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DENR's 18th Secretary

Monday, July 25, 2022 Journal Online







Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary for Legal, Administration, Human Resources, and Legislative Affairs and former DENR OIC Secretary Ernesto D. Adobo Jr. (left) hands over the DENR flag to the new DENR Secretary Ma. Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga (right) during the turnover of the agency's leadership at the DENR Central Office in Quezon City on July 21. Yulo-Loyzaga brings to the Department her years of experience as President of the National Resilience Council, Chairperson of the International Advisory Board of the Manila Observatory, and member of the Senior Advisory Board of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Command and General Staff College, among others. Yulo-Loyzaga is the 18th Secretary of the **DENR** since its reorganization in 1987.



Panayam kay DENR Sec. Toni Yulo-Loyzaga tungkol sa plano at programang isasagawa ng DENR

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Panayam kay DENR Sec. Toni Yulo-Loyzaga tungkol sa plano at programang isasagawa ng DENR

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Environment, anti-mining advocates start ‘courtship’ of new DENR chief

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA JULY 25, 2022

Bearing flowers, fruits, seafood, and crafts from what they described as “mining sites of struggles,” environmental and anti-mining groups under the Alyansa Tigil Mina on Monday trooped to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and appealed to the new environmental agency to implement the group’s “First 100 Days Agenda.”

In what appears to be a romantic courtship, they serenaded Ma. Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga on the day of the State of the Nation Address (Sona) of President Ferdinand “Bongbong” R. Marcos Jr.

“We are here on the day of the SONA to show our openness to work with the new DENR Secretary in order to advance the cause of mining communities against destructive mining,” Jaybee Garganera, ATM National Coordinator said.

Christel Yparraguire of Baywatch Foundation Inc. pointed out “that many with vested interests in the mining industry will also woo the new DENR Secretary, but we appeal to Secretary Yulo-Loyzaga to take our side as we will stand by her pro-environment and scientific stance that serves to benefit future generations and mining-affected communities, and address climate change.”

Malou Verano from Aroroy, Masbate, and a member of ATM’s Women and Mining Working Group said, “It is time that the mining industry is rationalized and that the ban on open-pit mining be again enforced.”

“Mining destroys our communities and deprives us of our livelihood and sources of food. Also, it causes pollution of our food and waters and severely affects our health. We have had no choice but to endure, eat contaminated food and suffer from tuberculosis and food poisoning,” Verano said.

The group submitted their First 100 Days Agenda to the Office of the DENR Secretary. The agenda includes the revocation of EO 130 or Duterte’s mining policy, as well as the imposition of a ban on open-pit mining.

“Should Secretary Yulo-Loyzaga choose to listen to our demands, she can be assured that we will support her until the end until our agenda are met and implemented. She will have our support against corporate mining interests and those who would try to use her to destroy the environment and communities for the sake of profit,” Garganera said.



Marcos SONA: A lot of talk on environment, not as much on its defenders

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) - Philstar.com July 25, 2022 | 9:47pm



Philippine president Ferdinand Marcos Jr (C) delivers his first State of the Nation address at the House of Representatives in Quezon City, suburban Manila on July 25, 2022.

AFP/Jam Sta. Rosa

MANILA, Philippines — While climate change—an issue put on the back burner during the election campaign—was mentioned at least six times in the first State of the Nation Address of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., his speech was silent about the threats faced by Filipino climate advocates and environmental defenders.

The Philippines is among the countries most exposed to climate change hazards. It is also consistently identified as one of the most dangerous countries for protectors of nature.

In his speech delivered before Congress, Marcos stressed the use of renewable energy is "at the top" of the government's climate agenda. But he also spoke about the development of nuclear and fossil gas in the same address.

He also said that capacity building for disaster resiliency is a must. "Investment in science and technology is imperative to enable us to have accurate weather forecasts and on-time disaster alerts."

Marcos added there should be disaster-proof planning for communities affected by sea level rise and efforts to look for more sources of fresh water.

Marcos has appointed disaster resilience expert Toni Yulo-Loyzaga to lead the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Proper enforcement of laws

The chief executive also emphasized that laws on the environment must be properly enforced. The DENR has been often criticized in recent years for the weak implementation of laws that are supposed to protect the country's rich ecosystems and natural resources.

"Companies who exploit our natural resources must follow the law. We all have the responsibility to preserve this Earth, for we are but custodians, and we will pass on this treasure to future generations," Marcos said.

"There is no question that the preservation of the environment is the preservation of life," he added.

Environmental group Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment, however, warned that Marcos' promise to construct more international airports, railway and transport systems, solar and wind farms, nuclear power plants, and dams will cause the destruction of forests, farmlands, and other critical landscapes and seascapes.



"Despite all the rosy rhetoric of responding to worsening disasters and pursuing renewable energy, the proposed-private partnership model for these economic projects has a track record of bringing displacement and conflict to communities and defenders," said Leon Dulce, national coordinator of Kalikasan PNE.

Uneasy silence

Green groups also criticized the lack of mention of human rights in Marcos' first SONA.

"While climate change was woven in agriculture, health and energy themes, Marcos Jr. was distressingly silent about mining issues, human rights, indigenous and women rights, extrajudicial killings and environmental defenders," Alyansa Tigil Mina national coordinator Jaybee Garganera said.

According to a report of watchdog Global Witness, the Philippines remained the worst place in Asia for land and environmental defenders in 2020. Kalikasan PNE, for its part, recorded six new attacks against environmental defenders in the two months after the May elections.

"We thus fear more human rights abuses against environment and other human rights defenders," Dulce said.

Renewable energy among Marcos Jr.'s agenda in addressing climate change

July 25, 2022



President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. during his maiden State of the Nation Address on Monday, July 25

By Gabriela Baron

The use of renewable energy is at the top of President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr.'s agenda in fighting climate change.

In his maiden State of the Nation Address, Marcos Jr. said the government is eyeing to increase the country's use of hydropower, geothermal power, solar power, and wind power.

"Geographically, we are a disaster-prone country. Capacity building for our natural disaster resilience is, therefore, a must," he said.

Marcos Jr. noted that investment in science and technology is imperative to enable the government to give accurate weather forecasts and on-time disaster alerts.

"Studies show that already many areas in the Philippines are at high risk from the rise in sea levels brought about by the increase in global temperature. We must adapt to this phenomenon with disaster-proof planning of our communities," he added.

Marcos Jr. said his administration will also look into the freshwater supply situation in the country, especially in the urban areas.

"Many of our water supply systems date back to the 1950s and they must now be rehabilitated and improved," he added.

The President said he has instructed Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Toni Yulo-Loyzaga and Department of Public Works and Highways Secretary Manny Bonoan to explore partnerships with the private sector to address the situation.

"Companies who exploit our natural resources must follow the law. We all have the responsibility to preserve this Earth, for we are but custodians and we will pass on this treasure to future generations," Marcos Jr. said.

"There is no question that the preservation of the environment is the preservation of life. If we cannot mitigate climate change, all our plans for the economy, for our future, will be for naught."
ngs

Source: <https://ptvnews.ph/renewable-energy-among-marcos-jr-s-agenda-in-addressing-climate-change/>



Marcos says to prioritize use of renewable energy to address climate change

Rose Carmelle Lacuata, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jul 25 2022 06:17 PM | Updated as of Jul 25 2022 10:59 PM



President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos, Jr. delivers his 1st State of the Nation Address at the House of Representatives on July 25, 2022. *RTVM Screengrab*

Marcos eyes rehab of water supply systems

MANILA (UPDATE) - President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said Monday his administration will prioritize the use of renewable energy sources to cushion the impacts of climate change in the Philippines.

Marcos, in his first State of the Nation Address (SONA), said although the Philippines is considered a minor contributor to climate change, it is one of the countries most vulnerable to its effects.

In order to alleviate the effects of climate change, he said there is a need to prioritize the use of renewable energy sources.

"The use of renewable energy is at the top of our climate agenda. We will increase our use of renewable energy sources such as hydropower, geothermal power, solar and wind," he said.

There is also a need to invest in technology to provide more accurate weather forecasts and disaster alerts, he said.

"Geographically, we are a disaster-prone country. Capacity building for our natural disaster resilience is therefore a must. Investment in science and technology is imperative to enable us to have accurate weather forecast and on-time disaster alerts," said Marcos.

He pushed for disaster-proofing of communities, especially those that are already affected by climate change.

"Studies show that already now, many areas in the Philippines are at high risk from the rise in sea levels brought about by the increase in global temperature," he said.

"We must adapt to this phenomenon with disaster-proof planning for our communities."

Consumer group Power for People Coalition, meanwhile, said it was "disappointed" that Marcos' renewable energy plans were "full of contradictions" given that gas remained necessary during the transition.



"President Marcos' energy plans are at odds with what he promises. He cannot say that renewable energy is his top agenda when he is peddling nuclear and natural gas, both of which are not clean sources of energy, not to mention the environmental risks and hazards that come with it." said Gerry Arances, convener of the group.

They urged Marcos to follow through with his plans.

"Renewable energy is a top priority not just by saying it, but committing to minimizing, then eliminating the use of fossil fuels to protect the environment and consumers. It's disappointing to hear him talk about incentives and bill for gas and action point for nuclear but no actual plans for renewable energy," he added.

NUCLEAR POWER

Marcos, who advocated for the revival of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant during his presidential campaign, said "it was time to reexamine" the country's strategy in building nuclear power plants locally, noting that public-private partnerships would help fund future nuclear projects.

He also assured the public that the government would follow international regulations on nuclear operations.

"In the area of nuclear power, there have been new tech developed that allows small-scale modular nuclear plants and other derivations. PPPs will play a part in support," he said during his address.

The Department of Energy had said the country's nuclear energy push is possible under the current administration as more countries veer away from the use of coal-fired power plants, which have contributed to large carbon emissions detrimental to the environment.

Government, however, will need a proper regulation framework and a strong foundation to build new nuclear power plants or revive the one in Bataan, given the wide skepticism surrounding it due to safety issues.

WATER SUPPLY

Aside from prioritizing the use of renewable energy, Marcos said there is a need to rehabilitate and improve the country's water supply systems.

This can be done by looking for more sources of fresh water and working with the private sector.

"We will also look into the precarious fresh water supply situation in the country, especially in our urban areas. Many of our water supply systems date back to the 1950s, and they must now be rehabilitated and improved," Marcos said.

"I've instructed the DENR, together with the DPWH to explore positive partnerships with the private sector to address this crucial situation," he added.

In terms of protecting the environment, Marcos said companies exploiting the country's natural resources should follow environmental laws.

"The Philippines has excellent laws on the environment, but we have to guarantee that these laws are properly enforced. And this will require a great deal of coordination and cooperation between concerned government agencies and private stakeholders. Companies who exploit our natural resources must follow the law," he said.

"We all have the responsibility to preserve this earth. For we are but custodians and we will pass on this great treasure to future generations," he added.



"There is no question that the preservation of the environment is the preservation of life. If we cannot mitigate climate change, all our plans for the economy, all our plans for our future will be for naught."

Climate change is among the biggest global challenges. Former President Rodrigo Duterte himself had said he hoped the Marcos administration would do better in addressing the issue.

Newly-appointed Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Toni Yulo-Loyzaga earlier said she will prioritize fighting climate emergency and protecting indigenous species.



Marcos pushes for gas, nuclear development alongside renewables

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) - Philstar.com July 25, 2022 | 7:25pm



Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr delivers his first State of the Nation address at the House of Representatives in Quezon City, suburban Manila on July 25, 2022.

AFP/Pool/Aaron Favila

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. reiterated Monday the need to adopt nuclear and develop fossil gas—two energy sources that groups say will impede the transition to renewable energy and threaten host communities.

In his first State of the Nation Address, Marcos stressed that increasing the use of renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, hydropower, and geothermal power is “at the top of our climate agenda.”

But in the same speech, the chief executive also spoke about the development of new power plants and the use of natural gas—or fossil gas—as another energy source alongside renewables.

"Nuclear and fossil gas should be out of the picture today; it's hypocritical to talk about addressing the climate crisis while prioritizing dangerous energy sources," Greenpeace Philippines campaigner Khevin Yu said.

Marcos called on Congress to enact an enabling law seeking to foster the midstream natural gas industry “by diversifying the country’s primary sources of energy and promoting the role of natural gas as a complementary fuel to variable renewable energy.”

"We will provide investment incentives by clarifying the uncertain policy in upstream gas, particularly in the area close to Malampaya," Marcos added, referring to the deep water gas-to-gas power in Palawan.

The Philippines is currently scaling up the development of infrastructure that will support the import of liquefied natural gas. The proposed LNG plants and terminals also threaten the marine frontiers where these projects will be built, such as the Verde Island Passage, and the coastal communities that depend on these waters.

Natural gas has been pitched as a “bridge fuel” that can help the shift to a lower-carbon economy. Climate and energy campaigners, however, say that fossil gas produces potent greenhouse gas methane, and blocks the transition to cleaner and cheaper sources of energy.

Nuclear strategy

Marcos also reiterated his determination to adopt nuclear power, saying “it is time to re-examine our strategy towards building nuclear power plants.”



The chief executive said the government will comply with the regulations of the International Atomic Energy Agency for nuclear power plants and mentioned technologies that allow smaller scale modular nuclear plants and other derivations.

"Once again, PPPs will play a part in support as funding in this period is limited," he said.

During the election campaign, Marcos said the country should look into reviving his father's venture—the 621-megawatt Bataan Nuclear Power Plant, which was mothballed in 1986 because of safety concerns.

In a statement, Power for People Coalition said that Marcos' energy plans are at odds with what he promises. It also criticized the lack of actual plans for the development of renewable energy.

"Marcos was on point on renewable energy as a priority both for lowering costs and transition, but his plans were distracted and unsound with his push for LNG and nuclear," P4P convenor Gerry Arances said.

"However, the more we invest in imported, expensive, capital-intensive gas-powered facilities, the harder it becomes to discard them, essentially locking us into using gas instead of moving forward to renewable energy. And the more we rely on fossil fuels, the more consumers suffer during times of high prices in the world market, as we are experiencing now," he added.



Renewable energy tops Marcos admin's climate change agenda

July 25, 2022 3 min read

MANILA – President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. on Monday pushed for the transition to renewable energy to mitigate the worst impacts of climate change on the country.

Marcos, in his first State of the Nation Address (SONA) delivered at Batasan Pambansa in Quezon City, said the use of renewable energy will top his administration's climate change agenda.

“We will increase our use of renewable energy sources such as hydropower, geothermal, solar, and wind,” said Marcos, whose home province Ilocos Norte houses the now-famous Windmills of Bangui.

The shift to renewable energy is seen as a solution to help slow down the effects of climate change.

The United Nations-body Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), in its report released in April 2022, bared that solar and wind energy and batteries have shown sustained cost reductions of up to 85 percent since 2010.

Many policies and laws have improved energy efficiency, reduced deforestation rates, and accelerated renewable energy deployment, according to the IPCC report.

Marcos emphasized the need to promote the use of renewable energy, as he noted that the Philippines is a disaster-prone country.

Given the country's geographical situation, capacity-building for natural disaster resiliency is “a must,” he said.

Marcos said investing in science and technology would enable the government to have accurate weather forecasts and on-time disaster alerts.

“For the welfare of our people, it is incumbent upon us to lessen our vulnerability,” he said. “Studies show that many areas in the Philippines are already at high risk from the rise in sea levels brought about by the increase in global temperature. We must adapt to this phenomenon with disaster-proof urban planning.

Partnership with private sector

The Philippines, though a minor contributor to climate change globally, is one of the most vulnerable countries to the effects of climate change.



Marcos also raised alarm over the precarious fresh water supply situation in the country, especially in urban areas.

“Many of our water supply systems date back to the 1950’s and they must already be rehabilitated and improved,” he said.

He then directed Environment Secretary Ma. Antonia “Toni” Yulo-Loyzaga and Public Works Secretary “Manuel” Manny Bonoan “to explore possible partnerships with the private sector to address this critical situation.”

“There is no question that the preservation of the environment is preservation of life. If we cannot mitigate climate change, all our plans for the economy will be for naught,” Marcos said.

Marcos said environmental laws and policies must be followed when the government forges partnership with the private sector.

“Companies who exploit our natural resources must follow the law. We all have the responsibility to preserve the Earth, for we are but custodians, and we will pass this treasure on to future generations,” he said.

Marcos, in his inaugural speech delivered on June 30, mentioned plastic pollution and climate change as among critical issues his administration will address.

Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno earlier said Marcos will continue pursuing a whole-of-nation approach in mitigating climate risks. **(PNA)**



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Pres. Marcos Jr. on climate change: Renewable energy is top of our climate agenda.
#SONA2022

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MBG6 underscores hazard maps on disaster preparedness

Published on: July 25, 2022

By Franz Remar Garion

ILOILO CITY (PIA) -- The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) 6 highlighted the significance of geological hazard maps to disaster preparedness measures of local government units (LGUs) and the public.

In a recent online Kapihan program, MGB 6 Geosciences Division chief Mae Y. Magarzo underscored that the Bureau, as an attached agency of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), has been mandated to conduct assessments of hydrometeorological hazards.

These hazards, according to her, include rain-induced landslides and flooding.

“We started with the National Geohazard Mapping Program way back in 2005 and continued up to the present,” she noted.

Magarzo added that from 2005 to 2010, they conducted 1:50,000 scale geohazard mapping for landslide and flood susceptibility across the country. It was then followed by the conduct of a detailed geohazard assessment and mapping from 2011 to 2014.

With this, all the 133 cities and municipalities in Western Visayas were assessed and mapped and were the recipient of the 1:10,000 scale geohazard maps for landslide and flood susceptibility.

“Right now, we started with the updating of the geohazard maps of all the municipalities and cities covered by the region. We started it with the vulnerability risk assessment (VRA) of three elements. So, we are producing the risk exposure maps for population, build-up areas, and road networks,” said Magarzo.





According to her, there are five towns targeted to be accomplished for VRA this year. These include San Joaquin in Iloilo and Buenavista, Sibunag, San Lorenzo and Nueva Valencia in Guimaras.

Apart from VRA, MGB 6 is also conducting the Karst Subsidence Hazard Assessment (KSHA) which maps and promotes awareness of the various sinkholes, and the Coastal Geohazard Mapping and Assessment (CGMA) which aims to identify potential geohazards affecting coastal areas in the region.

Under the KSHA, they target to cover the town of Dingle in Iloilo province, while the CGMA covers the eight municipalities from Guimbal, Iloilo to San Jose de Buenavista, Antique.

Meanwhile, Magarzo stressed that "the

purpose of the geohazard mapping and assessment is to serve as a tool for LGUs in the crafting of their respective Comprehensive Land Use Plans and Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plans."

These will be the guide of the local authorities to determine areas prone to certain hazards for preparedness measures and will give them the direction as to where their developmental plans shall be put up.

As a reminder, she advised the LGUs to make use of and consult these geohazard maps, especially this season when hydrometeorological hazards are being anticipated. (JBG/FRG/PIA6)



Mahigpit ang gagawing pagbabantay ng Bulacan Environment and Natural Resources laban sa mga iligal na pagmimina ng lupa at pagpuputol ng puno. (BENRO File photo)

Illegal quarrying, logging mahigpit na babantayan ng BENRO

Published on: July 25, 2022

By Vinson Concepcion

LUNGSOD NG MALOLOS (PIA) – Mahigpit ang gagawing pagbabantay ng Bulacan Environment and Natural Resources o BENRO laban sa mga iligal na pagmimina ng lupa at pagpuputol ng puno.

Ito’y matapos naglatag ang nasabing tanggapan ng siyam na checkpoint upang tiyakin na ang mga nagbyabyahe ng quarry materials ay mula sa mga lugar na may permiso o permit lamang.

Ayon kay BENRO Head Julius Victor Degala, paiigtingin nila ang pagbabantay sa mga illegal na nagmimina at nagtrotroso upang protektahan ang kapaligiran ng buong lalawigan.

Bilang karagdagan, bumuo rin ang kanilang tanggapan ng roving team na magbabantay sa mga checkpoint bukod pa sa regular na alas otso ng umaga hanggang alas singko ng hapon.

Nilinaw naman ni Gobernador Daniel Fernando na mataas ang pangangailangan sa quarrying at nagbibigay ito ng hanapbuhay sa mga Bulakenyo ngunit kailangan itong kontrolin at mahigpit na bantayan.

Aniya, ang regulated at permitted quarrying ay namomonitor kung kaya hindi tahasang nasisira ang kapaligiran dahil dito.

Ang illegal quarrying ang kalaban at ‘yun ang patuloy na binabantayan at nilalabanan

Sa ilalim ng termino ni Fernando, nakapag-monitor at nakapag-patrolya na ang BENRO ng may 468 ulat laban sa illegal logging.

Nakapagbantay at nakapag-imbetiga dito ito sa 181 quarries at mining concerns; nakapagsuri sa 35,494 sasakyan kaugnay sa kanilang accreditation stickers; at nakapagkolekta ng 128,551 piraso ng delivery receipts at transport slips. (CLJD/VFC-PIA 3)

Source: <https://pia.gov.ph/news/2022/07/25/illegal-quarrying-logging-mahigpit-na-babantayan-ng-benro>



Bulacan gov't intensifies measures vs. illegal quarrying, logging

Published July 25, 2022, 2:08 PM

by [Freddie Velez](#)

To further protect the environment from illegal quarrying operations and illegal loggers, the Provincial Government of Bulacan headed by Governor Daniel R. Fernando, through the Bulacan Environment and Natural Resources Office (BENRO), established a total of nine checkpoints all over the province starting Monday, July 25, to stop the transport of quarrying materials and hot logs.



Bulacan Provincial Capitol (Freddie Velez)

According to BENRO head Attorney Julius Victor De Gala, the checkpoints will make sure that quarrying and timber materials will only be sourced and transported from legitimate sources.

De Gala said a roving team was created to watch the checkpoints outside the regular 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. hours of operations.

Fernando admitted that quarrying is in high demand and provides jobs for the Bulakenyos but unregulated quarrying has led to the destruction of the environment.

“Ang illegal quarrying po ang kalaban at ‘yun ang patuloy nating binabantayan at nilalabanan,” (Illegal quarrying is the culprit here so we need to continue to monitor and fight it),” the governor said.

Since 2019, BENRO had monitored 468 illegal logging reports and investigated 181 quarrying and mining concerns. It also checked 35,494 vehicles for accreditation stickers and collected 128,551 pieces of delivery receipts and transport slips.

De Gala added that despite the lockdowns and the rise in the prices of petroleum products, the collection of fines from trucks remains and these fines go straight to the Capitol after the issuance of Official Receipts from the Provincial Treasurer's Office.



Eco-trail in Victorias City gets P1.2M in aid



NEGROS. Negros Occidental Governor Eugenio Jose Lacson leads the turnover of financial assistance amounting to P1.2 million to Barangay VI-A Mangrove Eco-Trail in Zone III Pasil, Victorias City Monday, July 25. (Contributed photo)

July 25, 2022

THE Provincial Government of Negros Occidental has turned over financial assistance amounting to P1.2 million to Barangay VI-A Mangrove Eco-Trail in Zone III Pasil, Victorias City.

Governor Eugenio Jose Lacson led the activity Monday, July 25, 2022.

The project, which is under the Coastal Wetlands Rehabilitation and Conservation Program of the province, included the construction of a mangrove training center and mangrove boardwalk, that will provide livelihood assistance to project beneficiaries as well as to the members of Pasil Fisherfolks Association.

Punong Barangay Anna Mae Claro said that P800,000 will be allocated for the multipurpose hall while the remaining P400,000 is for the Mangrove Boardwalk.

It will also ensure the continuation of seedling production and maintenance of the Provincial Mangrove Nursery, as well as strengthen Information, Education, Communication activities at the Mangrove Training Center.

Provincial Environment Management Office Head lawyer Julie Ann Bedrio and other local officials were also present at the activity. **(PR)**



3 Northern Negros Natural Park trails open



NEGROS. Effective August 1, the Office of the Protected Area Superintendent of the Northern Negros Natural Park (NNNP) will open three official trails for trekking activities. (File photo)

TERESA D. ELLERA

July 24, 2022

THE Office of the Protected Area Superintendent of the Northern Negros Natural Park (NNNP) opened three official trails.

These trails are in Barangay Patag in Silay City, Sitio Campuestuhan in Talisay City and Canlandog in Murcia town, effective August 1.

Engr. Joan Nathaniel Gerangaya, officer-in-charge of the provincial environment and natural resources officer, said they already laid down guidelines in the processing of mountaineering permits for major trekking activities within the NNNP.

But the trekking will only be allowed on the three trails at a weekly interval.

A P300 mountaineering fee will be charged for locals while P500 will be charged for foreigners, he said, adding that a group ratio of 15 climbers and 30 climbers is allowed.

For every five climbers, a tour guide and a porter are required with fees of P750 each for their services.

The NNNP management also strictly implements a "no orientation, no climb policy" and is available both virtual and face-to-face.

A zero-waste commitment is mandatory for all climbers who wish to conduct mountaineering activities inside the NNNP.

To minimize and avoid local transmission of coronavirus disease (Covid-19), trekkers, porters and guides must practice at all times proper health precautionary measures including social distancing, hand sanitation and wearing of face masks.



2nd Marine Brigade launched advocacy bike, clean-up drive



ZAMBOANGA. The 2nd Marine in collaboration with the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (Caap)-Tawi-Tawi and Sanga-Sanga and Tubig Bassag village officials embark on Advocacy Bike and Clean-up Drive dubbed "Bike for a Clean and Safe Runway" at the Sanga-Sanga Airport. A photo handout shows Marine troops picking up trash while on brisk walks and biking at the airport of Sanga-Sanga in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi. (SunStar Zamboanga)

July 24, 2022

THE Officers and men of the Joint Task Force Tawi-Tawi and 2nd Marine in collaboration with the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (Caap)-Tawi-Tawi and Sanga-Sanga and Tubig Bassag village officials embarked on environmental advocacies geared toward maintaining a clean and safe environment.

Together with partner agencies, they initiated the conduct of the Advocacy Bike and Clean-up Drive dubbed "Bike for a Clean and Safe Runway" at the Sanga-Sanga Airport (SSA).

Brigadier General Romeo Racadio, commander of the 2nd Marine Brigade, said the activity is part of the unit's line of operations focusing on Civil-Military Operations (CMO) to promote good environmental management and good information.

Racadio said the activity aims to ensure a clean and safe environment for airport operations.

Racadio said the activity specifically focuses on mitigating the potential presence of Runway Foreign Object Debris (FOD) that can get to the runway and taxiway due to a still incomplete airport fence.

He said the FOD poses the greatest potential to cause damage to airplanes during take-off and landing, much like the danger caused by bird strikes.

"Proper waste disposal should be the concern and responsibility of everyone. This will help preserve the cleanliness in our respective areas and portrays the discipline of the people living in it. Similarly, the activity promotes a healthy and safe environment for everyone to live in," Racadio said.

"Additionally, the unit's participation in this action demonstrates our care for maintaining cleanliness and disseminating the government's clean and green program to promote the province's beautiful image as one of the country's tourism destinations in the southwestern region," he added. (SunStar Zamboanga)

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1935887/zamboanga/local-news/2nd-marine-brigade-launched-advocacy-bike-clean-up-drive>



Greece, California battle fierce wildfires amid heatwaves

Agence France-Presse July 25, 2022 | 8:57am



Smoke ascends over the village of Vrisa, in the southern part of the Greek island of Lesbos, as the wildfire burn near tourist resorts for the second day, forcing vulnerable residents to flee on July 24, 2022. Greece on July 24, 2022, battled three wildfires across the country which forced hundreds to evacuate, as soaring temperatures raised fears of more blazes.

AFP/Anthi Pazianou

ATHENS, Greece — Greece on Sunday battled four major wildfires that have forced hundreds to evacuate, as soaring temperatures there and in Spain raised fears of more blazes.

The United States meanwhile sweltered in scorching heat set to exceed already record-setting temperatures, worsening an out-of-control wildfire in central California.

Scientists say human-induced climate change is amplifying extreme weather—including the heatwaves, droughts and floods seen in several parts of the planet in recent weeks—and say these events will become more frequent and more intense.

The international community has agreed that climate change poses an existential threat to human systems and the natural world.

Earth's average temperature has warmed just over 1.1 degrees Celsius (34 degrees Fahrenheit) since the industrial era and the United Nations says it is currently on track to warm some 2.7C this century.

Greece is in the grip of a heatwave that began on Saturday and is expected to last 10 days. Temperatures were set to rise to 42C in some regions.

Fires raged in the north, east and south of the country, including on the tourist island of Lesbos, where around 200 people were ordered to leave the village of Vryssa on Sunday to escape the flames.

Danger to people and wildlife

Elderly women left the village carrying a few possessions in plastic bags, as thick smoke engulfed the first houses.

On Saturday residents and tourists were told to leave the island's beach village of Vatera.

In the northeastern region of Evros, hundreds of firefighters battled a wildfire that has been ablaze for four days in Dadia National Park, known for its black vulture colony.

Evros governor Dimitris Petrovits told Athens News Agency the authorities were doing all they could to protect locals and treat injured wildlife.



In the south, a fire in the Peloponnese caused the evacuation of three villages and a children's summer camp, while on the island of Crete a fire was raging inside a ravine.

In Spain, a heatwave that has persisted for two weeks was expected to produce record-high temperatures of 45C in the southern region of Cordoba.

This part of Andalucia registered Spain's highest-ever temperature—47.7C—only last year.

The national weather office said the relentless heatwave since July 9 and the lack of rain since the start of the year across the Iberian Peninsula meant there was an "extreme" risk of fires.

In all, fires in France, Spain and Portugal have already burned more land so far this year than was destroyed by flames in all of 2021. The area—some 517,881 hectares (1.28 million acres)—is equivalent to the size of Trinidad and Tobago.

The World Health Organization said on Friday Europe's heatwave had led to "more than 1,700 needless deaths... in Spain and Portugal alone".

Wasting energy is 'absurd'

In the United States, where President Joe Biden warned this week that climate change represented a "clear and present danger", tinderbox conditions in California sparked a fire on Friday near the Yosemite National Park and its giant sequoia trees.

The fire—described as "explosive" by officials—spread from 250 to 4,800 hectares within 24 hours and had consumed more than 5,750 hectares by early Sunday, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection said.

Evidence of global warming could be seen elsewhere in the country, where 85 million people in more than a dozen states were under a weekend heat advisory.

A heat emergency was in effect for cities up and down the northeast coast, from Boston to Philadelphia to Washington.

In France, the government announced on Sunday it was bringing in rules to curb energy wastage, which adds needlessly to the greenhouse gas emissions that fuel climate change.

Shops will be ordered to keep their doors closed when their air-conditioning or heating is on or risk a fine, energy transition minister Agnes Pannier-Runacher told RMC radio.

Leaving the doors open when the air conditioning is on leads to "20 percent more consumption and ... it's absurd," she said.



#US #Wildfires #BBCNews

US consider declaring climate emergency as wildfires tear through California - BBC News

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US President Joe Biden is said to be considering whether to declare a climate emergency as wildfires tear across California.

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DENR boosts Bamban river rehab

Planting bamboos is a crucial component of rehabilitating denuded forest areas, facilitating rapid recovery of river easements and stabilizing river banks

BY JONAS REYES

BAMBAN, Tarlac — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in this province has planted over 230 Chinese bamboo seedlings along Bamban River to boost the rehabilitation of the river which connects to the Manila Bay.

DENR Tarlac provincial director Cella Esteban disclosed that the agency planted the bamboo seedlings at a 3,600-square-meter portion of the Bamban River located in Barangay Lourdes.

Esteban said that the agency has also conducted regular cleanup activities in Bamban River that is usually participated by various stakeholders, partner agencies, and estero rangers that are currently deployed in the area.

The average collected waste is about 14,500 kilos daily.

Meantime, DENR Central Luzon executive director Paquito Moreno Jr. stressed that planting bamboos is a crucial component of rehabilitating denuded forest areas, facilitating rapid recovery of river easements and stabilizing river banks, particularly in Manila Bay areas in Bataan, Bulacan, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija and Tarlac.

Since the Manila Bay cleanup and rehabilitation program started in 2019, the DENR here has planted more than 141,000 kilometer-stretch of river systems with 38,390 bamboos.

This year alone, over 140,000 tons of wastes have been collected from 15,000 cleanup activities conducted in Manila Bay areas in Region 3.



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MARCOS FOCUS: REVIVE ECONOMY, HELP FARMERS

STORY BY JEROME ANING AND NESTOR CORRALES

President says P58 billion in loans owed by 654,000 agrarian reform beneficiaries will be condoned, and medium-term fiscal strategy will fix government's finances through tax reforms and prudent spending.



THE PRESIDENT'S LEGISLATIVE WISH LIST:

- National Government Rightizing Program (NGRP)
- Budget Modernization Bill
- Tax Package 3: Valuation Reform Bill
- Tax Package 4: Passive Income and Financial Intermediary Taxation Act (PiFit)
- E-Government Act
- Internet Transaction Act or E-Commerce Law
- Government Financial Institutions Unified Initiatives to Distressed Enterprises for Economic Recovery (GUIDE)
- Medical Reserve Corps
- National Disease Prevention Management Authority



COMMITMENT: President Marcos, during his first State of the Nation Address on Monday, bars his administration's plan to help the country navigate through an economic crisis and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Senate President Juan Miguel Zubiri (top left) and Speaker Ferdinand Romualdez (top right) have committed to support Mr. Marcos' legislative agenda. **MANILA BUREAU**

FROM AT

By Jerome Aning and Nestor Corrales @Team_Inquirer

President Marcos on Monday gave the Filipino people a more detailed preview of what his administration intends to accomplish in the next six years, highlighting the immediate need to resuscitate the pandemic-battered economy and to uplift the lives of marginalized farmers, debt-ridden agrarian reform beneficiaries, migrant workers and the poor.

In his four State of the Nation Address (SONA) before the joint session of Congress, the President also listed 19 legislative measures that he requested lawmakers to pass in order to achieve his administration's various socioeconomic goals.

In his speech that lasted an hour and 12 minutes which was applauded 54 times and delivered in a mix of English and Filipino, Mr. Marcos also touched on the delicate issue of the West Philippine Sea, promising that he "will not preside over any process that will abandon even a square inch of territory of the Republic of the Philippines to any foreign power." (See story on Page A5.)

The most applauded part of his SONA, aside from the conclusion, was his proposal to set up "specialty hospitals" in various parts of the country similar to the Philippine Heart Center, Lung Center of the Philippines, Philippine Children's Medical Center and the National Kidney and Transplant Institute—projects built during his late father's tenure—that are found

in Metro Manila.

The President said he knew the hardship endured by the people in the past two years and the efforts they were doing to meet the challenges of the present.

"I do not intend to diminish the risks and challenges that we face in this turbulent time in global history, and yet, I see sunlight filtering through these dark clouds. We have assembled the best Filipino minds to help navigate us through this time of global crisis," he said.

"We will endure. Let our Filipino spirit ever remain undimmed. I know this in my mind, in my heart, in my very soul that the state of the nation is sound," he added.

Agrarian loan write-off

The President called on Congress to pass a law condoning more than P58 billion in loans owed by some 654,000 beneficiaries of the government's agrarian reform program.

"In this [proposed] law, the loans of agrarian reform beneficiaries with unpaid amortization and interest shall be condoned. The aim of the law is to erase the loans that could not be paid by our farmers who are beneficiaries of agrarian reform," the President said.

Agrarian reform beneficiaries who are still to receive their awarded land under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program shall receive it without any obligation to pay any amortization, according to Mr. Marcos.

He said the condonation of the existing agrarian reform loans would cover 1.8 million hectares of awarded lands.

While waiting for the law to be passed, the President said he intended to issue an executive order to impose a one-year

THE PRESIDENT'S LEGISLATIVE WISH LIST:

FROM AT

- Creation of the Virology Institute of the Philippines
- Department of War and Reserves
- Unified System of Separation, Retirement and Pensions
- E-Government Act
- National Land Use Act
- National Defense Act to amend the abrogated National Defense Act of 1935
- Mandatory Reserve Officers' Training Corps (MRTC) and National Service Training Program (NSTP)
- Reinstatement of an Existing Law for the Natural Gas Industry
- Amendments to the Electric Power Industry Reform Act or EPIA (RA 9193)
- Amendments to the Road Operator's License (ROTL) Law



MARCO ANTONIO DELA CRUZ

moratorium on the payment of land amortization and interest payments, noting that such moratorium was provided under Republic Act No. 11465, or the *Sayonhina to Masal sa Dine Act*.

"A moratorium will give the farmers the ability to channel their resources in developing their farms, maximizing their capacity to produce, and propel the growth of our economy," he said.

He said he would also enforce Executive Order No. 75, series of 2005, issued by his predecessor, requiring all government agencies, bureaus, departments and instrumentalities to

turn over agricultural lands to qualified agrarian reform beneficiaries.

He said there were, at present, about 52,000 ha of unused agricultural lands of the government that would be distributed to homeless war veterans, surviving spouses and orphans of war veterans, and retirees of the military and the police in accordance with RA 6462.

Under EO 75, agricultural lands would also be given to graduates of college degrees in agriculture who are landless.

The President also promised continuing assistance to the beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program

(aP) victims of calamities and the sick.

6-year fiscal plan

The President presented what he called Medium-Term Fiscal Strategy (MTFS) of his administration which seeks to attain short-term macro-fiscal stability while remaining supportive of the country's economic recovery and to promote medium-term fiscal sustainability.

Mr. Marcos said he wanted Congress to adopt and concur with the MTFS by passing a concurrent resolution.

Measurable medium-term macroeconomic and fiscal objectives include 5.5-7.5 percent real gross domestic product (GDP) growth in 2022 and 5.5-8 percent annually between 2023 to 2028, 9 percent or single-digit poverty rate by 2028, 3 percent annual government deficit-to-GDP ratio by 2028, less than 50 percent national government debt-to-GDP ratio by 2028, and at least \$4,265 income per capita to attain upper middle-income status by 2028.

Once adopted, the MTFS will become an anchor for the annual spending and financing plan of the national government and Congress when preparing the annual budget and undertaking related appropriations activities.

Renewable energy push

"Our tax system will be adjusted in order to catch up with the rapid developments of the digital economy, including the imposition of value-added tax on digital service providers," he said, adding that initial revenue impact of this would be around P1.7 billion in 2023-2026.

Tax compliance procedures will be simplified to promote ease of paying taxes, he added.

In the power sector, the President said the government must build new power plants and push for the use of renewable energy to lower the price of electricity in the country.

"We must build new power plants. We must take advantage of all the best technology that [is] now available, especially in the areas of renewable energy," he said, receiving applause from the audience that included members of the country's business elite.

According to him, the government must examine the entire system of transmission and distribution to lower the price of electricity to the consumer.

As a solution to cut electricity rates in the Philippines, the President said the country has already begun to use wind power and was now expanding the use of solar energy, which he noted "is practical almost everywhere in the Philippines all year round."

He also assured the business community that the government would provide investment incentives by clarifying the operational policy in upstream gas, particularly in the area close to the Malabon gas field in offshore Palawan.

He also pushed for the review of the possible revival and building of nuclear power plants in the country.

"We will comply of course with the International Atomic Energy Agency regulations for nuclear power plants as they have been strengthened after Fukushima," he said, referring to the 2011 nuclear disaster in Japan.

In terms of infrastructure projects, the President said he would continue the Build, Build, Build program of the Duterte administration "but, wherever possible, be expanded." **AN**



Marcos vows tax

system overhaul

By Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza

Reporter

PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. on Monday vowed to overhaul the tax system and unveiled a 19-point legislative agenda designed to

spur growth and make the Philippines an investment destination, as the economy recovers from the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Mr. Marcos began his first State of the Nation Address (SONA) with a promise to implement sound fiscal management and tax administration reforms to boost revenue collections.

"Our tax system will be adjusted in order to catch up with the rapid development of the digital economy," Mr. Marcos told Congress on Monday, proposing a value-added tax on digital services, which would generate P11.7 billion in revenues if implemented in 2023.

The Marcos administration is targeting 6.5-7.5% gross domestic product

(GDP) growth this year, and 6.5-8% GDP expansion through 2028.

Mr. Marcos pledged to bring down the poverty rate to 9% by the end of his term in 2028, and the National Government deficit-to-GDP ratio to 3%. The government also aimed to lower the debt-to-GDP ratio to less than 60% by 2025, and to attain upper middle-income status by 2024.

The President said the administration's expenditure priorities will be realigned and spending efficiency will be improved to address the scarring effect of the pandemic and prepare the country for future shocks.

"Our country must become an investment destination," he added.

Marcos, SI/5

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY

Mr. Marcos identified 19 priority legislative measures, which included National Government rightsizing, budget modernization, and the last two remaining tax reform packages of the Duterte administration — the Real Property Valuation and Assessment Reform Act and Passive Income and Financial Intermediary Taxation Act.

The tax reform packages were approved by the House of Representatives during the 18th Congress, but failed to hurdle the Senate.

Like his predecessor, Mr. Marcos is also pushing for the passage of the proposed Government Financial Institutions Unified Initiatives to Distressed Enterprises for Economic Recovery (GUIDE) Act and the E-Government Act, which seeks to digitize the bureaucracy.

He urged Congress to approve bills creating the Virology Institute of the Philippines and the Department of Water Resources, calling for the “ethical” planning of the country’s land and water resources.

As part of his thrust to pursue public-private partnerships, Mr. Marcos is pushing for amendments to the Build-Operate-Transfer Law.

Mr. Marcos said his administration would push for an enabling law for the natural gas industry and amendments to the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA), which led to the privatization of the country’s energy industry.

The Philippine leader, who has pledged to facilitate a shift to renewables, also signaled his intent to review nuclear power — a plan that his late father and former president Ferdinand E. Marcos, Sr. started in the 1970s.

He also promised to accelerate infrastructure projects, such as airports and railways, and to go after firms that damage the environment.

Mr. Marcos proposed the establishment of a medical reserve corps and National Disease Prevention Management Authority, a Unified Military and Uniformed Services Personnel Separation, Retirement, and Pension Act; a National Defense Act, and a bill that would reinstate the mandatory Reserve Officers’ Training Corps.

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Marcos, who also heads the Agriculture department, bared his plans to revive the agriculture sector and to continue agrarian reform programs.

He promised to sign an executive order imposing a one-year moratorium on payment of land amortization and interest payments, which he said will help farmers increase their

output.

Mr. Marcos also asked Congress to pass a law condoning P58.1 billion worth of loans of some 654,000 agrarian reform beneficiaries.



PHILIPPINE STAR/KI ROSALES

PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR. delivered his first State of the Nation Address during the joint session of the 19th Congress at the Batasan complex in Quezon City, July 25.

“Agrarian reform beneficiaries who are still to receive their awarded land under the comprehensive agrarian reform program shall receive it without any obligation to pay any amortization,” he said.

The President also pledged to distribute unused agricultural lands of the government to landless war veterans and their surviving families, retired military and police personnel, and college graduates with agriculture degrees.

“The call of the times is for the infusion of fresh and new blood in the agricultural sector. We need a new breed of farmers equipped with modern agricultural technology able to engage in sustained scientific farming that will not only increase farm yields, but also resilience in the face of climate change,” Mr. Marcos said.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

“We will endure. Let our Filipino spirit ever remain undimmed.” Mr. Marcos said as he capped his speech that lasted over an hour. “The state of the nation is sound.”

Michael Henry Ll. Yusingco, a policy analyst, said it is now clear the focus of the new administration is economic recovery.

“The President has offered policy details this time around as well as a detailed plan. We also have a list of priority legislations,” he said in a Messenger chat. “As analysts, we now have something to work with, meaning something concrete to study.”

Leonardo A. Lanzona, who teaches economics at the Ateneo de Manila University, said the SONA seemed to focus on technological change and institutional reform, which are needed but are long term in nature.

Mr. Marcos also fell short of discussing the issues confronting the education sector, which needs to be prioritized amid the eroding quality of the labor force, Mr. Lanzona said.

In his SONA, Mr. Marcos vowed to protect the country’s territories but did not send a strong message against China’s aggression in Philippine-claimed areas in the South China Sea. He also insisted his administration will have an independent foreign policy.

“I will not preside over any process that will abandon even one square inch of territory of the Republic of the Philippines to any foreign power,” he said.

As the pandemic continues, Mr. Marcos also vowed to build more health centers and hospitals across the country.

“I’m impressed that the President promised to overhaul the healthcare system. This was happily welcomed by the lawmakers in attendance, so there is reason to believe that they will work on this vigorously,” Mr. Yusingco said.

Hansley A. Juliano, a political economy researcher studying at Nagoya University’s Graduate School of International Development in Japan, said the SONA reflects the “technocratic agenda of the business allies of Marcos and his economic architects.”

“He acknowledges the economic issues faced by the country but for very understandable reasons, he is keeping the business-as-usual, macro-oriented projections over direct impact on people’s lives,” he added.

Mr. Juliano said contentious issues, including labor and indigenous peoples’ rights, will “once again be sidelined if not flat out ignored altogether in the governance.”

The President, despite his promise to improve the lives of Filipinos, did not touch on his human rights agenda, which experts said is necessary amid the shrinking space for civil societies.

“There is no mention of contentious areas such as political reforms, corruption, and human rights,” Arjan P. Aguirre, who teaches political science at the Ateneo de Manila University,



BBM pushes 19 priority bills for better gov't

By Maricel V. Cruz

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday urged Congress to pass at least 19 priority measures of his administration that would help improve government

Next page

PBBM'S PRIORITY BILLS

1. National Government Rightsizing Program
2. Budget Modernization Bill
3. Tax Package 3 Valuation Reform Bill
4. Passive Income and Financial Intermediary Taxation Act
5. E-Govt Act
6. Internet Transaction Act or E-commerce law
7. GFI Unified Initiatives to Distressed Enterprises for Economic Recovery
8. Establishment of Medical Reserve Corps
9. National Disease Prevention Management Authority
10. Creation of Virology Institute of the Philippines
11. Department of Water Resources
12. Unified System of Separation, Retirement and Pension
13. E-Governance Act
14. National Land Use Act
15. National Defense Act
16. Mandatory ROTC and National Service Training
17. Enactment of Enabling Law for Natural Gas Industry
18. Amendments to EPIRA
19. Amendments to BOT Law

BBM...

From A1

services under his leadership.

Marcos enumerated his administration's priority legislative measures in his first State of the Nation Address (SONA).

"As I am here today addressing the legislature, let me propose legislation that we would like for you to pass," he said in his SONA delivered before lawmakers at the plenary of the House of Representatives.

The Marcos administration's priority bills include the proposed National Government Rightsizing Program (NGRP), the Budget Modernization bill, and the proposed E-Government Act

The NGRP is a reform mechanism that aims to enhance the government's institutional capacity to perform its mandate and provide better services while ensuring optimal and efficient use of resources.

The President said the rightsizing efforts will involve the conduct of a

"comprehensive" strategic review of functions, programs, and projects that will cut across various agencies.

"Compared to previous government reorganization efforts, the NGRP will entail a comprehensive strategic review of the functions, operations, organization, systems, and processes of the different agencies, and massive and transformational initiatives in agencies concerned, such as merger, consolidation, splitting, transfer, and abolition of some offices," he said.



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'We will endure' — BBM

Says state of nation is sound

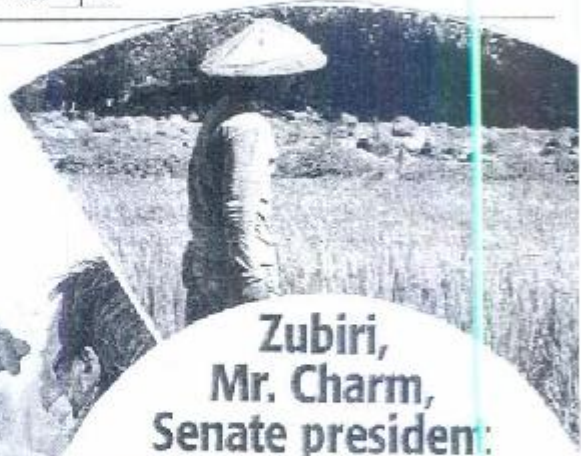
BY NICHELLE GULLANO
@tribunephd_mist

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. said the state of the nation is sound as he outlined his programs and plans to steer the country's response and recovery from numerous challenges here and overseas.

"I do not intend to diminish the risks and the challenges that we face in this turbulent time in global history, and yet, I see the sunlight filtering through these dark clouds," said the 64-year-old Chief Executive as he winded down his one-hour, 14-minute speech before the joint session of Congress on Monday.

"We have assembled the best Filipino minds to help navigate us through this time of global crisis that we are now facing. We will endure. Let our Filipino spirit ever remain undimmed," he declared.

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Zubiri, Mr. Charm, Senate president

BY TOM GARNER
@tribunephd_low

Juan Miguel "Migz" Zubiri was elected Senate president on Monday, a development that did not come as a surprise.

Zubiri, a key ally of President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr., was nominated by Senator Joel Villanueva shortly after the 16th Congress opened its first regular session.

Villanueva describes Zubiri as "ripe" for the job.

"He (Zubiri) served in both houses of Congress for almost two decades, man-nered by the senators who came before us like Senators Miriam Defensora Santiago, Edgar Jo Angara, Aquilino Pimentel III, and Joker Arroyo. In the previous Congress, he was part of the leadership team of the Senate, consisting of Senate President Tito Sotto, Senate President Pro Tempore Ralph Recto and Minority Leader Frank Drilon," Villanueva said.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY TUNIME DINGSON, ANAY LARCH AND DOB DUNGO, JR. FOR THE DAILY TRIBUNE @tribunephd_mist@tribunephd_low @tribunephd_00

BBs, please For his much-awaited first State of the Nation Address.



'We will endure' – BBM

From page 1

Digitalization

Marcos tackled a wide array of issues during his first State of the Nation Address (SoNA) beginning with what he labeled as the age of exponential adoption of technology – the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

He directed the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) to identify and utilize these innovations to improve governance. This includes deploying digital connectivity across various islands.

"This will be done through the implementation of the National Broadband Plan, the common tower program, connecting our Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDA) via our 'Broad Band ng Masa' project," he said.

Marcos said they expect to issue 30 million physical identification cards and 20 million digital ID by the end of the year.

"The target is to accomplish the issuance of about 82 million ID by the middle of next year," he said.

Agriculture

Marcos, who concurrently serves as Agriculture chief, bared his plans to modernize Philippine agriculture.

"We will prioritize the modernization of farms through the utilization of modernized technology for our farmers. We will expand our fisheries, livestock and poultry," he said.

He said his actions to modernize agriculture will be based on research and technology, stressing the need to consider climate change impacts.

"In all of these, science will be used to increase agricultural production. Even the post-production processing will be supported by the government."

Moreover, he announced that the government will provide loans for farmers to help them increase their products.

"To support the consumers in maintaining their purchasing power or power to buy, the Department of Agriculture is finalizing its plan to increase yield for the next planting season through financial and technical assistance," he said.

He urged Congress to enact a law that could help agrarian reform beneficiaries, who have loan dues, concentrate on farm productivity.

"The condonation of the existing agrarian reform loan will cover the amount of P58.125 billion benefiting around 654,000 agrarian reform beneficiaries and involving a total of 1.18 million hectares of awarded lands," he explained.

He said an amendment to Section 26 of Republic Act (RA) 6657, or the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988, is needed to unburden the farmers from their loans and interests.

"In this law, the loans of

agrarian reform beneficiaries with unpaid amortization and interest shall be condoned. This law aims to condone unpaid debts by the beneficiaries of agrarian reform," he explained.

The Department of Agrarian Reform earlier said that in accordance with Section 40 of the said law there are 52,000 hectares of unused government agricultural lands that are up for distribution to landless war veterans, landless surviving spouses and orphans of war veterans, and landless retirees of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP).

'Build Better More'

Marcos expressed his intention to continue building more infrastructures under the Duterte administration's centerpiece program that aims to usher in the country's "Golden Age of Infrastructure."

"We shall confidently build on this firm foundation established by my predecessor. As it is in building an edifice. We must keep the momentum. And aspire to 'Build Better More,'" he said.

He stressed that he will not suspend projects as long as they are "beneficial", noting that infrastructure development will be among his priorities due to its potential to spur economic growth.

"I will not suspend any of the ongoing projects as those have already been shown to be of benefit to the public that they serve. I will continue to study the proposals that have been made."

For the Chief Executive, while past administrations managed to build more roads and highways, the Philippine government missed the opportunity to develop the country's railway transport system.

"It is clear in our mind that railways offer great potential as it continues to be the cheapest way of transporting goods and passengers," said Marcos.

There are many rail projects not just in Metro Manila, he pointed out, but in five other regions at different stages of implementation and with a combined cost of P1.9 trillion.

He ordered the Department of Transportation (DoTr) to modernize existing railway systems.

"Full speed ahead! Improving our railway system, along with modernizing existing airports and seaports, will maximize our strategic location in the Pacific and connect our many islands," he said.

Cheap – reliable energy

Marcos expressed the need to increase the level of energy production through the expansion of existing power sources and the building of more power plants.

"We must take advantage of all the best technology that is

now available, especially in the areas of renewable energy," he said, citing windmill power and solar power.

In the interim, Marcos said natural gas will hold the key.

"We will provide investment incentives by clarifying the uncertain policy in upstream gas, particularly in the area close to Malampaya," he said.



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THE 'WE WILL ENDURE' - BBM

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Nuclear power plants

Marcos called for the building of new power plants, believing that this could result in a lower price of electricity for consumers.

"At present, our demand for energy far exceeds our reliable supply. We must increase the level of energy production. We must look at every possible option that would be appropriate for the Philippine situation," said Marcos.

"We will involve our cooperatives. Their transmission efficiencies and our traditional distribution system must be more effective in bringing power cheaply to both our homes and industries," he added.

Marcos said it's time to re-examine the strategy towards building nuclear power plants in the Philippines.

"We will comply of course with the International Atomic Energy Agency regulations for nuclear power plants as they have been strengthened after Fukushima. In the area of nuclear power, there have been new technologies developed that allow smaller scale modular nuclear plants and other derivations thereof," he added.

Natural disaster resiliency

Marcos cited the need to invest in science and technology to enable the country to have accurate weather forecasts and on-time disaster alerts.

"Geographically, we are a disaster-prone country. Capacity building for our natural disaster resiliency is therefore a must," he said.

He said the water supply systems date back to the 1950s.

"They must now be rehabilitated and improved," he added.

He ordered the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to explore possible partnerships with the private sector to address this crucial situation.

Overseas foreign workers

Marcos lauded the creation of the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) during the administration of former President Rodrigo Duterte.

He vowed to remove to remove red tape in the delivery of services through digital empowerment.

"We shall automate the verification of contracts and issue secure Overseas Employment Certifications (OEC) that you can keep on your smart phone. I call on the DMW and the DICT to make this a top priority," he said.

The Chief Executive called on the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) to work with the DMW to make sure that overseas foreign workers who lost their jobs get employment at home.

Marcos reported that Secretary Susan Ople is going to Saudi Arabia in the next few months to negotiate for the possible deployment of overseas Filipino workers (OFW) and push the country's campaign against human trafficking.

"You OFW represent the fighting faith of the Filipinos as a nation and as a people. Let us transform your overseas journey into inspirational stories for all time," he said.

Foreign policy

"On the area of foreign policy, I will not preside over any process that will abandon even one square inch of territory of the Republic of the Philippines to any foreign power," Marcos said.

"With respect to our place in the community of nations, the Philippines shall continue to be a friend to all, an enemy to none."

Marcos said the country will continue with its independent foreign policy "with the national interest as our primordial guide."

No more lockdowns

Marcos said he will no longer implement lockdowns in the fight against Covid-19.

"We cannot endure another lockdown anymore. Lockdowns will no longer happen. We must have a balance on health, and the economy, on the other hand," he said.

Marcos vowed to conceptualize a vaccine institute and a center for disease control and prevention, adding that his administration will continue to implement the alert level system at the moment.

In-person classes

Marcos assured a safe reopening of in-person classes in the upcoming school year as he urged individuals to get booster shots against the dreaded coronavirus disease.

"I believe it is time for our children to return to full face-to-face classes once again," he said.

He noted that the Department of Education, headed by Vice President Sara Duterte, is now preparing for the implementation of face-to-face classes for school year 2022-2023.

"We must ensure that our classrooms are safe for teachers, for students, and the entire academic community when they return to face-to-face classes," Marcos said.

"We continue to encourage everyone to get their booster shots in preparation for the resumption of in-person classes," the chief executive added.

NEIL ALCOBER,
RAFFY AYENG
@tribunephil_raf



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Marcos: State of the nation is sound

BY JOCELYN MONTEMAYOR

PRESIDENT Marcos Jr. yesterday outlined plans and goals of his administration for the next six years, including 19 priority measures that he wants Congress to pass.

Among the bills are on strengthening the country's health and disaster response system and the economy, and promoting efficiency of government service.

In his first State of the Nation Address (SONA) before the joint session of Congress, the President also promised to create jobs, support growth by improving tourism, expedite long overdue infrastructure works including airports and railways, embrace renewable energy and be tough on firms that damaged the environment.

Marcos Jr reiterated his commitment to protect Philippine sovereignty.

"On the area of foreign policy, I will not preside over any process that will abandon even one square inch of territory of the Republic of the Philippines to any foreign power," he said, adding he will continue to pursue a policy of a Philippines that is a "friend to all, an enemy to none."

He said the Philippines has always been open and welcoming to all our foreign friends and visitors and it will remain to be a "good neighbor" that is always looking for ways to collaborate and cooperate with other nations with the end goal of having mutually beneficial outcomes.

"If we agree, we will cooperate and we will work together. And if we differ, let us talk some more until we develop a consensus... But we will not waver. We will stand firm in our independent foreign policy, with the national interest as our primordial guide. We commit to maintaining good relations with the rest of the world," he said.

Also among Marcos' plans are improving education, healthcare and working conditions for doctors and nurses, and ensuring a better water and power supply across the nation.

Marcos also said amid challenges tasks ahead, the Philippines will endure and the Filipino spirit will "remain undimmed" because he

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MARCOS

knows in his mind, heart and soul, that the "the state of the nation is sound."

PRIORITY MEASURES

Among the 19 measures Marcos wants Congress to pass are on establishing a Medical Reserve Corp; creating a Center for Disease Prevention and Control, a Virology Science and Technology Institute of the Philippines, and a Unified System of Separation, Retirement and Pension that grants a monthly disability pension, in lieu of disability benefits, for military and uniformed personnel retired by reasons of disability, making mandatory the Reserve Officers' Training Corps; amending the National Defense Act of 1935 to make the military structure of the Armed Forces more responsive to current and future non-conventional security threats to national sovereignty; amending the Electric Power Industry Reform Act or EPIRA (Rep. Act No. 9136) to enhance its effectiveness in addressing the high cost of electricity;

He also endorsed priority measures of the Duterte government such as laws creating a Department of Water Resources to establish framework for national water management, policy making and planning; and the National Land Use Act that provides for a rational and holistic management and development of our country's land and water resources and hold owners accountable for making these lands productive and sustainable.

OFWS

Marcos reaffirmed his commitment to promote the welfare of Filipinos working overseas with the help of the Department of Overseas Filipinos.

He said processing of papers and documents of an OFW will be reduced to three weeks from three months while OPW handbooks will be made simpler and easier to understand.

A One Repatriation Command Center would also be set up to assist OFWs who are abused or in need of help.

The President said Migrant Workers Secretary Susan Ople would soon fly to Saudi Arabia to push for the reopening of employment of Filipinos in that country while ensuring that their rights are protected, and campaigning against human trafficking.

"You OFWs represent the fighting faith of the Filipinos as a nation and as a people. Let us transform your overseas journey into inspirational stories for all time," he said.

CAMPAIGN PROMISES

The President also detailed some of his plans to realize some of the



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campaign promises like strengthening the education sector, digitization of the government processes and improving the internet system; improving the energy sector and making affordable energy and electricity; protecting the environment amid the climate change threats; and continuing the infrastructure program of his predecessor.

Marcos thanked former President Rodrigo Duterte for starting some of the important programs in the country.

He did not tackle the peace process and the campaign against illegal drugs, insurgency and terrorism or the peace process.

The President, however, committed to uplift the lives of Filipinos and help those in dire need through programs of government that provide social services including those under the Department of Social Welfare and Development such as the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations (AICS), and the Emergency Shelter Assistance program that is undertaken by the department in coordination with the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development.

Marcos said these programs would not just continue but would also be provided to those that actually need it.

NO LOCKDOWN

The President also committed to sustain the COVID-19 programs of the government, including the vaccination and booster shots program of the Department of Health. He reiterated that he wants another round of public vaccination programs to increase the vaccine and booster rate.

Marcos is also sustaining the COVID-19 alert level system for now until they come out with a new classification policy that is more applicable to the present situation and current presence of subvariants.

He, however, clarified that there will be no more lockdown in the future despite the observance of the current alert level systems.

"In our health situation, the COVID-19 threat remains especially with the emergence of new variants of the coronavirus. But we cannot afford another lockdown. We will not impose lockdowns," he said in Filipino.

HEALTHCARE

Marcos wants to strengthen the healthcare system by establishing specialty hospitals outside of Metro Manila similar to the Heart Center, Lung Center, Children's Hospital, and National Kidney and Transplant Institute that were established during the presidency of his father, the late Ferdinand Marcos.

He also wants more regional hospitals or public clinics, especially in remote areas, that are regularly visited by doctors, nurses, midwives, and medical technologists to be able to attend to the health concerns of people in remote places.

The President said he has also started talks with some pharmaceutical companies both here and abroad about increasing the supply of affordable medicine in the country including generic brands. He directed the Department of Trade and Industry and the Philippine Competition Commission to ensure equal treatment and no cartel among the pharmaceutical companies.

"This is one of the hard lessons that we learned when the pandemic struck, and therefore, we must act on that shortcoming," he said.

CLASSES

Marcos said the resumption of full face to face classes will proceed as he "continue to encourage everyone to get their booster shots in preparation for the resumption of in-person classes."

Apart from ensuring the vaccination and booster program to ensure the health and safety of both students and teachers, problems about the condition and availability of school rooms are also being addressed by the Departments of Education (DepEd) and Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

"Though some complications have arisen over the question of repair of school buildings in relation to the Mandanas-Garcia ruling, this will be ironed out," he said. Government wants the full face to face classes to resume by November.

The President again mentioned that the continuation and viability of the K to 12 school system is being carefully reviewed and that "all necessary inputs and points of view are now being considered."

He also again talked of the need to institute refresher courses and re-training for teachers so they can stay abreast of the rapid growth in technology, especially in this post-pandemic world.

Marcos also emphasized the importance of the ability of stable internet connection to enable students to participate fully in the digital community here and abroad, as well as the importance of improving the country's international rankings in "STEM subjects" or Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics to enable the Filipino graduates to compete in a highly technological and competitive world.

He also emphasized the need to sustain and improve the Filipinos grasp of the English language to "maintain that advantage that we have established as an English-speaking people."

"We cannot stand idly by," he said.



SONA NI PBBM SUMENTRO SA EKONOMIYA

SUMENTRO sa ekonomiya ng bensa ang unang State of the Nation Address ni Pangulong Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos, Jr. Kahapon sa Batasang Pambansa Complex sa Quezon City.

Sa katunayan, sinabi nito na magapatupad siya ng sound fiscal management habang ang tax administration reforms ay ikakasa rin upang mapataas ang revenue collection.

Sa kanyang SONA, sinabi nito na ang expenditure priorities ay ire-align, at ang spending efficiency ay pagbibutihin para agad na tugunan ang tinatawag na pagkakapilat sa ekonomiya na nag-ugat mula sa epekto ng COVID-19, at para na rin sa paghahanda para sa "future shocks."

Ipo-promote umano ang productivity-enhancing investments.

"Our country must become an investment destination, capitalizing on the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises or the CREATE Law and the economic liberalization laws such as the Public Service Act and the Foreign Investments Act," ayon sa Pangulo.

"Ecozones will be fully supported to bring in strategic industries such as those engaged in high-tech manufacturing, health and medical care, and all emerging technologies. This is also seen to facilitate economic growth outside of Metro Manila," dagdag na pahayag nito.

Bukod dito, sinabi pa ng Pangulo na ang tax system ay ia-adjust upang makahabol sa mabilis na developments ng digital economy, kabilang na ang imposisyon ng value-added tax sa digital service providers.

"The initial revenue impact will be around Php 11.7 billion in 2023 alone. Tax compliance procedures will be simplified to promote ease of paying taxes. We will pursue measures to determine possible under-valuation and/or trade misinvoicing of imported goods. Through information and communications technology, the Bureau of Customs will promote streamlined processes," ayon sa Pangulo.

"Disbursements for 2022 to 2023 will be maintained at above 20 percent of gross domestic product or Php 4.955 trillion and Php 5.086 trillion, respectively to ensure continuous implementation of priority programs. Disbursement will further increase over the medium-term from Php 5.402 trillion or 20.7 percent of our GDP in 2024 to Php 7.712 trillion or 20.6 percent of GDP in 2028," aniya pa rin.

Sinabi pa nito na ang Medium-Term Fiscal Strategy ng kanyang administrasyon ay naglalayong "attain short-term macro-fiscal stability while remaining supportive of the country's economic recovery and to promote medium-term fiscal sustainability. Furthermore, and more importantly, fiscal policy aims to bring together the National Government's resources so that these

are mobilized and utilized in order to gain the maximum benefit and the high multiplier effects for our economy."

IBA PANG PROGRAMA DINIINAN

DINIINAN ni PBBM ang kanyang mga programa sa agrikultura, gaya ng pagbuhay sa Kadiwa Centers, pagpapatuloy ng agrarian reform program, isang taong moratorium sa land amortization at interest payments, pagbura sa mga 'di nababayaran utang ng mga benepisaryo ng agrarian reform. Pagbibigay ng lupa sa mga graduate ng agriculture na walang sariling lupa.

Bingyan-din din ng Pangulo ang pagpapalantad sa industriya ng turismo sa pangunguna ng Department of Tourism at Department of Public Works and Highways.

Ipinag-utos ng Pangulo sa Department of Social Welfare and Development ang mabilisang pagtugon sa pangangailangan ng mga biktima ng kalamidad, paglilinis sa listahan ng mga benepisaryo ng 4Ps, pagpapatuloy ng suplemental feeding sa mga bata, pagpapatibay sa mga programa para sa solo parents, PWDs at iba pa.

Sa kalusugan, wala nang gagawing lockdown, patuloy ang pagbabakuna, paglibayuhin ang kooperasyon sa ibang sektor para bumalik sa full capacity ang mga ne-

goso, pagbibutihan ang pagpapalantad ng info campaign ukol sa COVID-19, pananatilihin ang alert system, itatag ang sariling center for disease control and prevention, maglalayo ng dagdag na mga center at ospital sa buong bansa, maglalagay ng clinic, rural health units sa buong bansa, magkakaroon ng sapat na suplay ng gamot, pararamihin ang murang generic drugs at gagawing pantay-pantay ang pagtrato sa pharmaceutical companies.

Sa edukasyon, nais ni PBBM na ibalik ang face-to-face classes, magpa-booster shot bilang paghahanda sa F2F classes, tugunan ang kakulangan ng silid-aralan, magkaroon ng refresher course para sa mga guro, matapos ang kawalan ng sapat na school materials gaya ng internet at iba pang tools, STEM subjects dapat paunlarin para makaagapay sa international standards, muling surin ang lengguahang gamit sa mga eskul at gamitin ang English sa pagtuturo.

Aniya, malaki ang papel na gagampanan ng national ID sa digital transformation ng bansa.

Inatasan ang DICT na magpakalat ng digital connectivity sa buong bansa.

Depat umenong ipagpapatuloy at palawakin pa ang infra projects ng Duterte administration dahil ito ang backbone ng ekonomiya.

Inatasan ni PBBM ang DOT na bilisan ang mga railway project at iba pang pang-masasag transportasyon.

Depat umenong maglayo ng bagong power plants gamit ang mga makabagong teknolohiya.

Inatasan din ni PBBM ang DENR at DPWH na tugunan ang problema sa kapaligiran at natural resources, gaya ng climate change.

Aniya, ang Department of Migrant Workers ang magsisilbing kanlungan ng mga kabebayan sa gitna ng mundong walang kasiguruan at mahigpit na kompetisyon.

Tinawagan din niya ang Department of Foreign Affairs na tulongang ibalik ang mga OFW na nawalan ng hanapbuhay.

Ibulunsad ang One Reparation Command Center para sa mga nangangailangang OFWs.

Inisa-isa ng Pangulo ang ilang priority legislative measures na nais niyang ipasa ng mga mambabatas.

Eksaktong alas-3:33 ng hapon nang dumating sa Batasang Pambansa si Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos Jr. para sa kanyang unang SONA.

Dumiretso ang Pangulo sa Executive Lounge ng Kongreso kasama ang kanyang maybahay na si Lisa at Executive Secretary Vic Rodriguez, mga senador at iba pa.

Maaga namang dumating si Vice-President Sara Duterte.

KRIS JOSE



Nuclear power, alternative energy eyed for reliable supply

As the country grapples with high energy costs, President Marcos yesterday called for a review of the government's strategy on nuclear power, citing the need to attract more investors and ensure adequate power supply.

In his first State of the Nation Address (SONA), Marcos noted that cheap and reliable energy is a "fundamental requirement" for economic growth and increased employment.

He said energy supply is related to the ease of doing business and is necessary to persuade investors to set up shop in the Philippines. Marcos, however, admitted that the demand for energy far exceeds the country's reliable supply.

"We must increase the level of energy production. We must look at every possible option that would be appropriate for the Philippine situation," Marcos said.

"There is some room to expand our present power supply through

our existing power sources, but this is only to a very limited extent. We must build new power plants. We must take advantage of all the best technology that is now available, especially in the areas of renewable energy," he added.

Marcos said the search for new power sources "should always be with an eye to improving the energy supply mix between traditional and renewable sources."

After discussing renewable energy technologies, Marcos talked about nuclear power and allayed concerns about its safety.

"I believe also it is time to re-examine our strategy towards building nuclear power plants in the Philippines," the President said.

"We will comply of course with the International Atomic Energy Agency regulations for nuclear power plants as they have been strengthened after Fukushima," he said.

Marcos was referring to the meltdown in a nuclear power plant in Fukushima which happened after a magnitude 9.0 quake devastated parts of Japan in 2011.

In the area of nuclear power, there have been new technologies developed that allow smaller scale modular nuclear plants and other derivations, he said.

"Once again, PPPs (public-private partnership) will play a part in support as funding in this period is limited," Marcos said.

The President also cited the need to examine the entire system of power transmission and distribution

to find ways to lower the price of energy to the consumer.

During the presidency of Marcos' father and namesake Ferdinand Marcos, the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant was constructed as part of the government's nuclear energy program.

The power plant was completed in 1984 but was set aside in 1986 after the elder Marcos was ousted through the people power revolt. The Chernobyl nuclear disaster that happened in 1986 also strengthened the opposition against the use of nuclear energy for power generation.

Climate change

Marcos also vowed to address climate change, saying the Philippines has "the unfortunate distinction of being one of the most vulnerable countries" to its effects.

"For the welfare of our people, it is incumbent upon us to alleviate the effects of that vulnerability. The use of renewable energy is at the top of our climate agenda. We will increase our use of renewable energy sources such as hydropower, geothermal power, solar and wind," he said.



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needed for reliable supply

Marcos said investment in science and technology is imperative to ensure accurate weather forecasts and on-time disaster alerts. He also vowed to look into the precarious fresh water supply situation in the country, especially in urban areas.

"Many of our water supply systems date back to the 1950s and they must now be rehabilitated and improved. I have instructed DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) Secretary Toni Yulo-Loyzaga, together with Secretary Manny Bonoan of the DPWH (Department of Public Works and Highways), to explore possible partnerships with the private sector to address this crucial situation," the President said.

Marcos also called for the proper enforcement of the country's environmental laws.

- Alexis Romero, Richmond Mercurio



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PBBM'S STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

State of PH agri to be

elevated

BY EIREENE JAIREE GOMEZ

PRESIDENT Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr., in his first State of the Nation Address (SONA), highlighted his administration's plans to further advance the state of the Philippine agriculture under his term.

In his one-hour and 20-minute speech, Marcos highlighted the importance of the agriculture sector, saying it is "one of the main drivers of the push for growth and employment" in the Philippines.

He said the Department of Agriculture (DA), which he serves as the concurrent secretary, has finalized the national plan to increase agricultural production, boost food value chain and increase support to local farmers and fishers amid the global food system

challenges.

The President emphasized the need to fix the value chain in order to address short-term and long-term problems in the agriculture sector. "*Pagtibayin natin ang koordinasyon ng ibat-ibang bahagi,*" he said.

To address high cost of production in the Philippines, Marcos said he will ensure that robust financial assistance will be provided to small farmers and fishers across the country. "*Ang mga pautang at*

financial assistance *sa mga maghukid at mangingisda ay magiging institusyon at patakaran ng aking administrasyon,*" he said.

Correspondingly, the President and DA chief said the government will build a national network of farm-to-market roads toward the efficient delivery and trade of farmers' local produce. He added that priority will be given to the modernization of the agricultural sector, which entails introducing the latest technology to farmers.

"We need a new breed of farmers equipped with modern agricultural technology able to engage in sustained scientific farming that will not only increase farm yields but also resilience in the face of climate change," said Marcos.

He was also keen on implementing a one-year moratorium of land

and amortization and interest payment for farmers to help them maximize their capacity "to produce and propel the growth of our economy." He believes that doing so will "unburden" the farmers of their dues and be able to focus on improving farm productivity.

Congress, likewise, must also pass a law that will emancipate the agrarian reform beneficiaries from the agrarian reform debt burden, thereby, amending Section 26 of Republic Act (RA) 6657, according to Marcos.

The President noted that he will issue an executive order that will require all government agencies, bureaus, departments and instrumentalities to turn over agricultural lands to qualified agrarian reform beneficiaries.

To date, there is a total of 52,000

hectares of unused agricultural lands of the government which, Marcos said, shall be used for distribution to the following sectors in accordance with Section 40 of RA 6657 as amended.

The administration will generate ways to ease the prices of goods in the country, said Marcos, who promised to lower the price of rice to P20 per kilogram.

In a message to *The Manila Times*, former Agriculture secretary Leonardo Montemayor cited several gaps in Marcos' first SONA in the aspect of agriculture, particularly the Rice Tariffication Law. "[There was] no mention of changes in Rice Tariffication Law and agricultural trade policy, especially on importation," he said.

"On second thought, the promised interventions will cut costs

and enhance profitability. However, latter should have been specifically mentioned as a major objective," said Montemayor, who, on one hand, welcomed the priority legislation of the National Land Use Act and Department of Natural Resources.

Meanwhile, Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura executive director Jayson Cainglet lauded Marcos' marching orders for the agriculture sector.

"The challenge of our times is to locally produce more, and the SONA emphasized the government's commitment to subsidize essential farm inputs — fertilizers, pesticides, feeds and fuel. We also commend the marching order of increasing aquafarms, hog and poultry farms as the basis to increase local production," Cainglet said.



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DOH says dengue picking up in PH

DENGUE cases since January 2022 reportedly went up to more than 73,000, of which over 18,000 have been logged in the past weeks alone, the Department of Health (DOH) said Monday.

DOH officer-in-charge Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said a total of 18,699 dengue cases were recorded from June 12 to July 9.

This brought the total dengue case-load in the country this year to 73,909.

Vergeire said the regions with the most dengue cases were Central Luzon, Cagayan Valley, and the National Capital Region (NCR).

"Right now, our campaign against dengue continues where we are mobilizing our local governments to do the 4S strategy and also mobilize their dengue brigades," Vergeire said.

The 4S protocols included search and destroy breeding places; use self-protection; seek early consultation; and support fogging or spraying in hot-spot areas, especially during the rainy season.

The DOH, along with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), released a joint advisory on Sunday, reminding the public that only scientific solutions can solve the country's health problems like dengue.

They said that vector control, and not placing frogs and fishes in swamps and stagnant water, could help curb the increasing dengue cases in the Philippines.

"This kind of practice can destroy our ecosystem because frogs are invasive species. They could also pose health risks and poison our countrymen and their pets," Vergeire said.

Vergeire earlier this month said the increase of dengue cases in the country is already alarming as some individuals are now being admitted in hospitals. **Willie Casas**



Ecowaste campaigns for zero chemical, waste in schools

By Joel dela Torre

A waste and pollution watchdog group scheduled a month-long campaign to promote chemical safety and zero waste in schools as enrolment for school year 2022-2023 kicked off yesterday.

Through a variety of back-to-school public information and outreach, the EcoWaste Coalition hopes to contribute to the ongoing efforts led by the Department of Education (DepEd) to build a healthy school environment that will protect students and other members of the school community from chemical and waste contaminants.

The group planned to conduct market investigation on school supplies and accessories laden with hazardous chemicals and dissemination of results while propagating practical tips toward an eco-friendly conduct of the National Schools Maintenance Week, or the annual Brigada Eskwela.

Also in the list of activities is to promote and monitor the compliance to the mandatory use of lead-safe paints in Brigada Eskwela and in all painting and repairing works in preparatory, elementary and secondary schools as per DepEd's Department Order No. 4, series of 2017.

Information drive on the safe management of busted mercury-containing devices of lamps, and the promotion of mercury-free and more energy efficient LED lights will also be in the EcoWaste's month-long program.

Also included is the promotion of climate-friendly and toxic-free practices in ecological solid waste management in schools in line with Republic Act 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act and Republic Act 9512, or the National Environmental Awareness and Education Act.

"During the month-long campaign, we'll be espousing practical suggestions and tips to help safeguard our young learners from some environmental risks in the school setting," said Aileen Lucero, EcoWaste Coalition national coordinator.



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Bulacan tightens environment checkpoints

MALOLOS – The provincial government of Bulacan has tightened its campaign against illegal quarry and logging operations as well as other offenses committed against the environment.

Bulacan Gov. Daniel Fernando earlier ordered the setting up of nine environment checkpoints to ensure that only quarry materials and forest products from permitted sources are transported.

Julius Victor Degala, chief of the provincial environment and natural resources office, said that aside from checkpoints, a roving team was also created to patrol beyond the regular office hours.

Since 2019, the provincial government has monitored 468 illegal logging reports and investigated 181 quarry and mining complaints.

– Ramon Efren Lazaro



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Ilocos Norte posts 40% hike in quarry collection

LAOAG CITY – Sustained infrastructure development in Ilocos Norte amid a pandemic has raised its quarry collections to P43.8 million in 2021 as compared to the P26.8 million figure in the previous year, the Provincial Quarry Office said.

Provincial administrator Yvette Convento-Leynes said the 40-percent increase in the 2021 quarry collections is attributed to the high demand for sand for various government and private projects.

"We are thankful for the cooperation and high compliance of our quarry permittees in paying their dues to

the government," Convento-Leynes said.

With this, the Commission on Audit has commended the Provincial Quarry Office under the provincial government for exceeding its quarry collection target.

Early on, members of the previous set of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Ilocos Norte amended the provincial quarry ordinance, imposing higher penalties for theft of minerals.

The application for industrial sand and gravel permits was also tightened to ensure that all requirements are strictly followed.

For example, all ISAG permittees

have been required to install their own machinery at the quarry site before they can be granted a permit to operate.

The quarry machinery being referred to includes stone crushers, separators, or any machinery that qualifies for the operation of an ISAG.

The quarry industry in the province is a major local revenue source for local government units.

Under the amended Provincial Quarry Ordinance, both the provincial and municipal governments have a share of 30 percent each from quarry fees and charges, while the host barangay would get a 40-percent share.



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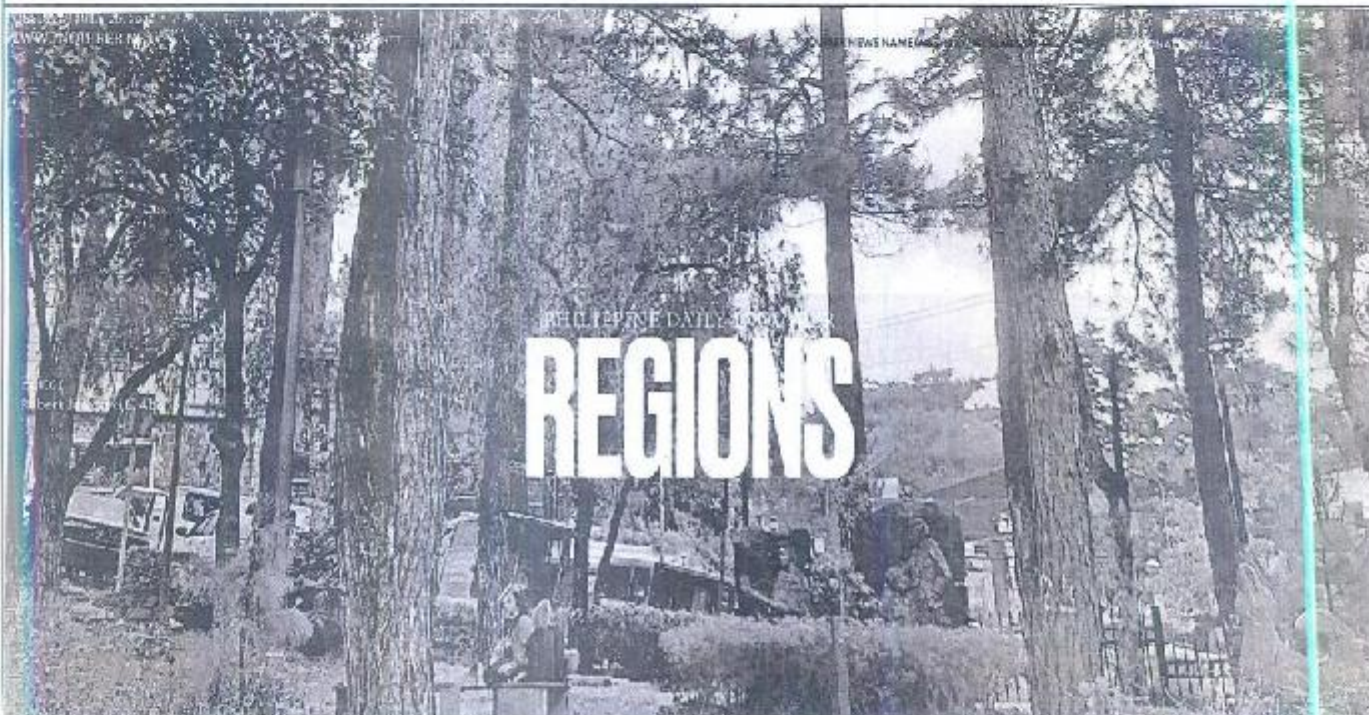
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BETWEEN TREES Baguio's diminished pine cover includes trees standing between houses and buildings. Government environmentalists are now protecting the surviving pine trees, and have been studying even pests that destroy the sensitive species. **BY SHARON**

PROTECT SPECIES THAT HAS BECOME SYNONYMOUS WITH BAGUIO

SUMMER CAPITAL EYES DECLARING BENGUET PINE AS HERITAGE TREE

BAGUIO CITY—The Benguet pine trees have become "endangered species" due to over-development, prompting the city council here to study an ordinance declaring all pine trees as "heritage trees" to preserve Baguio's remaining woodlands.

"We are facing the sad reality that in due time we will lose all our pine trees in the name of development," stated the pro-

posed measure filed on July 16, by Councilor Leandro Yanga.

According to the proposed ordinance, heritage trees are entitled to special protection from various agencies, and may be cut only if they have become a "clear and present danger" to people and property.

Also at stake, it said, is the summer capital's enduring reputation as the country's

"City of Pines."

Only last June, the previous council had passed on second reading two measures that imposed a tree-cutting moratorium and a protection plan for the city's pine population of over 500,000 trees, a number that was based on a recent inventory by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources that was ordered by

former Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu.

Penalties

But with the new council coming on June 30, it would now be up to the new legislative body to pass them on the third reading.

Baguio also has an ordinance in the 1990s that penalizes anyone who harms pine

trees, such as people using them for advertising by nailing signboards on them.

Under the proposed Baguio heritage tree ordinance, offenders will face jail time of six months or a fine of ₱5,000.

The measure covers all individuals, including foreigners. Government employees who hurt a pine tree or cause its destruction also face administrative

sanctions.

Baguio has a total of 25 million trees, with only half a million classified as pines.

According to the 2009 Baguio urban carrying capacity report, Baguio's present forest cover represents only 3 percent of the territory of the city when the ideal cover should be 30 percent to 40 percent of its land area. **—VINCENT CARRERA**



Classification of land important for registration

Dear PAO,

I intend to apply for the registration of the land I have been occupying for 32 years now. Jose told me to ascertain whether the land was alienable from the inception of my occupation, otherwise my application would be denied. Is Jose correct? In the first place, is it important to determine if a land is alienable?

Herald

Dear Herald,

Only lands classified as alienable and disposable of the public domain may be covered by land registration. This is in consonance with Section 14 of Presidential Decree 1529 or the "Property Registration Decree" which states that:

"The following persons may file in the proper Court of First Instance an application for registration of title to land, whether personally or through their duly authorized representatives:

"(1) Those who by themselves or through their predecessors-in-interest have been in open, continuous, exclusive and notorious possession and occupation of alienable and disposable lands of



the public domain under a bona fide claim of ownership since June 12, 1945, or earlier.

"(2) Those who have acquired ownership of private lands by prescription under the provision of existing laws.

"(3) Those who have acquired ownership of private lands or abandoned river beds by right of accession or accretion under the existing laws.

"(4) Those who have acquired ownership of land in any other manner provided for by law. xxx"

The afore-cited provisions of the law for land registration were fully explained in the case of *Republic of the Philippines v. Philippine National Police*, GR 198277, Feb. 8, 2021, where the Supreme Court speaking through Associate Justice Ramon Paul Hernando, citing *Republic v. Bautista*, stated that:

"For registration under Section 14(1) to prosper, the applicant for original registration of title to

land must establish the following:

"(1) that the subject land forms part of the disposable and alienable lands of the public domain; (2) that the applicants by themselves and their predecessors-in-interest have been in open, continuous, exclusive, and notorious possession and occupation thereof; and (3) that the possession is under a bona fide claim of ownership since June 12, 1945, or earlier.

"On the other hand, registration under Section 14(2) requires the applicant to establish the following requisites: (a) the land is an alienable and disposable, and patrimonial property of the public domain; (b) the applicant and its predecessors-in-interest have been in possession of the land for at least 10 years, in good faith and with just title, or for at least 30 years, regardless of good faith or just title; and (c) the land had already been converted to or declared as patrimonial property of the State at the beginning of the said 10-year or 30-year period of possession.

"From their respective requisites, it is clear that the bases for registration under these two

provisions of law differ from one another. Registration under Section 14(1) is based on possession; whereas registration under Section 14(2) is based on prescription. Thus, under Section 14(1), it is not necessary for the land applied for to be alienable and disposable at the beginning of the possession on or before June 12, 1945. Section 14(1) only requires that the property sought to be registered is alienable and disposable at the time of the filing of the application for registration. However, in Section 14(2), the alienable and disposable character of the land, as well as its declaration as patrimonial property of the State, must exist at the beginning of the relevant period of possession." (Emphasis not ours; Underscoring supplied)

Applying the above-quoted law and jurisprudence in your situation, it is important to determine whether the land you are occupying is classified as alienable and disposable as it is the only type of land that is allowed to be registered under the Property Registration Decree. If it is not classified as alienable and disposable, then you cannot register it in

your name.

As to your question if it is important to ascertain whether the land was alienable from the inception of your occupation as contended by Jose, the answer will depend on the mode of registration that you will use. Considering that your basis for registering the subject land is that you have been occupying it for 32 years, meaning later than June 12, 1945, then Section 14 (2) of the Property Registration Decree applies to your case. In this mode, you are claiming the subject property on account of prescription. This requires that not only must the subject property be classified as alienable and disposable, but

there must also be a declaration by the State that the same is patrimonial property, ergo no longer intended for public use or for public service. (Art. 422, New Civil Code of the Philippines). Both must exist at the start of the relevant period of your possession, which may either be 10 or 30 years, depending on whether your possession is in good faith and with just title.

However, if you can tack your possession with your predeces-

sors-in-interest who have been in open, continuous, exclusive and notorious possession and occupation of the subject land under a bona fide claim of ownership since June 12, 1945, or earlier, then Section 14 (1) of the Property Registration Decree may apply to you. In this mode, you are claiming that you and your predecessors have been exercising dominion over the property and claiming it as your own since June 12, 1945 or earlier. If this is the case, it is not required that the subject land is alienable and disposable at the start of your possession. You may register the subject land in your name even if it became alienable and disposable land only recently.

We hope that we were able to answer your queries. This advice is based solely on the facts you have narrated and our appreciation of the same. Our opinion may vary when other facts are changed or elaborated.

Editor's note: Dear PAO is a daily column of the Public Attorney's Office. Questions for Chief Acosta may be sent to dearpao@manilatimes.net



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Dear Doc Erwin,

Napanood ko sa news program ang balita tungkol sa climate change. Ayon sa eksperto na na-interview, may epekto ang climate change sa ating kalusugan.

Nag-alala ako sa balitang ito dahil may mga magulang ako na inaalegan na nasa edad 70. Maysakit na hypertension at diabetes ang aking ama at dementia naman ang aking ina.

Ano ba ang climate change? Paano ito makaaapekto sa kalusugan ng aking mga magulang? Ano ang mga dapat gawin upang maiwasan ko ang aking mga magulang sa epekto ng climate change? - Maria Ruby

Sagot

Maraming salamat Maria Ruby sa iyong paglitham sa Sabi ni Doc.

Ang climate change ay ang pagtaas ng temperatura sa ating kapaligiran, kasama na ang mga extreme weather events, tulad ng hagyo at tagtuyot. Ayon sa mga scientists, ang ating mundo ay mas mainit ng 1.2 degrees Celsius noong 2021 kumpara noong 1900. Ito ay lalo pang tumaas sa 1.5 degrees Celsius ngayong 2022.

Sa pag-aaral ng National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), naganap ang mabilis na pag-init ng mundo sa nakaraang 40-taon. Dahil ito sa pagtaas ng level ng mga greenhouse gases, tulad ng carbon dioxide at methane. Ang mga greenhouse gases ay nag-a-absorb ng init galing sa araw at pinipigilan nitong bumalik ang init sa kalawakan. Dahil dito ay nanatili ang init sa ibabaw ng ating mundo, na nagdudulot ng pagtaas ng temperatura.

Ang pagtaas ng temperatura ang dahilan ng maraming pagbabago sa ating klima. Umiminit ang mga ilog at dagat, dahilan kung bakit apektado ang pangangisda at kabuhayan ng mga mangangisda. Dahil

EPEKTO NG CLIMATE CHANGE SA KALUSUGAN NG TAO

sa pag-init ng panahon, apektado rin ang irigasyon ng pagkasaka at ang produksyon ng bigas. Lahat ito ay nagdudulot ng water at food insecurity.

Nalutunaw din ang mga yelo sa north pole na nagiging dahilan ng pagtaas ng 21 percent ng sea level natin, na nagdadala ng pagbaha sa mga coastal towns at paglubog sa tubig ng ilang mga lugar.

Isa sa mga importanteng epekto ng climate change ay ang mga epekto nito sa ating kalusugan. Ang pag-init ng panahon ay nagdadala ng iba't ibang health risks.

Ayon sa pag-aaral ng Karolinska Institute sa bansang Sweden, dumarami ang mga nagkakaroon ng 'hyponatremia' o ang pagbaha ng level ng sodium sa katawan. Dahil ito sa pag-init ng kapaligiran at pagpaparwis. Madalas na apektado nito ang mga bata at matatanda.

May pag-aaral din na nagpapakita na dahil sa climate change maaaring humina ang ating immune system laban sa mga sakit, tulad ng trangkaso. Humihina rin ang mga panlaban natin sa infection mula sa ating digestive system. Mayroon din link ang kidney disease at exposure sa matinding init.

Ayon sa pag-aaral sa University of Copenhagen na inilathala sa scientific journal na PeerJ noong Agosto 2021, dahil sa pag-init ng kapaligiran ay maaaring lumala ang sintomas ng mga indibidwal na may sakit na epilepsy, Alzheimer's Disease, Parkinson's Disease at migraine. Nagkakaroon ng irritability, anxiety, depression at agitation ang mga indibidwal na may Alzheimer's Disease at iba pang uri ng dementia. Maging alerto sa mga nasabing sintomas na maaaring maranasan ng iyong ina na may dementia.

Ayon sa Center for Disease Control (CDC) ng Amerika, nakakaapekto ang mainit na panahon sa mga indibidwal na may mental illness at depression. Tumataas ang suicide rates tuwing mainit ang panahon at maaari ring magkasakit ng hyperthermia ang mga may schizophrenia dahil sa pag-inom nila ng gamot



Tax incentives of renewable energy



Atty. Irwin C. Nidea Jr.

TAX LAW FOR BUSINESS

THE Industrial Revolution occurred more than a century ago, yet the anchor of development remains the same. At the surface, we have come a long way. Transportation has reached new height, communication has connected continents, and technology has evolved multiple folds. However, at the interior of all this innovation, we will find ourselves energized by the same source energy (gas, oil, or coal) that fueled the Industrial Revolution.

There is no doubt that the Industrial Revolution has catapulted the advancement of society, but in the process, it has also accelerated climate change.

The United Nations has explained that "climate change" refers to the long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. These shifts may be natural, such as through variations in the solar cycle. But since the 1800s, human activities have been the main driver of climate change, primarily due to burning fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas. To avoid the worst impacts of climate change, emissions need to be cut by nearly half by 2030. To achieve this goal, we would need to steer development towards a greener future. Focus should be geared towards Renewable Energy (RE) sources instead of reliance in fossil fuels.

Sadly, for years, there seemed to be a disconnect between the intended direction of our policy makers and how our laws are framed, as far as tax incentives for RE is concerned.

For one, there are CTA decisions that deny an RE developer's claim for VAT refund on the ground that it failed to produce the DOE Certificate of Endorsement relative to its sale of renewable energy as required in the RE Law's implementing rules. RE developers are being required to produce not only the DOE Certificate of Registration and BOI Registration but also a COE from the DOE for every sale of renewable energy. This requirement is cumbersome if not impossible to comply.

The RE Law is clear that the value-added tax zero-rating incentive on sale of fuel or power generated from renewable sources of energy by RE developers does not require the presentation of the COE. The RE Law never mentioned of the requirement of a COE before availing the said incentive. It only requires registration with the DOE and the BOI before an RE Developer can enjoy the VAT zero-rating incentive on sale of fuel or power generated from renewable sources of energy.

There are many claims for refund that were denied just because the IRR of a law stated a requirement that the law itself does not mandate.

In January 2022, the IRR of the RE Law was amended by Department Circular DC2021-12-0042. It now provides that an RE Developer shall be AUTOMATICALLY qualified to avail of the incentives provided in the RE Law after securing a Certificate of Registration from the DOE. The IRR has been amended. It has been clarified that an RE Developer is not required to submit a COE to avail of the VAT zero-rating incentive.

Damage has been done not only to the investors of renewable energy but to the environment as well. Some investors may have been turned off when they realized that our law, particularly the old IRR, empowers the government to hold on to their money that is supposed to be returned to them, by requiring the impossible.

It bears stressing that the issuance of the COE is not included as one of the functions of the Renewable Energy Management Bureau of the DOE. Given that the old IRR specifically states that it is the REMB which shall issue the COE but the

There are many claims for refund that were denied just because the IRR of a law stated a requirement that the law itself does not mandate.

said office does not issue the same will leave anyone dumbfounded. A claim for refund is being denied because of a requirement that is not being processed by the government agency that is allegedly mandated to produce it.

The government is now trying to make amends with the issuance of the new IRR and with the issuance of Revenue Regulations 7-2022, dated June 30, 2022. The said RR provides that local supplier of goods, properties, and services shall require from the RE Developer only a copy of the latter's BOI Registration and DOE Registration for VAT zero-rating purposes. Accordingly, local suppliers/sellers of goods, properties, and services of duly registered RE developers should not pass on the 12 percent VAT on the latter's purchases of goods, properties and services that will be used for the development, construction and installation of their power plant facilities. This includes the whole process of exploring and developing renewable energy services up to its conversion into power, including but not limited to the services performed by subcontractors and contractors.

The VAT zero-rating incentive does not stop to the local purchases by RE developers. All manufacturers, fabricators, and suppliers of locally produced RE equipment are also subject to zero-rated VAT on their transactions with local suppliers of goods, properties, and services needed in the manufacture/fabrication of RE equipment. They just must only show their BOI and DOE certifications as well as the BOI and DOE certifications of the RE developers.



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Based on these recent issuances, it can be seen that there is now a conscious effort by the government to show that a COE is no longer a requirement to avail of the VAT zero-rating incentive. Unfortunately, damage has been done.

We need to pivot to renewable energy and shy away from carbon and fossil fuels. These sources of energy may have catapulted us to where we are now. But are they sustainable? We all know that we are killing our planet with carbon emissions that bring about climate change.

Climate change is slowly becoming apparent. We are now experiencing record-breaking temperatures and stronger typhoons. The policy direction of our government to renewable energy must be crystal clear. Our laws, including tax incentives given to RE, must not be equivocal. RE developers must be given what is due them and they must be allowed to grow and be more.

The author is a senior partner of Du-Balagad and Associates Law Offices, a member-firm of WTS Global.

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Bite-sized rightsizing

Pronouncements from various government pulpits of "rightsizing" are spooking the bureaucracy. The context of this disruptive initiative—post-pandemic and pre-food and energy crises—is distressing.

Add to this the decades of profligacy that turned the lofty provisions of the 1987 Constitution into mandates for corruption, cronyism, and bacchanalian excess. The government, an amalgam of political dynasties buttressed by mercenary governing elites, is now talking about rightsizing.

But where is the spirit of rightsizing when those who would inflict it on the bureaucracy by law would appoint as many as 30 deputy speakers in the House of Representatives as a mechanism for distributing spoils? Or how about the runaway bloat in the sectoral representation system for electing party list representatives which have become a backdoor for unelectable elites?

Let us be clear. Rightsizing is the correct prescription for the main problem of the Philippine bureaucracy: being overstaffed but undermanned. There are just too many people who are on the government payroll without any real and commensurate contribution to the total government effort, while there are too few of those with the right skills and motivation to keep pedaling the bureaucracy forward.

But the strategy, timing, and approach of the unfolding extemporaneous rightsizing initiative are counterproductive. This gargantuan bureaucracy will now go on a crash diet to correct its weight and form imbalance. Sure, the head is swollen, the torso is bloated, and the legs are spindly. What magic body sculpting method will work in as short a time to leave enough time for the business of government?

Drumbeating the rightsizing initiative should have come after the overall strategy of the Marcos Jr. administration has been crafted; the systems for setting, assigning, and measuring performance targets up and down



ON THE MOVE

SEGUNDO ECLAR ROMERO

the bureaucracy are settled for all incumbents; and the structural framework for the complex machinery of government firmed up.

Agencies like the Civil Service Commission, the Department of Labor and Employment, the Department of the Interior and Local Government, and the Office of the President should have long been ready with their own function-specific completed staff work. They appear flatfooted, unable to give definitive rightsizing features and modalities, considering that this rightsizing plan has several versions in the House (Nograles) and the Senate (Pangilinan, Sotto).

For good measure, there should first be a whole-of-government reorganization commission (akin to the Villafuerte Commission during the 1986 revolutionary government period) to do the groundwork. That work should eventually enlarge and update the de facto manual of the Philippine government, the Revised Administrative Code of 1987.

Rightsizing must be guided by a theory of change. The focus should be on the whole government where the general diagnosis and prescriptions should be made and implemented at the unit level where decisions on abolition, merging, and creation of units and the reassignment, redeployment, and sepa-

ration of staff should be taken. Without the guiding principles and guide rails for implementation, the spindly legs, not the torso nor the bloated head will likely be rightsized.

Human and information and communication technology interoperability will be key in rightsizing. Clearly, more of the lower-level government functionaries will be rightsized, as the application of rightsizing to the upper management levels requires more time, prototyping, proficiency, and calibration. In other words, those who are poor, vulnerable, disadvantaged, and "padrino"-less.

The Marcos Jr. administration has just begun what Bruce Tuckman calls the five stages of the psychological development of a team, which are Forming (establishing relationships), Storming (turf wars), Norming (trust-building), Performing (establishment of systems for achieving goals), and Adjourning (closure and turnover). No sooner has this government started the Forming process than it opened up an open-ended Storming phase as well.

Rightsizing is a spooky word, depending on where you sit or stand. Nothing can be more disruptive to the business of governance. It is the functional equivalent of Gotabaya Rajapaksa of Sri Lanka naively thrusting his country into needless ruin by precipitously shifting from chemical to organic farming, not in stages, but all at once.

Now we know why the ambiguous call for "unity" did not create the critical foundational consensus through the May 9 elections on how the nation should move forward. The Marcos Jr. administration and the Filipino people will grate on one another with unpleasant surprises. Many senior technical people in government, despite their long service and experience, will still find it surprising how changeless the hidden soul of Philippine governance and administration—the "padrino" system.

doyromero@gmail.com



Frogs, fishes not 'scientific solutions' vs dengue

By ANALOU DE VERA

Frogs and fishes are not "scientific solutions" to combat dengue-carrying mosquitoes, three government agencies said on Sunday, July 24.

The departments of Health (DOH), Interior and Local Government (DILG), and Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), issued the joint statement amid the rising number of dengue cases in the country.

"Scientific solutions can solve complex problems like dengue," the agencies said.

"Releasing invasive species of frogs and fish is not the scientific solution," they added.

Such moves may cause more danger to human health and to the environment, the agencies said.

"To do so would risk human health, and may also destroy ecological balance leading to other worse problems in the natural environment,

like issues in food supply," they said.

The agencies noted that dengue is caused by a virus that is transmitted through a vector, which is the aedes aegypti mosquito. They emphasized the importance of the 4s strategy.

"The main solution to the dengue problem is vector control, that is, to destroy the breeding grounds of these mosquitoes," they said.

"We all know the solutions: search and destroy breeding places (stagnant water and its containers).

Use self protection. Do not delay when sick, seek early consultation. Where there is an outbreak, support fogging," they added.

As of July 2, the DOH already re-

corded a total of 65,190 dengue cases nationwide. The figure is 83 percent higher compared to the 35,715 dengue cases recorded during the same period last year.



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Department of Environment and Natural Resources
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT BUREAU
DENR Compound, Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City 1110
Tel. No.: (02) 8506 4378
Website: www.emb.gov.ph | Email: records@emb.gov.ph



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Of the ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS) of the 60 MW GAS TURBINE POWER PLANT PROJECT of BELGROVE POWER CORPORATION located in BARANGAY MALAYA, PILLILA, RIZAL.

Notice is hereby given to all parties who wish to give their opinion regarding the implementation of the PROPOSED 60 MW GAS TURBINE POWER PLANT PROJECT to attend the Public Hearing scheduled on:

Date	Time	Venue
05 August 2022 (Wednesday)	09:00 AM <i>Registration starts at 08:30 AM</i>	Covered Court Barangay Malaya, Pillila, Rizal

The Public Hearing is being conducted in connection with the review of the EIS of the aforementioned project by the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The following is the project information:

Project Name	60 MW Gas Turbine Power Plant Project
Project Location	Barangay Malaya, Pillila, Rizal
Project Capacity	60 MW
Project Type	Power Plant
Project Rationale	The proposed 60 MW gas turbine power plant will provide ancillary services to the national grid specifically as dispatchable reserve (DR). This type of ancillary service is generating capacity that is not scheduled for regular energy supply, regulating reserve or contingency reserve, or intermittent loads not scheduled for contingency reserve. DR services should be readily available for dispatch in order to replenish the Contingency Reserve Service whenever a generating unit trips or a loss of a single transmission interconnection occurs. This type of ancillary service can be provided by qualified generators that are not connected to the grid but have fast start capabilities and can ramp up their output to the offered DR within thirty minutes.
Project Components	Major Components: • Two (2) units of 30 MW Modular Gas Turbine Engines Auxiliary Facilities: • 2.50 MW installation • 4 units of 2,000L cylindrical tanks • Diesel and water storage tanks • Wastewater storage tank Shared Facilities with existing 600-MW MTRP: • Wastewater treatment plant • Water Facility • Water treatment plant • Administration Building
Proponent	Belgrove Power Corporation

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

The project's EIS and Executive Summary for the Public are downloadable on our website. Please access the [Notice of Public Hearing/Consultation link](#) found in our website while copies will be available in the following offices:

- EMB Region IAA
6th Floor 1515 DENR By the Bay Bldg., Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila
- Municipal Environment & Natural Resources Office-Pillila
Pillila Municipal Hall, Pillila, Rizal

For more details, please contact the EIAMD Division at this Office at telephone number (02) 8506 4378 loc. 118 and look for the project case handlers Engr. Dexter Tabada and Engr. Jason Paolo Esquivara.

(POI - July 19 & 26, 2022)

26 JULY 2022, TUESDAY



NEWS ALERTS

COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Over 19,000 COVID-19 infections in past week

[Rhodina Villanueva](#) - The Philippine Star July 26, 2022 | 12:00am



People enter a polling station before casting their votes during the presidential election in Manila on May 9, 2022.

AFP / Chaideer Mahyuddin

MANILA, Philippines — A total of 19,536 new infections were recorded in the country this past week, the Department of Health (DOH) reported yesterday.

The latest COVID-19 bulletin issued by the DOH likewise showed that from July 18 to 24, there were 56 new patients in severe and critical condition and 42 deaths from COVID-19 were verified.

Meanwhile, the daily average number of new COVID-19 infections is 2,791. This is 33 percent higher than those recorded from July 11 to 17.

Last Sunday, the health department recorded 666 severe and critical COVID-19 patients who sought admission in hospitals. This number is 8.7 percent of the total COVID-19 admissions in the country.

Out of the 2,664 ICU beds intended for COVID-19 patients, 578 (21.7 percent) were occupied while 26.0 percent or 5,804 of 22,331 non-ICU COVID-19 beds are being used.

The DOH also reported that as of July 17, more than 71 million individuals or 91.61 percent of the target population have been vaccinated against COVID-19 after an additional 223,507 individuals were added from July 18 to 24.

Meanwhile, 15.9 million individuals have received their booster shots. These included the 341,718 individuals boosted last week.

The health department said 6.7 million senior citizens or 77.87 percent of the target A2 population were able to receive their primary vaccine series.

In an interview with reporters, DOH officer-in-charge Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said the National Capital Region (NCR) can be classified as being at “moderate” risk if the basis to be used is only the average daily attack rate (ADAR).

“Because of the continuing increase in the number of cases, the NCR is now at moderate risk case classification. We are at moderate risk... because the average daily attack rate is at 6.25,” said Vergeire.

However, she noted that it cannot be considered fully as being at “moderate” risk classification when the health care utilization rate or HCUR will be considered.



“The health care utilization rate is at less than 50 percent. That means that when we cross tabulate using the new metrics system, NCR is still at low risk,” said Vergeire.

Earlier, the DOH said the country’s alert level system will be indicated solely by the ADAR and HCUR. This was after the government removed the two-week case growth rate as among the indicators used by the DOH.

OCTA Research Group affirmed yesterday the NCR was at moderate risk for COVID-19 as it registered an average daily attack rate of 7.17 per 100,000 individuals,.

OCTA fellow Guido David said NCR recorded a 14.1 percent COVID-19 positivity rate.

For July 18 to 24, NCR had an average of 1,033 new cases per day for an ADAR of 7.17 per 100,000 individuals that is 25 percent higher compared to the 7-day average of 829 from July 11 to 17 (equivalent to an ADAR of 5.75).

“Overall, the NCR was at moderate risk. With a flat growth rate, it is not clear at this time when the peak in cases in the NCR will occur,” David said during the Laging Handa briefing.

In a tweet, David said “NCR is at moderate risk based on the metrics we use, but the bright spot is that HCUR remains below 50 percent.”

HCUR remained at 33.1 percent.

NCR’s one-week growth rate, he said, was at 25 percent while reproduction number was 1.38.

“The one-week growth rate in the NCR has remained relatively flat over three weeks. This means that while cases continue to rise, the rate of increase is moderate,” David tweeted.

David noted that the country may record 4,000 new cases per day by next week, but cautioned these were just projections and that the surge was not exponential and thus not alarming. – Pia Lee-Brago



Paghaba ng Omicron subvariants wave, ikinabahala

[Danilo Garcia](#) - Pang-masa July 26, 2022 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Nabahala ang OCTA Research Group sa paghaba ng wave na dulot ng mga subvariants ng Omicron makaraang manatili ang antas ng reproduction number at growth rate ng COVID-19 ngayong linggo katulad ng numero ng nakaraang linggo.

Ayon kay OCTA fellow Dr. Guido David na nananatili sa 25% ang “one-week growth rate” ng COVID-29 sa National Capital Region. Napanatili rin naman ang reproduction number sa 1.38 katulad ng nakaraang linggo. Ang reproduction number ang numero ng tao na nahahawa ng isang kaso. Kapag umabot sa 1 ang reproduction number, nangangahulugan na bumababa na ang mga kaso.

Nanatili rin naman ang positivity rate sa NCR sa 14%. Ito ang porsyento ng mga tao na nagpopositibo mula sa kabuuang bilang ng mga sumailalim sa Covid test.



#OneDENR

**Covid-19
Situation and Response**



National COVID-19 Case Bulletin

July 25, 2022

Official DOHgov
@DOHgovph

Healthcare Utilization

(as of July 24, 2022)

26.0%
Non-ICU Bed Utilization
5,804 out of 22,331 non-ICU beds used

21.7%
ICU Bed Utilization
578 out of 2,664 ICU beds used

666
Severe and Critical Admissions
8.7% of total COVID-19 admissions

Vaccination Accomplishment

(as of July 24, 2022)

91.61%
% Coverage of Target Population*

77.87%
% Coverage of Target A2 Population**

Fully Vaccinated Individuals
71,546,355
+223,507 vaccinated on Jul 18 to Jul 24

Individuals with Booster/Additional Dose
15,934,251
+341,718 vaccinated on Jul 18 to Jul 24

(added on Jul 18 to Jul 24)



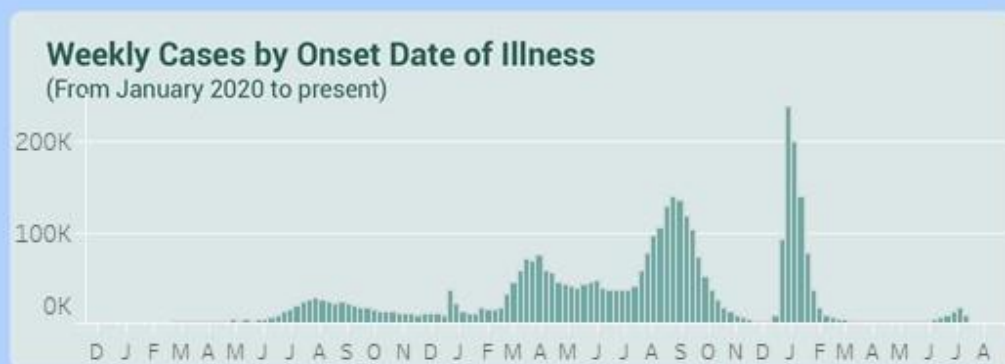
COVID-19 Cases

(as of July 24, 2022)

New Cases
+19,536
Daily Average Cases = 2,791
(33% higher than cases on Jul 11 to Jul 17)

Severe and Critical Cases
+56
(0.29% of new cases)

Deaths Verified During The Past Week
+42
(0 deaths occurred on Jul 11 to Jul 24)



*Target population refers to 70% of the total population (78,100,578 individuals)
**Target A2 population refers to 85% of the total Senior Citizen population(8,721,357 individuals)

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



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I-chat na si KIRA!
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MESSENGER: Department of Health PH
KONTRACOVDPH: kontracovid.ph

26 JULY 2022, TUESDAY



DENR

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Please click this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TtV9gEgWs-g>

MANILA

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Manila Bay Update: July 25, 2022

5,012 views · Jul 25, 2022

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Engr. berto

22h · 🌐

Malaking tambakan sa Manila Bay litaw na litaw na!

#ManilaBayReclamation

See Translation



Chen2x, Ma Fi Pulos and 966 others

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Miz July

July 24 at 3:30 PM · 🌐



talagang dinadayo na ngayon ang Manila Bay Dolomite ,yung mamasyal ka lang tapos konting kapaan uuwi kana masaya dahil sa naka libreng pang ulam kapa ,tahong at halaan lang ang malakas 🤪

See Translation



👍❤️🤔 317

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