduction, the basis of the plan’s only significant accomplishment so far, the passage of the Extended Producer Responsibility Act (RA 11898).



Pagkamit ng Climate Justice sa QC

SIMULA nang manungkulan ako bilang Vice Mayor, nakita ko na kung gaano katindi ang epekto ng pagbago-bagong klima sa ating lungsod. Halimbawa nito ang mabilis na pagtaas ng tubig baha pero matagal humupa. Nakaaapekto ito sa pamumuhay ng daan-daang residente. Ito ang nagmulat sa akin para magsagawa ng agarangakasyon para maagapan ang climate change.

Sa bisa ng City Resolution 7999-2019, nagdeklara ng Climate Emergency sa Quezon City. Ito ang sumuporta sa paglulunsad natin ng mga proyektong makakalikasan.

Bilang nag-lisang lungsod sa Pilipinas na bahagi ng C40 Cities, o grupo ng mahigit 100 lungsod sa mundo na nakatuon sa pagbabawas ng epekto ng climate change, gusto nating maging simula para sa iba pang lungsod na agad nang kumilos.

Taon 2019 nang sinimulan nating magpasa ng mga ordnansa, katuwang ang Sangguniang Panlungsod sa pangunahina ni Vice Mayor Gian Sotto na nagbabawal ng single-use plastic sa dine-in customers. At para matulukan ang mga programa para sa kalikasan, itinatag natin ang Climate Change



and Environmental Sustainability Department. Ipinasok na rin natin ang environmental criteria sa ating procurement process sa tulong ng Green Public Procurement Ordinance.

Para magkaroon ng direksyon ang ating plano para sa pangangalaga sa kalikasan, binuo natin ang Enhanced Local Climate Change Action Plan for 2021-2050. Dito nakasaad lahat ng pangmatagalan na programa at solusyon para matugunan ang epekto ng global climate change nang hindi isinasaalang-alang ang kapakanan ng mga mamamayan. Patuloy din ang ating pakikipag-partner sa organisasyon tulad ng C40 Cities, Clean Air Asia, at UK Government para sa pagsasakatuparan nito.

Tulad ng ibang krisis, masosolusyunan lang ang climate crisis sa pamamagitan ng pagkaka/isa at sama-samang pagkilos ng iba-ibang sektor. Makakaasa kayo na magsisilbing lider ang Quezon City para matuldukan ang panganib na dulot ng problemang ito.



THE CORNER ORACLE

ANDREW J. MASIGAN

A step back in our climate change effort

The conservative Republican agenda continues to rip through American legal fabric. Just after the overturn of the 1973 decision of *Roe vs. Wade* (which legalized abortion in America), the American Supreme Court ruled anew to effectively clip the powers of the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).



Why is this relevant to us? The EPA was established in 1970 by then US president Richard Nixon to manage greenhouse gas emissions. The decision of the Supreme Court stripped the EPA of its power to regulate emissions from fossil fuel power plants and to mandate (or expedite) the shift of America's power source mix from fossil fuel to renewable energy. In other words, the EPA can no longer enforce climate change action on the power industry. The Supreme Court effectively took away America's most effective tool to mitigate climate change.

America is the second largest emitter of greenhouse gases, spewing 4.745 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and fluorinated gases into our atmosphere every year (data from 2019). For context, the largest emitter of greenhouse gases is China, who dumps 9.877 billion metric tons into the atmosphere, while the Philippines is responsible for only 135.3 million metric tons.

The Supreme Court's 6-3 ruling allows coal fired power plants in America to operate unhampered and without consequence.

The lawsuit was filed by Republican states, led by West Virginia, a coal producing state. While Republicans celebrate the Supreme Court decision, environmental groups, including those in the Philippines, are expressing exasperation. Coal-fired power plants account for 25 percent of American greenhouse gas emissions.

The United Nations expressed serious concern since the Supreme Court's decision will make it harder to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement. For those unaware, the goal of the Paris Agreement is to limit the increase of global temperature by 1.5 degrees Celsius.

To exceed the 1.5 degrees Celsius threshold will trigger changes in the planet's atmospheric balance and this could be fatal to all life forms. Time is ticking and we are already feeling the consequences of climate change. In America and Europe, extreme blizzards, frequent forest fires and severe droughts have become a natural occurrence. In tropical countries like the Philippines, frequent and increasingly violent typhoons, higher sea levels and storm surges have become annual tragedies. The UN has declared the Supreme Court decision a step back in human survival with worldwide repercussions.

But the decision is a vindication for Donald Trump. It will be recalled that in 2021, the US Court of Appeals struck down Donald Trump's Affordable Clean Energy rule. That rule would have imposed limits on a Clean Air Act provision that provides the EPA authority to regulate emissions from existing power plants. With this decision, Trump finally got his way. Curiously, three of the nine Supreme Court members are Trump nominees.

The ruling of the Supreme Court was based on what is called the "Major Questions Doctrine." In essence, the doctrine dictates that federal agencies, like the EPA, cannot implement policies of great importance and social impact without the express consent of Congress. The fact that the EPA continues to regulate the emissions of coal power plants and the power industry as a whole, without a congressional mandate, makes it illegal, they argue.

West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrisey, a Republican, called the ruling "a huge victory against federal overreach and excess of administrative state."

The majority of Republicans do not consider climate change an issue urgent enough to cull the coal industry. The Pew Research Center says that Democrats are more than three times as likely as Republicans to say that dealing with climate change should be a top priority (78 percent vs. 21 percent). Less than a third of registered Republicans nationwide said that climate change is caused mostly by human activities - the greater majority claim that it is a natural phenomenon.

Politically, this is a defeat for US President Joe Biden, who intended to lead the world in climate change mitigation. Not only is his multi-billion package of climate change investments stuck in Congress, now the EPA is de-fanged. It is a defeat for both the democratic agenda and environmentalists.

President Biden called the ruling "another devastating decision that aims to take our country backwards. While this decision risks damaging our nation's ability to keep our air clean and combat climate change, I will not relent in using my lawful authorities to protect public health and tackle the climate crisis."

Biden subsequently directed his legal team to work with the Justice Department to review the ruling and find ways under federal law to protect against pollution, including emissions that cause climate change. It is still unclear how the Biden administration can regain regulatory sway over the coal industry.

Invoking the Major Questions Doctrine was rarely argued in court until recently. But this is a precedent that opens the way for other lawsuits meant to question other regulatory powers of the US Federal government. Many suspect that the Clean Water Act will be next to be questioned. The same for No Vaccine Mandate and Same-Sex Marriages. Clearly, the US Supreme Court is leading America back to conservatism according to the Republican agenda.

No matter what direction the political winds blow, no one can deny that the planet is deteriorating towards a dangerous path as humans continue to burn fossil fuels at an alarming rate. This is a huge step back for America, for the world and for humanity. We can only hope that President Biden finds legal ways to mitigate if not eliminate the use of fossil fuel power in his own backyard.

Email: andrew_rs6@yahoo.com. Follow him on Twitter @aj_masigan



PCSD sounds the alarm

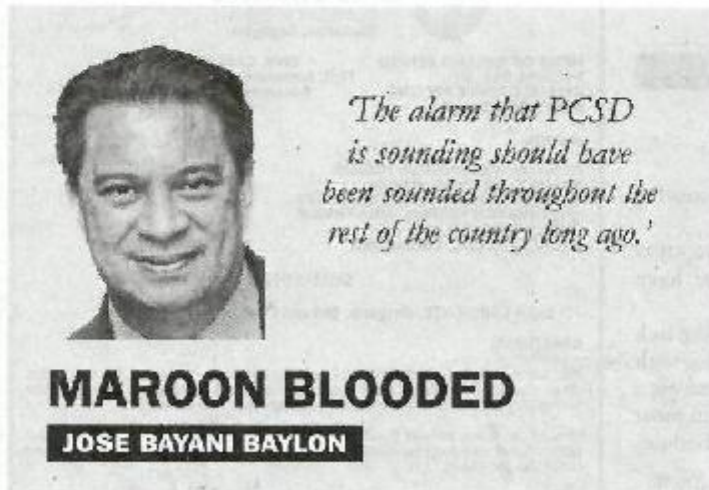
THE state of the region is dire."

So intoned Atty. Teodoro Jose "TJ" S. Matta, executive director of the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development, in a video presentation that PCSD showed during the Palawan Planning Summit held from August 17-19 in Puerto Princesa City.

ED Matta was principally referring to forest cover, long a major asset and attaching of Palawan, dubbed by many as "the last frontier" in the Philippines. It is also a major ecosystem center, whether above ground, beneath the ground, and even beneath the water's edge.

In the video, ED Matta cited the damage done by Typhoon Odette, saying it destroyed some 60% of the forest cover in the northern part of the island province. A shocking number given that Palawan is very rarely visited by typhoons, and the island forest cover consists of numerous hardwood species, with mahogany being my favorite.

But just one wayward typhoon, and what nature has nursed through decades, centuries even, is flattened to the ground or wiped out.



The alarm that PCSD is sounding should have been sounded throughout the rest of the country long ago.'

MAROON BLOODED

JOSE BAYANI BAYLON

Just as interesting is the damage to forest cover done in the southern part of Palawan, where mining activity is going on. But contrary to common belief, Matta cites not mining but agricultural expansion, human settlements and urbanization and even kaingin as the main reasons for the major (Matta used the word "devastating") loss of forest cover in the south.

Of these, agricultural expansion was the biggest reason for the devastating degradation or loss of forest cover from 2005-2015.

To address these problems, Matta is urging provincial officials to consider incorporating reforestation in their development plans. He is asking each LGU (I think there are about 22 or so municipalities, plus Puerto Princesa) to allocate 10,000 hectares - at the minimum - for this campaign. Am hoping the LGU leaders will listen.

The alarm that PCSD is sounding should have been sounded throughout the rest of the country long ago. It is population growth

that fuels human settlements and urbanization and agricultural expansion that has primarily left this country naked, its hardwood trees chopped down to satisfy the market here (and abroad) of a growing population. If you google "Philippine forest cover," you are bound to come across a set of images showing the Philippines and how it has changed over the decades from a green set of islands to one that is almost totally brown. Almost, that is, except in a few pockets of the country like northeastern Mindanao, southern Palawan, part of the Sierra Madre and even the Mountain Province. Interestingly, these are mostly the mining areas of the country!

As a frequent visitor to Palawan - and one who has planted over 50 trees in the mining area of Nickel Asia Corporation in Rio Tuba in Bataaza town as part of our corporate mission to turn a mine that God gave us into a forest to give back, I pray that the political leadership of Palawan led by Gov Dennis M. Socrates will pay heed to the alarm call of the PCSD.

Let's do what we can to restore the forests and the biodiversity habitats in that beautiful island!



TIME: _____

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No segregation of garbage, no collection in Imus

**By Dennis
Ahrina**

IMUS CITY, Cavite - The City Environment and Natural Resources Office is conducting information dissemination regarding the "No segregation of garbage, No collection" in the city.

The move was in compliance with the directive of the new administration in the city to help clean the environment and teach every resident of Imus the proper waste disposal.

Mayor Alex "AA" Advincula issued the "No Segregation, No Collection Policy" to all the residents of the 97 villages in the city to reduce the volume of trash being hauled

by garbage trucks, to reduce trucking fees, and be beneficial to every citizen if they separate biodegradable, non biodegradable and recyclable items.

Personnel from the CENRO visit every barangay and sitios to inform, explain and tell the residents the importance of the program.

The CENRO is also conducting seminars in the barangays about the garbage policy.

A "Bantay Kalikasan" also conducted clean-up of rivers in the different villages in the city as well as road clearing operations.

Advincula's directive is in accordance with Executive Order No. 19-A and Republic Act No. 9003 or the "Ecological Solid

Waste Management Act of 2000."



Property developer appeals Makati court

decision approving 318-hectare Manila Bay reclamation project

By Darwin G. Amojelar

A PROPERTY developer controlled by construction firm F.F. Cruz & Company Inc. asked the Makati City regional trial court to reverse its ruling that allowed the Gatchalian family's Waterfront Manila Premier Development Corp., the Philippine Reclamation Authority and the City of Manila to reclaim 318 hectares on Manila Bay.

Asian Seas Resources and Construction

Development Corp., in a 24-page motion for reconsideration filed on Aug. 22 before the Makati RTC Branch 139, asked the court to reconsider its Aug. 4 order setting aside its April 25, 2022 ruling that voided the P34.3-billion joint venture of Waterfront Manila, PRA and City of Manila.

Makati RTC Judge Rommel Baybay said in an Aug. 4 order the petitioner failed to "implead" the Office of the President, which it said was an indispensable party, when it sued

the joint venture parties and stakeholders PRA, the City of Manila and Waterfront Manila.

"In the absence of the indispensable party in the instant case, the assailed decision should be vacated," Baybay said in his ruling. This was a reversal of the court's April 25 decision.

The Makati court, in its April 25 decision, declared null and void the contract to reclaim 318 hectares in Manila Bay for allegedly not undergoing a competitive bidding

process and NEDA Board evaluation and approval for encroaching in areas covered by another reclamation contract.

ASSERCO filed a civil case against PRA, City of Manila and Waterfront because the awarded project to Waterfront overlapped the former's project award issued in 1991 by PRA.

"The Honorable Court erred when it vacated and set aside the decision dated 25 April 2022 on the ground that the Office of

the President is an indispensable party when the same has been resolved by the Honorable Court in its order dated 17 February 2022, which became final and binding to the parties," ASSERCO said.

"The issue whether the Office of the President is an indispensable party was already resolved by the Honorable Court in its order dated 17 February 2022," ASSERCO, represented by the Bernas Law Offices, said in its 24-page motion for reconsideration.



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ADB, USAID ink climate-support deal

By CAUL ORDINAHO
@caulordinaho

THE Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) agreed to better respond to climate and disaster impacts, pandemics and economic shocks.

Under the agreement, USAID will support efforts to strengthen community resilience and governance and advance resilient economic growth in the Pacific.

The Regional Development Objective Agreement was signed by ADB Senior Advisor for Strategy, Policy and Partnerships Kenji Yuhaku and

USAID Acting Mission Director for the Philippines, Pacific Islands and Mongolia Betty Chung.

"ADB and USAID share similar goals in addressing development challenges in the region," ADB Director General for the Pacific Leah Gutierrez said. "This new partnership will provide for stronger collaboration in Pacific Island countries as they continue to address climate change risks, strengthen efforts to mitigate and respond to disasters and improve management of natural resources in the Pacific region."

The partnership aims to expand access to affordable and climate-smart energy systems through private sector-led investments.

The agreement between ADB and USAID will also strengthen health systems and health coverage to help the region become more resilient to shocks and more able to overcome the challenges of distance and isolation.

"We believe that by advancing an open, connected, prosperous, resilient and secure Indo-Pacific, countries in the region will be more empowered to adapt to the challenges of the 21st century and to seize its many opportunities," Chung said.

The ADB said it is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty.



Regional Updates

Australia-funded coral restoration project underway in Zambales

RESTORATION work is underway in damaged reefs in Iba, Zambales in northeastern Philippines through a P15.3-million project funded by the Australian Embassy.

The Mead Foundation, one of the implementers, said the two-year project will use several best practices for coral restoration for the first time in the Philippines.

"Essentially, we want to help restore coral reefs and promote greater resilience in our project sites, not only in Zambales but also in other parts of the

country in future," Ben Mead, founder of The Mead Foundation, said in a statement on Tuesday.

Professor Peter Harrison of Australia's Southern Cross University, the project lead, said it is "an exciting opportunity to combine both larval restoration of corals using millions of larvae cultured from coral spawning events, with traditional coral gardening approaches to restore coral communities in damaged reef areas near Iba."

The Marine Environment and Resources Foundation, Inc. of the University of the Philippines-Marine Science Institute is also involved in the coral conservation program.

Mr. Mead said "the project is designed for long term impact, and whilst the funding from the Australian Government covers the project's first two years' of operation, we have plans to make this project self-sustaining in future."

Coral restoration will be undertaken in areas covered by the Calanga Marine Protected Area (MPA) and nearby MPAs.

"This aims to improve local fishing community earnings through improved catch and eco-tourism," Mr. Mead said.

"As part of our initiative we have opened a dive shop located near the project area, so recreational divers can experience the project research as well as other good reef sites nearby. All the profits go to sustaining the conservation project and helping with the management of the MPA, and in that way we plan for it to become self-sustaining," he said. — MSJ

Baguio solicits proposals for hydroelectric, bulk water, cable car projects

THE BAGUIO City government has put up three projects — a renewable energy plant, water supply, and transport — for proposals as part of its priority investments program.

"The city government is accepting proposals for three more big ticket projects:

Asin Hydro Electric Plant, Cable Car System as Public Transport, Bulk Water," it said in a post on its official Facebook page late Tuesday.

Proposals may be submitted starting this week to Sept. 22.

City Budget Officer Leticia O. Clemente, in a separate statement on Monday, said they recently presented the local government's 12 priority investment areas to local businessmen, which will be pursued through various financing schemes, including public-private partnership (PPP).

"On water and energy resources development," Ms. Clemente said the city government is looking to set up a "waste-to-energy project, rehabilitate the city-owned Asin minihydro power plants and revive

the bulk water supply and distribution project."

The cable car project is part of the planned mass transportation and facilities system, which also includes an intermodal transport terminal, multi-level parking, and elevated monorail, among others.

Other priority investment areas include Smart City mobility system and information technology-enabled services; tourism-oriented and related establishments such as parks development, eco park and multi-level greenhouse at Botanical Garden; market development and slaughterhouse modernization; mass housing; and business incubation hubs and co-working spaces, among others.

Ms. Clemente said aside from the PPP scheme, they are looking to bankroll the projects using local revenue collection, borrowing or bond flotation, foreign and local grants, capital income from sale or use of assets, or a combination of these different options. — MSJ

Red tide warning up in three provinces

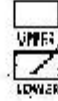
THE BUREAU of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) has issued a red tide notice on the coastal waters of Davao and Tagbilaran City in Bohol; Dumanquillas Bay in Zamboanga del Sur; and Lianga Bay in Surigao del Sur.

Based on BFAR's latest laboratory results, shellfish collected from these areas still tested positive for paralytic shellfish poison or toxic red tide beyond the regulatory limit.

All types of shellfish and *Acetes* sp. or *alamang* gathered from these waters are not safe for human consumption, according to the agency.

Meanwhile, fish, squids, shrimps, and crabs are considered safe for human consumption provided that these are fresh and washed thoroughly, and internal organs such as gills and intestines are removed before cooking.

People who consume shellfish contaminated with red tide can experience gastrointestinal and neurological distress, nausea, diarrhea, dizziness, muscular aches, and tingling in the tongue, lips, throat and extremities. — Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jacson



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Maynilad gives hygiene supplies to 112 schools

WEST Zone concessionaire Maynilad Water Services, Inc. (Maynilad) donated pandemic essentials to 112 public schools within its service area, in support of the Brigada Eskwela 2022 program of the Department of Education (DepEd).

The water company turned over 810 bottles of liquid soap, 12,400 washable facemasks, 5,300 pieces of bottled water, and wash buckets to 14 School Division Offices for the use of school personnel and indigent students.

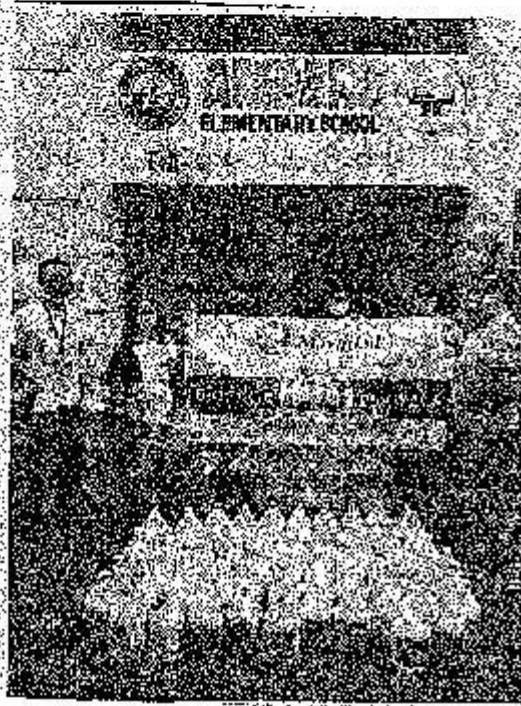
Aside from these donations, Maynilad is also installing at least 40 modular handwashing stations in several schools to reinforce the habit of proper handwashing among students. Furthermore, the company is conducting W.A.S.H. (Water, Sanitation, Hygiene) training sessions online, reaching some 5,144 educators to-

date.

During the kickoff of DepEd's Oplan Balik Eskwela Command Conference last August 15, Maynilad also vowed to intensify water quality testing in sampling points within school vicinity. The company will also ensure that its excavations near schools are safe and passable for pedestrians and motorists, and that requests for septic tank in-

stalling will be prioritized.

Maynilad aims to make the transition from distance learning to in-person classes smooth and safe for our children by providing items that are essential for Covid-19 prevention and equipping our educators with W.A.S.H. training," said Maynilad President and CEO Ramoncito S. Fernandez.





Why a flying fox in Masungi is good news for Metro Manila

ONE of the largest bats in the world, the mottle-winged flying fox (*Desmalopex leucop-terus*), has been seen in the Masungi landscape. This was confirmed by mammal researchers Maria Dichoso and Joel Samiento. It is the first time this elusive flying fox was documented in Rizal province. The sighting occurred a few days into a research expedition supported by the Canadian embassy through the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives and the Buhay-Ilang research team.

The flying fox belongs to a genus of bats that can only be seen in the Philippines and is endemic to Luzon. It has medium to pale brown wings with white blotches on the edge of the wing and around the wingtip. Its resembles a fox in appearance, hence the name, but is actually a bat. The mottle-winged flying fox resides in mountainous and forested areas in Luzon. Scientists have collected their specimen at the Dalton Pass. There have been accounts of their sighting in Balbalasang, Kalinga province, which hints at their seasonal movement.

This is a significant "discovery" as it confirms that the Masungi's efforts at reforestation are working. According to Dichoso, "It says a lot about Masungi to see this type of flying fox as it tends to forage in smaller groups and in cluttered



URBANISTA

DAPHNE
OSEÑA PAEZ

canopies to lessen their exposure to predators. There is an abundance of food resources found in Masungi which the flying foxes use as a foraging site. This indicates Masungi is protected and has a healthy forest within its borders."

Dichoso says that during the first leg of their research in February 2022, the Mammals Team saw an unidentified bat species flying around the areas, feeding on the young flowers of the cotton trees and figs. Since they are bigger than the average common bat, they are easily seen and observed. These bat species are motivated by foraging. They help in pollinating and dispersing seeds of native trees.

In January 2021, I visited Masungi Georeserve, a conservation area with an adventure geo-tourism site with moderate to difficult treks and climbs amidst suspension bridges and walkways. Together with our three daughters, we did the Discovery Trail one day and the Legacy Trail the next. It was a fantastic experience navigating through rope bridges and caves. The Legacy trail actively

exposed us to reforestation efforts. Each participant got to plant trees. The trek included a brief lecture on the importance of reforestation in order to regenerate the Upper Marikina watershed.

It was great to have the children plant trees in Masungi where they had a view of Metro Manila. They had context and saw its relation to the mountains. They learned firsthand how trees can help prevent floods and erosion. They saw different species of birds like flying lizards and native flowers like the Tayabak or jade vine. My kids are familiar with my hobby of growing Philippine native trees in my nursery at home. We usually give away our native tree seedlings as presents or plant them in areas near our small farm in Cavite.

My hobby of growing Philippine native trees started from saving little wildlings in my village park. Wildlings are infant trees that found their way to grow by embedding themselves in the ground. They don't have much chance of survival in our park because there isn't enough space and the park is used for play. I give them a second chance to live by scooping them out, complete with the root system and soil, and replant them in small pots. When they reach at least 2 feet in height, they are ready to be planted. I

run a small native tree adoption nursery in my home. It is a one-woman show, with occasional help from my husband and three children. It can easily be scaled up with minimal cost.

The confirmation of the existence of the endemic flying fox in Masungi is a very significant development not just for Masungi or the giant bats, but for residents of Metro Manila and its surroundings. We plant native trees so that we can encourage biodiversity in the Upper Marikina watershed. But all these are just trendy buzzwords for keyboard activists and savvy entrepreneurs. It is when we really see endemic animals, insects and birds and beautiful rare flowering trees and vines that we feel we have proof that our reforestation efforts make sense. Apparently it is not enough that our own existence as Metro Manila urbanites is made possible by the water supply that is sourced from the Upper Marikina watershed. Or that the trees in Masungi help protect Metro Manila residents from floods and landslides.

The forest rangers, researchers and friends of Masungi are doing their best. The flying fox is a good indicator of small wins. We shall celebrate. But this is not enough. We need stronger protection and enforcement of an anti-logging and mining ban in the area. Every urbanista in Metro Manila should be involved and concerned.



GOTCHA
JARIUS BONDOC

Compel barangays to collect rainwater



Thirty-three years ago, all barangays were obligated to collect rainwater. Hardly any has complied. The aim of the Rainwater Collector and Springs Development Act of 1989, R.A. 6716, is simple. Reduce floods during the wet season and have water during the dry. Flooding and drought are of crisis proportion today. Won't anyone act yet?

The Department of Public Works and Highways was supposed to pinpoint the lowest areas of every barangay. Rainwater catchments shall be dug up there. The wider and deeper, the better. Canals can be directed and drainpipes laid down onto the impoundments.

Barangays can have food. Plant vegetables and fruits around the impoundments. With surrounding soil always wet, harvest will be plenty. Seed the ponds with tilapia, carp, catfish and mudfish. Probably rock crabs and frogs too. Those will prevent the spread of mosquitoes. Use vegetable trimmings and kitchen peelings for feeds. Also manure from a chicken coop built atop the pond. Richer barangay residents can donate growth pellets.

Impoundments can be barangay recreation parks. Shade trees can be planted, and huts and umbrella tables set up. If the pond is big enough, put paddle boats. Charge upkeep fees.

Barangays can have drinking water. The Department of Science and Technology, community engineers and technology students can put their heads together. Filter chambers can be designed to clean the water. Before the final chamber can be one with clear enough water for showers, toilets and dishwashing as picnic amenities.

Water impounding has long been practiced. From the air in Australia's arid zones, one can spot a series of giant "turkey nests" on hilltops. For irrigation, water is released into canals spiraling down the hillsides, gathering momentum, to gush onto farms. Former Rep. Felicitio Payumo adopted the method in his Bataan home province in the 1980s. He was past president of Engineering Equipment Inc.

For community-level impoundment, consult for free environment lawyer Antonio Oposa. He has dug several in the subdivision where he lives south of Manila. Years ago, the Supreme Court affirmed Oposa's case to compel national and local governments to clean up Manila Bay and surrounding rivers.

Malls, factories, office and residential condos, churches, schools and homes must have their own catchments. Rainwater can be collected from roofs, gutters and downspouts. From the catchments can be derived free water for firefighting, gardening, hosing cars, garages, fences, walls and windows. Such architecture was common in the 1960s. India, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand copied it.

The typhoon season is upon us. Floods again threaten to destroy lowland homes, shops, cars, furniture, appliances and personal records. Yet mountainside quarrying goes on. The mindset of natural resource bureaucrats is that they're there to parcel off rock quarries for construction. To hell with the garbage-producing dwellers below.

Behind each quarry is a politico as owner or protector. In Congress, they arm-twist environment officials to shut up. Confirmation hearings of Cabinet members are ongoing.

Expect outcries due to flooding deaths. Expect the news to die down till next year's disasters. And so it goes.

At the Marikina Watershed in Rizal thrive quarries and illegal swimming pool resorts. Having carved up the mountains, chopped down trees and diverted riverways, their armed goons control the uplands. Park rangers of Masungi Georeserve in Baras town are being shot at and mauled to scam. Their lives are in danger. "We don't know how long we can hold the line," reforestation foundation head Ben Dumaliang laments. He pays the rangers from modest incomes from eco-tourists in the Masungi limestone and rewilding site.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau insists that there will always be floods in the valley of Marikina, San Mateo, Cainta and Quezon City below. Yes, but the quarries up there worsen and hasten the floods. Scientists from the National Museum, University of the Philippines, UN Development Program, International Union for Conservation of Nature and World Commission on Protected Areas said so. Same with past environment secretaries Angel Alcalá, Gina Lopez and Roy Cimatu.

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Catch Sapul radio show, Saturdays, 8 to 10 a.m., dwtz.com (882-AM).



'Condone farmers' debts to boost growth'

By JOVEL MARTEA DELA CRUZ

A LEADER of the House of Representatives has filed House Bill (HB) 3797, or the New Agrarian Emancipation Act, which will result in the condonation of agrarian debts of 654,000 agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs), possessing or overseeing a total of 1.18 million hectares of awarded lands.

House Committee on Ways and Means Chairman Joey Salceda's version was endorsed by the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) and is the administration version of the reform that President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. proposed in his State of

the Nation Address last July. This measure—first proposed by this representation in the 1990s, then as a private sector analyst and later officially to the Cabinet in 2017 during his stint in the Arroyo administration as Presidential Chief of

Stipulations for the land transferred to them under the CARP are imposed an annual interest of 6 percent and should be paid in 30 years. However, only 17 percent of ARBs are paying their amortization, resulting in massive loan defaults, Salceda said.

"As such, liens and encumbrances are attached to their lands, making these beneficiaries unable to sell their lands, and making such lands idle in the absence of a financial capable or willing farmer to exploit them," the lawmaker explained.

The proposal will release farmers from debt and release lands from unproductive possession by condoning agrarian reform debts, lifting liens and encumbrances on agrarian reform land.

This will allow the transfer of such lands to younger farmers or more efficient users, allow existing ARBs to collateralize their land for productive credit, and unlock trans-

fer taxes for the national government," Salceda said.

Estate tax incentives

SALCEDA also crafted an incentives package for those who have already paid part or all of their agrarian reform debts.

He explained that the proposal also includes an estate tax amnesty as an incentive for those who have paid part of their amortizations until June 30, 2025.

The lawmaker said he expects the measure to yield P6.1 billion in additional estate tax collections every year.

Salceda said the proposal also mandates the Department of Agriculture and the DAR to compile a list of support programs where ARBs that have paid part of their amortizations will be given preference to.

"This will serve as an equalizing provision for those who have exerted efforts to pay at least part of their amortizations."

Staff—is long overdue, and will cost the government only some P58.125 billion in receivables that the government has found difficult to collect anyway," Salceda was quoted in a statement as saying.

The lawmaker added that "the productive capacities that such emancipation will unlock far outweigh the fiscal implications, which have already been incurred anyway."

Salceda noted that National Scientist and Economist Raul V. Fabella estimates that in 2019 alone the economy lost P390 billion in economic activity due to suboptimal use of agrarian reform lands.

Manned to the land

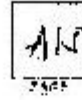
THE lawmaker explained that debt burden has also meant that farmers are "manned to their land" rather than economically uplifted, which was the initial purpose of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

He added that the ARBs' obli-



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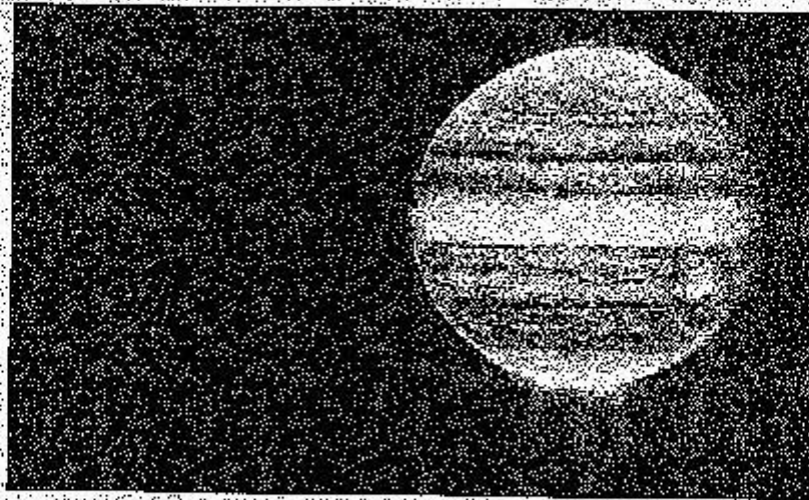
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THIS image provided by NASA shows a false color composite image of Jupiter obtained by the James Webb Space Telescope on July 27, 2022. The planet's rings and some of its small satellites are visible along with background galaxies. NASA/ESA/AS

NEW SPACE TELESCOPE SHOWS JUPITER'S AURORAS, TINY MOONS

By MARCIA DUBOW
AP Space Writer

CANE CANAVERAL, Fla.—The world's newest and biggest space telescope is showing Jupiter as never before, auroras and all.

Scientists released the shots Monday of the solar system's biggest planet.

The James Webb Space Telescope took the photos in July, capturing unprecedented views of Jupiter's northern and southern lights, and swirling polar haze. Jupiter's Great Red Spot, a storm big enough to swallow Earth, stands out brightly alongside countless smaller storms.

One wide-field picture is particularly dramatic, showing the faint rings around the planet, as well as two tiny moons against a glittering background of galaxies.

"We've never seen Jupiter like this. It's all

quite incredible," said planetary astronomer Mike de Pater, of the University of California, Berkeley, who co-led the observations.

"We didn't really expect it to be this good to be honest," he added in a statement.

The infrared images were artificially colored in blue, white, green, yellow and orange, according to the U.S.-French research team, to make the features stand out.

NASA and the European Space Agency's \$10 billion successor to the Hubble Space Telescope rocketed away at the end of last year and has been observing the cosmos in the infrared since summer. Scientists hope to behold the dawn of the universe with Webb, peering all the way back to when the first stars and galaxies were forming, 13.7 billion years ago.

The observatory is positioned 1 million miles (1.6 million kilometers) from Earth.