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2 Metro Manila Subway stations break ground

Marcos vows grander infrastructure projects

By BETHEENA V. UNITE and EMILIE V. ABADILLA

President Marcos led the groundbreaking ceremony of the Ortigas and Shaw Boulevard stations and tunnels of the Metro Manila Subway Project (MMSP) where he expressed optimism about the fruitful results it would yield.

The Ortigas and Shaw Boulevard Stations and tunnels is part of the ₱17.75-billion first phase of the subway project.

“As we break the ground for this portion of our subway system, we fervently hope to soon enjoy the benefits that it brings to ▶ **7**



SUBWAY PROJECT – President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. (fourth from left) is joined (from left) Senators Mark A. Villar, Jayvee Ejercito, and Grace Poe; and Transportation Secretary Jaime J. Bautista, Japanese Ambassador Kazuhiko Koshikawa, and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) chief representative Takema Sakamoto in applauding the start of the construction of the Metro Manila Subway Project's Ortigas and Shaw Boulevard Stations on Monday, Oct. 3, 2022, at the Metrowalk Commercial Complex in Pasig City. (Office of the President)



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2 Metro Manila Subway stations break ground

the general public," Marcos said in his speech on Monday, Oct. 3.

The subway, once operational, can accommodate more than 519,000 passengers a day. It will reduce travel time from Valenzuela to Bicutan to just 45 minutes.

Marcos expressed optimism that the project would also lead to more business opportunities and additional economic activities.

"With accessible designated stations that can cater to a massive volume of passengers, we anticipate helping our people skip the long lines of traffic and even spare themselves from the perils of commuting," the President said. "With the improved linkages of key areas and business districts in the metro as well as the availability of stalls and other stores in the stations and nearby markets, we can see more business opportunities for entrepreneurs and investors, and additional economic activity."

Marcos expressed his intention to pursue "grander" infrastructure initiatives for the country under his watch.

"Let the breaking ground of this subway system signal our intention to the world to pursue even grander dreams and more ambitious endeavors that will bring comfort and progress to our people all over the country," he said. "Be assured that this administration will take the lead in identifying, pursuing, and implementing projects as part of the Build Better More Infrastructure Agenda that we have laid out."

Senator Mark A. Villar, former Public Works secretary, joined Presi-

dent Marcos in the groundbreaking ceremony of the subway project.

"I'm glad to see that President Bongbong Marcos' Build Better More program will continue the country's Golden Age of Infrastructure. Continuity is very significant in terms of infrastructure development in the country," Villar said. "During my term as DPWH secretary, I remember the time when this project was being conceptualized. Many were doubtful but here we are today, realizing the project that has come to fruition. This world-class subway only proves that we can be at par with other developed countries."

The Metro Manila Subway is by far one of the Philippines' largest infrastructure projects that would create an efficient railway system in the National Capital Region (NCR).

The first phase, Contract Package 104 (CP104), of the project will be constructed by the winning contractor, Tokyu-Tobishima Megawide Joint Venture (TTM-JV).

Marcos encouraged the public and all stakeholders to be patient and optimistic amid the disruption the years-long construction would bring.

"Although it is a given that the construction of these structures will take time and cause disruption, let us be optimistic and just count these small inconveniences as a small price to pay for the fruitful results that this program, this project will yield," he said.

With assistance and funding from the government of Japan, through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Department of

Transportation (DOTr) is aiming to partially commence operations of the subway in 2025.

The subway project, the country's first underground railway system, has 17 stations from Valenzuela to Bicutan and covers 33 kilometers.

The project will be the crown jewel of the country's mass transit infrastructure system after its completion, said Transportation Secretary Jaime Bautista.

"We are running at full speed on this project. We owe it to the commuting public," he said.

The groundbreaking ceremony signals the closure of a portion of Meralco Avenue in Pasig City – from Capitol Commons to Shaw Boulevard – where traffic is rerouted starting Oct. 3, 2022 until 2028 to give way to the construction.

The entire contract package is nearly 3.4 kilometers with two stations connected by a 920.5-meter tunnel and extends further to 1.86-kilometer tunnels connecting Shaw Boulevard to Kalayaan Avenue Station in Taguig City.

The tunnel will be formed using two huge tunnel boring machines (TBM) from Japan, using a technique called New Austrian Tunneling Method (NATM).

Each TBM can excavate 300 to 500 cubic meters of soil daily and creates a tunnel nine to 12 meters daily, using rotating cutting wheels that can easily break up hard soil and rocks.

While the massive TBMs can significantly hasten the process of tunneling, above ground disruption will be kept to minimum. (With a report from Mario B. Casayuran)



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'Green' energy open to foreigners - DoJ

BY FRANCO JOSE C. BARONA

FOREIGNERS can own 100 percent of renewable or "green" energy projects in the Philippines, the Department of Justice (DoJ) said.

In a legal opinion it issued on September 29, the DoJ said the renewable energy sector is not covered by the 60-40 ownership rule in Section 2, Article XII of the Constitution.

It said, "the Constitutional for-

eign ownership restriction on the exploration, development and utilization of natural resources only covers things that are susceptible to appropriation, thus excluding the sun, the wind, and the ocean."

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'Green' Energy ...

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The DoJ said the phrase "all forces of potential energy" in the Constitution should be interpreted to exclude "kinetic energy" such as renewable energy.

Potential energy is defined as "energy at rest," while kinetic energy is "energy in motion." Renewable energy sources like solar, wind, hydro, and ocean or tidal energy are therefore considered kinetic energy sources.

The DoJ said the investment cap only seeks to "preserve for Filipinos limited and exhaustible resources."

The "appropriation of waters, direct from the source, for power generation" should continue to be subject to the foreign ownership restriction, the DoJ said.

Before more foreign investments in renewables are allowed, the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the Renewable Energy Act of 2008 (Republic Act 9513) must be amended to conform with the opinion, it said.

The government is planning to increase the share of renewable energy in the power generation mix to 35 percent by 2030, and increase it further to 50 percent by 2040.

Based on Department of Energy (DoE) data, renewables make up 22 percent of the generation mix, with coal having the biggest share at 58 percent.

As of June, a total of 998 renewable energy contracts with a combined installed capacity of 5,460.59 megawatts and a potential capacity of 61,613.81 MW have been awarded by the DoE.

Under current rules, foreign firms may go into renewable energy development through a service or operating contract with the government, but they cannot own more than 40 percent of a project.

In a statement, Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said the DoE is already revising the IRR of RA 9513 which places the exploration, development, production and utilization of natural resources under the government's full control and supervision.

"Private sector investments are central [to] achieving our renewable energy targets and vision for the Filipino people and this is a welcome development for our foreign investors to invest in renewable energy production here in our country," Lotilla said.

He thanked Justice Secretary Crispin "Boying" Remulla "for this favorable development which will pave the way for the opening of foreign investments in renewable energy development."

In 2020, the government allowed full foreign ownership of large-scale geothermal projects through financial and technical assistance agreements as long as the minimum investment amounted to \$50 million.



'KARDING' AFTERMATH

LANDSLIDES ON MT. ARAYAT ENDANGER 1,531 FAMILIES, SAY EXPERTS

By **Tonette Orejas**
@ttorejasINQ



**Pineda said
the affected
residents must
be able to move
out of harm's way
within minutes**

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Supertyphoon “Karding” (international name: Noru) triggered landslides at the summit of Mt. Arayat in Pampanga province, widening the debris field there, state geologists announced on Monday.

The sensors in the early warning system of the provincial government detected “intense ground vibrations” between 10:30 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. on Sept. 25 as Karding struck Central Luzon, said Dr. Mahar Lagmay, executive director of the University of the Philippines Resilience Institute in an online meeting with Pampanga officials.

Lagmay said the intensity of rainfall at that time peaked at 78.4 millimeters.

Separate aerial surveys done through drones by the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (PDRRMC) and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) verified fresh landslides from the summit down to Sapang Maeyagas, one of four creeks draining from the inactive volcano in the town of Arayat.

Noel Lacadin, chief of the MGB geology section in Central Luzon, said the Maeyagas Creek was the same landslide path when Typhoons “Ondoy” (Ketsana), “Santi” (Nari) and “Ulysses” (Vamco) lashed at Mt. Arayat in 2009, 2013 and 2020, respectively. Landslides killed 12 people during Ondoy and a policeman during Santi.

Zacarias Daniel Baricuatro, PDRRMC geologist, said the new landslides occurred in a strictly protected area with high to very high susceptibility to debris flows, so no residents lived there.

Baricuatro said the current volume of debris likely to flow down, mostly boulders as big as two-story houses, would have to be estimated by ground surveys.

According to Lacadin, the volume reached 66,000 cubic meters before Karding struck.

Simulation

Gov. Dennis Pineda ordered simulation exercises for the evacuation of 1,531 households in Purok (subvillage) 4, 5, 6 and 7 in Barangay San Juan Baño to a designated safe zone.

He said engineering interventions, such as the reinforcement of a deflector dike, would be undertaken later.

Arayat Vice Mayor Emmanuel Bonifacio Alejandrino said the municipal government declared the four subvillages to be permanent danger zones following Ondoy and resettled the residents.

“But they came back because they were below the summit,” he said at the meeting.

Pineda also ordered the Information Technology Business Solutions Corp., which installed the Mt. Arayat Early Warning System earlier this year, to widen the dissemination of alerts, especially among residents.

Lagmay said the distance between the landslide area and the subvillages gives a lead time of two hours to evacuate.

Pineda said the affected residents must be able to move out of harm's way within minutes. INQ



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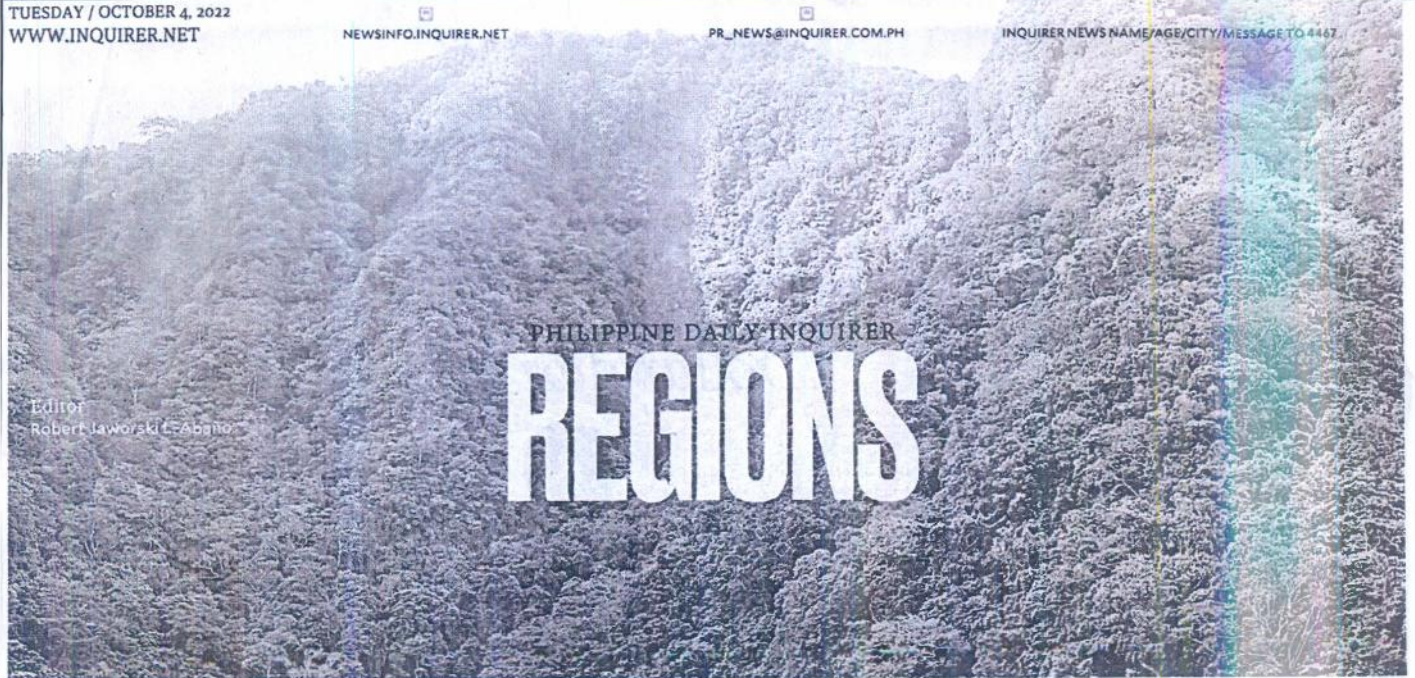
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Editor
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DENT Landslides at the summit of Mt. Arayat in Pampanga are visible in this aerial shot taken on Sept. 27, a few days after Supertyphoon "Karding" (international name: Noru) battered Luzon. According to state geologists, landslide debris, such as boulders, will gush down to Sapang Maeyagas, one of four creeks draining from the inactive volcano, putting at risk over 1,500 households near the area. —PHOTO COURTESY OF THE PAMPANGA PROVINCIAL DISASTER RISK REDUCTION MANAGEMENT COUNCIL



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COMMENTARY

Sierra Madre: The backbone of Mother Nature's protection

BY ANNA VARONA



Haribon Chief Operating Officer Anna Varona CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

WHEN you gaze at the Sierra Madre, you are admiring the longest mountain range in the Philippines. Spanning almost 500 kilometers in length and including 10 provinces in three regions in Luzon, it is home and a primary source of life to a large number of wildlife species and human communities. But what you don't see, under its seemingly serene beauty, is nature's power to sustain and protect — and how taking this power for granted can result in terrible consequences.

Sierra Madre's forests provide fresh water to residents of Metro Manila, Cagayan, Isa-

bela, Nueva Vizcaya, Nueva Ecija, Quirino, Aurora, Quezon, Rizal, Laguna and Bulacan. Sierra Madre also stabilizes the water flow and soil to prevent typhoon-related calamities. Moreover, its terrain provides a buffer to Central Luzon and its densely populated cities, slowing down and often taking the brunt of typhoons. Just like a doting mother, Sierra Madre gives sustenance and protects her children.

In recent decades, the country experienced a boom in real estate development and the implementation of land reform. Mountains were cleared, slash-and-burn

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Sierra Madre: The backbone

farming prevailed in key biodiversity areas, and mono-agroforestry became popular. Though built on good intentions, these initiatives took a long-term toll on our species' habitats.

Typhoon "Winnie" in 2004 claimed 1,500 lives due to flash floods and landslides, Francisco D. Elle Jr. of Barangay Tanauan Farmers Association (Batafa) sadly recalls. Francisco points out that the lack of sustainable livelihoods destroyed Sierra Madre and the lack of trees caused the death of people he knew.

This year, our country was threatened by Super Typhoon "Karding," with

maximum sustained winds of 185 kilometers per hour (kph) and predicted to reach gusts of up to 230 kph. However, Karding significantly slowed down as it traversed Sierra Madre. Once again, the mountain range's large surface area of slopes and curves weakened the typhoon.

For the past 12 years, our Haribon Foundation foresters, rangers and communities have worked to reclaim habitats totaling an area of 540 km. Haribon Foundation planted 1.6 million trees in these areas, with a successful survival rate of 96.5 percent. Haribon

has created partnerships with over 500 communities, leaders and women's organizations. These relationships allow the organization to work towards restoring Sierra Madre.

Nowadays, in Sierra Madre, you'll find former loggers turned forest rangers, empowered women purposeful in their roles in conservation leadership, Indigenous people protecting their ecosystems, and local communities' genuine commitment to preserving their environment. People like women leaders in Southern Sierra Madre like Celia "Tita Aba" Ungriano know that calling

for the protection of the "backbone of Luzon" must be done all year long, as it continues to face threats.

While Sierra Madre protects and gives life to humans, humans threaten its well-being. The Kaliwa Dam project looms over the mountains and indigenous people like a dark heavy cloud ready to pour destruction over its serene mountainside. The town of Infanta, created by the deposition of sediment, can be eradicated from the face of the earth.

There is a sustainable way to achieve economic growth while being empathetic stewards of nature. Sierra Madre is a reminder to prioritize building healthy ecosystems around our country, whether in far-flung areas or concrete communities. It's time to listen to environmental

advocates when they say we must save our native botanical and animal life by saving our native trees.

It's time to protect our roots and build our canopies.

Anna Varona is the chief operating officer of the Haribon Foundation. She has been a Haribon member since her college years at De La Salle University. Her tree-hugging days led her back to Haribon as the advocate we know today.

In the past decade, Varona became a responsible tourism advocate through the show 'Last Wild Place.' She worked with the United Nations Development Program and World Wildlife Fund as a marine protected area advocate and warrior against plastic pollution. She was the silent force that

convinced Okada to responsibly dispose of their 130,000 balloons meant to be dropped at a New Year's party at the Cove.

Varona was one of the first to teach people to sort plastics by type and how to prepare it for upcycling. As the founder of Drop the Plastic and Clean Our Oceans Project, she led the movement that successfully called for multinational firms, such as Nestle and Unilever, to empower consumers to prepare their consumer plastics to become upcycle ready, and diverted more than 21 tons of clean, dry and segregated plastics from the ocean within one year, encouraging the circular economy, where plastics are not treated as garbage, but as a raw material used by plastic manufacturers to use in making chairs, tables, crates and other consumer products.



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Point of view

Addressing uncertainties: Facing the world at breaking point

By SELVA RAMACHANDRAN

We are living in uncertain times.

Extreme weather patterns are becoming usual occurrences around the world. The onslaught of recent typhoons like Odette and Karding that swept parts of the Philippines clearly demonstrate the worsening climate crisis, greatly affecting those at the fringes of society. They provide a preview of what inaction on climate change can lead to: escalating needs for disaster response and recovery; increasing fiscal stress as the government is compelled to provide humanitarian aid to disaster-stricken areas and widening gap across income groups as low-income groups are, more often than not, more vulnerable to climate-related disasters.



Unfortunately, these extreme events may become more frequent and even more damaging with the changing climate.

Headlines may scream for urgent action, but implementing change is tough. Filipinos, just like the rest of the world, may appear to be trapped in a whirlpool of real problems and possible solutions, fueled by the uncertain world we live in. It is unsettling lives everywhere, and perhaps more so for the Philippines, an archipelago that's situated along both the Pacific typhoon belt and the so-called ring of fire.

Global development has stalled. Until 2020, the global human development index (HDI) – a measure of a nation's health, education and average income – had risen every year since 1991 when UNDP began calculating it. It fell in 2020. And it fell again in 2021. And it fell almost everywhere:

For the first time in history, manufactured materials, such as concrete and asphalt, outweigh the Earth's biomass. Microplastics are everywhere: in country-sized garbage patches in the ocean, in protected forests and distant mountaintops, in people's lungs and blood. This is threatening humanity's very survival.

90 percent of countries saw a decline in one or other year, wiping out five years of progress. The Philippines is no exception. In 2021, the country slid back to "medium" HDI category, after years of maintaining a spot amongst the "high" HDI group.

Development today, with its new dimensions of uncertainty, is the focus of UNDP's Human Development Report 2022. The report examines the ways in which crises are piling up to unsettle life, and interacting with our changing planet, increasing polarization and societal transformation. These are all moving at unprecedented speed and scale and interacting with each other in ways we cannot ignore. We are navigating uncharted waters around the world.

An obvious example is humanity's impact on planetary processes, from rising temperature to dwindling wildlife. For the first time in history, manufactured materials, such as concrete and asphalt, outweigh the Earth's biomass. Microplastics are everywhere: in country-sized garbage patches in the ocean, in protected forests and distant mountaintops, in people's lungs and blood. This is threatening humanity's very survival.

Aside from the planetary crisis, we are faced with a quickly eroding social fabric. Our societies are divided all over the world. Globally, trust in one another is at its lowest recorded level, coming in at just 30 percent in the latest HDR 2022. This erosion of trust pushed people to extreme positions, with those feeling very insecure twice as likely to support extremist views, which makes it even harder for a society to take collective action. Locally, there is clamor for climate justice, with efforts to curb emission being contingent upon climate finance, technologies and capacity development which developed countries are expected to provide in accordance with the Paris Agreement.

The future looks challenging, but this can be reversed. Our success will depend on our ability to take decisive action and to prioritize policies that invest, insure and innovate.

We are not starting from zero. There is already progress to cheer from the dramatic increase in renewable energy capacity. With serious investment this could rapidly accelerate and ensure a more sustainable source of energy. As investment ramps up, people also need to feel safe. Alongside insurance for companies and countries, social protection should be the bedrock of our societies, with universal basic income and cash transfers helping insulate people from increasing shocks.

However, it is innovation that will be at the epicenter of us conquering the unknowable challenges ahead. Artificial intelligence is already helping in modeling climate change impacts and in predicting disasters. And we are only just scratching the surface.

Humanity's only certainty is that our future is uncertain. To thrive together, we must throw out the old rulebook and recognize the world has changed. We trialed a new playbook during the pandemic, from cash transfers reaching over a billion people to saving 20 million lives through vaccination in 2021 alone. This shows what is possible when we put our minds to it. It is time to usher in a new era. To rekindle hope and re-write the future. To decide that this is not our end, but the start of a new beginning.

* * *

Dr. Selva Ramachandran is UNDP Philippines Resident Representative.



UN expert committee backs proposal to eliminate toxic plastic additives

A UN expert scientific review committee evaluated two toxic chemical additives found in many common plastics and has concluded the evidence of the substances harm to health and the environment qualify them for global elimination, recommending that the chemicals be listed under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs).

The Committee noted that it is important to separate out plastic wastes containing these chemicals, UV-328 and Dechlorane Plus, to ensure they are not recycled into new products. It also warned about the risk of replacing one of the chemicals, UV-328, with any other related hazardous chemical that could have harm-

ful impacts on human health and the environment.

"We commend and support the proposals by the POPs Review Committee (POPRC) to list highly toxic plastic additives UV-328 and Dechlorane Plus for global elimination under the Stockholm Convention," said Aileen Lucero, National Coordinator, EcoWaste Coalition. "We hope governments will approve the recommendations, but turn down the suggested exemptions to put an end to the harms caused by the continued production and use of these POPs to human health and the environment."

The decisions came this week at the meeting of the POPRC of the Stockholm Convention. Despite these welcome deci-

sions, science experts from the International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN) in attendance at the meeting warn that a range of exemptions were introduced in the recommendations that will unnecessarily perpetuate the use of these toxic chemicals and cause harm to health and the environment for decades.

The exemptions include use of the chemicals in cars and aircraft, which are similar to exemptions for previous listing of brominated flame retardants that has led to widespread and ongoing pollution of recycled plastics.

Dr. Therese Karlsson, IPEN Science and Technical Advisor said, "It is great to see that two toxic plastic additives are being recommended for

listing. This highlights that substantial efforts are urgently needed to phase out toxic chemicals used in plastics. It is however deeply concerning that the committee is recommending that some uses for the two chemicals will be allowed to continue for decades. These allowed uses will continue to put human health and the environment at risk."

The meeting also concluded that two classes of chemicals were likely, as a result of their long-range environmental transport, to lead to significant adverse human health and environmental effects, such that global action is warranted, and will be further assessed next year: Medium-chained chlorinated paraffins (MCCPs) and long chain perfluoro-

carboxylic acids.

The MCCPs were used as "regrettable" toxic substitutes for short chained chlorinated paraffins (SCCPs), which were listed in 2017. The current recommendation of MCCPs, although significant, has a limited scope regarding chain length and chlorination level that is likely to lead to additional toxic substitutions by similar chlorinated paraffins. Recent research showed that long-chained chlorinated paraffins have already reached the Arctic and should be eliminated.

The long chain perfluorocarboxylic acids is a group of toxic PFAS "forever chemicals" that are widespread pollutants threatening drinking water sources, public health, and the occupational

health of firefighters. They do not break down in the environment and accumulate in the bodies of wildlife and people. They are used in a wide variety of products, including firefighting foam, waterproofing of textiles, and food packaging, as well as other industrial and consumer applications.

Chlorpyrifos, a highly toxic pesticide, was also reviewed but the Committee failed to agree to move forward to the next phase. It will again be considered at the next meeting of the Committee in 2023.



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How to manage, reduce e-waste at home

PEOPLE use technology and electronics in every aspect of their lives. From gadgets to home appliances, refrigerators and TV, we need to replace broken items or have them repaired to extend their operation for three to six months.

The advent of technology also brought the skyrocketing of electronic wastes or e-wastes.

E-waste or Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) are any broken, spent, obsolete, and unwanted electronic and electrical products requiring disposal.

The improper dismantling, burning, or disposal of such can result in the release of harmful chemicals into the environment, which are detrimental to the environment and peo-

ple's health. The most common e-waste items are computers, cellular phones, washing machines, and refrigerators.

According to 2019 data, the country is currently one of Southeast Asia's top generators of e-waste, generating 3.9 kg of e-waste per capita. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) also reported that the country generated 32,664.41 metric tons of WEEE in the same year.

People's ever-growing reliance on electronics largely contributed to e-waste becoming the fastest growing waste stream worldwide. While solving the global problem may sound daunting, there are effortless yet effective ways individuals can help reduce e-waste.

Here are simple tips on how to successfully manage and reduce e-waste at home:

* Be responsible consumers. You do not need to upgrade to the latest gadgets every year, nor do you have to buy everything you see online. Only

buy new electronics and appliances whenever required to reduce the amount of e-waste. Overconsumption is one of the biggest causes of e-wastes.

* Fix rather than buy. Whenever you have old or broken electronics, check in with repair shops first to see if they are still fixable. Try to extend the lives of electronics and only buy new ones whenever necessary.

* Regularly clean and organize your items. If we have an idea of what gadgets or electronics we have at home, it will help us not buy things we already have.

* Bring back old electronics to the store. Some electronic shops buy back e-wastes for recycling, so they should be recycled rather than just be disposed of.

* Contact your barangay about your locality's proper e-waste management and disposal site. Do not just simply mix e-waste with other types of waste. Ask your barangay where to dispose of them and how to manage them.

Following these simple tips will not only help the environment but will also make you save money.

But aside from the obvious solution of reduction and recycling, one of the most effective ways to mitigate e-waste pollution is through educating and sharing these pieces of information with different social circles.

The fight against e-waste pollution cannot be achieved by one man alone but requires the action and commitment of all bodies- from the national government down to each citizen.

(Patricia Nicdao)



Life during wartime

THE orthodox version of climate change response is that between the two strategies to address — adaptation and mitigation — the latter must be prioritized. The reason for this is based on three assumptions: One, that it is still possible to keep global warming below a certain level (1.5 to 2.0 degrees Celsius) that avoids the most severe effects of it; two, it is absolutely necessary to do so because adapting to those effects, or even effects that are not as severe as those but simply worse than what would be experienced under the ideal 1.5-to-2.0 C level, would be completely unmanageable; and three, accepting that climate change effects are inevitable would discourage the world at large from trying to do anything at all to prevent them.

This perspective on climate change policy is manifested in practice. According to a report by the World Resources Institute (WRI) in the wake of the 2015 Paris climate summit, about 77 percent of all funding for climate action is directed toward mitigation. Individual countries are a bit more balanced; the average proportion of climate funding for mitigation among OECD countries is 56 percent. Multilateral development banks (MDBs) such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the World



ROUGH TRADE

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Bank and the European Investment Bank (EIB), however, are all-in for mitigation, devoting about 81 percent of their total climate funding for that, and just 19 percent for adaptation efforts.

The stubborn adherence to prioritizing mitigation over adaptation is frustrating, because it is based on an optimism that is not supported by scientific knowledge. There is virtually no evidence that merely halting the human activities that cause climate change is enough to reverse or even appreciably slow its effects. On the other hand, there is a large and rapidly growing volume of empirical evidence that climate change impacts are happening more quickly and are more severe than assumed by most models used to inform climate policy.

Two recent news items serve as good examples to illustrate this continuing disconnect between hopes and reality.

The first was a commentary from climate policy expert Philippe Benoit, a veteran of both

the World Bank and the International Energy Agency, published by Inter Press Service (IPS) about two weeks ago. In it, Benoit argues that the unprecedented scale of the devastation caused by the recent floods in Pakistan, which submerged about a third of the country and displaced or otherwise severely impacted more than 30 million people, "shows the shortcomings of invoking notions of 'adaptation' as a meaningful strategy to respond to climate change's destructive force."

Benoit explains that while adaptation measures such as more climate-resilient crops and infrastructure, better weather forecasting, and better disaster response are still good and necessary practice, "[T]he recent events in Pakistan illustrate the shortcomings of an adaptation strategy in the face of widespread devastation. Any notion of 'adapting' to these events is tragically misplaced. We cannot, just as countries cannot adapt to the destruction of war. They can resist, fight, look to recover, but the tragedy they suffer cannot be undone." Thus, he argues, the only real answer is the orthodox one: "But what the events in Pakistan show is that so much more needs to be done to reduce GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions and thereby limit the degree of climate change

and accompanying destructive forces people will need to face."

The second news item was the publication last month in the journal *Nature* of a multi-year study of the Greenland ice sheet by researchers from Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Norway, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the US, who sought to more accurately determine the amount and rate of melting of the planet's second-largest ice sheet. The results of the study were startling, even to the scientists who carried out the research: They discovered that, even under the absolutely best-case scenario, that is, if all GHG emissions and the resulting global warming were to instantly cease, the dynamics of the ice sheet are such that it will lose at least 3.3 percent of its volume — about 110 trillion tons of water — between now and the end of this century, which will raise the average global sea level by at least 25 centimeters.

That's not a "possibility if we don't do something to halt global warming," that's a "better move back from the beach, because the water is coming," take-it-to-the-bank warning. The only uncertainty is if the melting of the ice sheet will go beyond the unavoidable 3.3 percent, because that figure actually does assume an

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Life during wartime

ideal situation in which global warming stops increasing. If it does, the Greenland ice sheet will lose just that much and then settle back into a state of equilibrium; if global warming continues for any significant length of time — and other research already indicates it will, no matter what we do right now — then who knows; the amount of sea level rise will be something between 25 centimeters and 7 meters.

What is truly frightening about the new findings is that the amount of sea level rise that we will experience from just 3 percent of the Greenland ice sheet is at least twice as much as the most pessimistic existing model of what would happen if most of it melted. And no amount of “climate mitigation” is going to stop it. Yet experts who have access to all the information and should thus know better continue to exhort the public and political policy-makers to “do something to stop climate change before it’s too late.”

This is why I will continue, in the absence of hard scientific data to compel me to question it, to stick to the view that the state of orthodox climate change response has gone beyond hopeful to becoming irresponsibly naïve. It is analogous to telling a chain-smoker who has set his house on fire by carelessly dropping lit cigarettes all over the carpet that he can salvage his situation by simply quitting smoking and replacing the rugs. When the first discarded butt, or even the first two or three hit the floor, that might have been possible; now, if he wants to survive, he needs to evacuate the building and call the fire department.

Philippe Benoit says that the destruction and disruption that can be caused by climate change is like that caused by warfare. If that is true, we are all going to experience life during wartime, very soon.

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10-04-22

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MARTIN ANDANAR

Abante

Bagsik ng climate change

Sari-saring mga kalamidad at delubyo ang nakita at nabalitaang nangyari sa iba't bang bahagi ng mundo tulad na lamang ng malakihang pagbaha sa ilang mga bansa gaya ng Pakistan na kamakailan lamang ay nagpalubog sa maraming mga lugar nila at pagkawala ng mga ari-arian at maraming buhay.

Hindi lamang matinding pagbaha ang epekto ng climate change kundi mas matindi pang tagtuyot at matinding init ng temperatura na nararanasan sa ilang bansa sa Europa.

Ang climate change po ay ang long-term na pagpapalit ng temperatura at weather pattern dulot ng epekto ng mga pagkasira ng kalikasan at matinding industriyalisasyon ng mga mayayamang bansa na gumagamit ng fossil fuels gaya ng uling, langis at gas.

Nagdudulot ito ng matinding tagtuyot, mga bagyo, heat waves pagtaas ng tubig sa dagat, pagkatunaw ng mga yelo sa dagat na nagdudulot ng mas matinding pinsala sa sangkatauhan.

Dahil sa epekto ng climate change sinabi ng mga eksperto na aasahan ang mas matindi pang bagyo na mararanasan sa buong mundo dahil sa pagtaas ng moisture sa karagatan at matitinding hangin gaya ng bagyong Karding na nagparamdam ng kanyang lupit sa ilang mga lalawigan sa bansa.

Mas magiging malakas na anila ang mga bagyo at ang mundo ay lalong mag-iinit dahil sa kawalan ng pag-iingat at walang pakundangang paggamit ng ilang industrialized na mga bansa ng mga bagay na nakakasira sa kapaligiran.

Sa mga panahong ito na lamang nakaranas ng Signal Number 5 sa mga bagyong dumarating na dati ay hindi naman nangyayari at ito ay dahil sa epekto ng climate change.

Mismong si Pangulong Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. ay nagulat dahil sa signal number 5 na inianunsiyo ng Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) matapos manalasa ang super typhoon Karding na aniya ay dati wala namang ganitong kataas na signal sa bagyo sa Pilipinas.

Bago pa manalasa ang super typhoon Karding sa bansa, nanawagan si Pangulong Marcos Jr. sa mga lider sa buong mundo na magkaisa para tugunan ang problema sa climate change dahil ito ang pinakamatinding banta na kinakaharap ng mundo at ng sangkatauhan.

Ginawa ng Presidente ang panawagan sa kanyang pagdalo sa 77th session ng United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) sa New York City, USA na aniya ay dapat pagtulong-tulongan dahil ang mga maliliit na bansang tulad ng Pilipinas ang higit na maapektuhan ng epekto nito.

Tulungan po natin ang gobyerno para hindi humantong sa mas matinding panganib ang situwasyon sa Pilipinas at makipagtulungan sa mga hakbang at programang makakatulong para masagip ang kalikasan at mahadlangan ang mga posibleng peligro na darating sa bansa.

Magkaisa po tayo, ang gobyerno at publiko, para maibsan ang epektong dulot ng climate change.

Dinalaw kamakailan ng super typhoon Karding ang Pilipinas na nagdulot ng matinding pinsala sa mga pananim, ari-arian at buhay ng mamamayan.

Nasa 12 katao ang nauulat na nasawi dahil sa pananalasa ng bagyo noong nakalipas na linggo at posibleng tumaas pa ang bilang dahil sa anim na nawawala pa hanggang sa ngayon.

Hindi lamang buhay at ari-arian ang pininsala ng bagyong Karding dahil marami rin ang nauulat na nasaktan at nasugatan na mag-iwan ng marka sa kanilang pisikal na katawan at isip hinggil sa sinapit na karanasan sa bagsik ng bagyo.

Ang sabi po ng mga eksperto, ang mga naranasan sa super typhoon Karding at ilan pang nagdaang mga bagyo sa bansa ay epekto ng climate change na nagdulot ng matinding pinsala hindi lamang sa Pilipinas kundi sa buong mundo.

Bagama't matagal ng pinag-uusapan sa mga pandaigdigang mga pulong at pagtitipon ang isyu sa climate change, tila ba hindi sineryoso ito ng ilang bansa ang mga hakbang na dapat gawin para maibsan kahit papaano ang pinangangambahang magiging epekto nito sa mundo.



Getting everyone to understand and support the WPS ruling

The pursuit of a “public diplomacy campaign” spearheaded by the Department of Foreign Affairs to bolster and sustain awareness on the implications of the historic arbitral ruling on the South China Sea is certainly a step in the right direction.

It ought to solidify local and international support for the 2016 landmark Arbitral Award that recognized the sovereign rights of the Philippines to exclusively explore and develop the natural resources in our exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and continental shelf in the West Philippine Sea (WPS).

The DFA campaign, made known last Friday at a Senate hearing, aims to “secure the backing of other nations and to compel claimants to the South China Sea to respect dispute mechanisms under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).”

Many hope that the public diplomacy campaign will provide answers to many nagging questions that I posed in my previous column commemorating our Independence Day, amid the back-to-back diplo-

matic protests lodged against China and the need for answers on what more should be done to get respect for our sovereignty and national dignity.

How can we overcome our seeming helplessness to stop the continued transgressions of China in our EEZ? What efforts should be exerted towards the enforcement of the Arbitral Award? How much longer can we endure all the insolence and bullying?

We must never lose sight of the fact that future generations of Filipinos deserve and are entitled to the benefits of our patrimony – WPS is rich in fish, oil, gas and other mineral and aquatic resources worth several trillions of dollars when explored and developed.

We must exhaust all possible means to conserve and develop our patrimony,



FINDING ANSWERS
ATTY. JOEY D. LINA
FORMER SENATOR

without resorting to war. Indeed, the significance of Philippine Independence Day commemorated every June 12 should inspire us to do so. Because our forefathers fought off powerful invaders, we who are beneficiaries of their sacrifices and victories ought to do no less.

Because our country has not yet attained sufficient military strength to fend off a superpower that continues encroaching in Philippine waters, all we can do is to wage an all-out public relations campaign to get extensive worldwide support for our cause.

And Sen. Robin Padilla is absolutely right when he said recently that the DFA “needs to refine its publicity efforts regarding the government’s efforts on the West Philippine Sea” and to make Filipinos understand the benefits we are entitled to in the WPS.

Indeed, Filipinos and the rest of the world need to be aware of the significance of the Arbitral Award which declared as baseless the 9-dash line claim of China in practically the entire South China Sea, including over 3/4 of the WPS.

The world needs to be aware that the Award determined that China violated UNCLOS and the Philippines’ sovereign rights in WPS by massive fishing, bullying of Filipino fishermen, environmental destruction, and building artificial islands with airport and seaports, conducting maritime surveys, among others.

Unfortunately, UNCLOS has no enforcement mechanism. Bilateral talks with China to enforce the Award have proven ineffective. And all the hundreds of diplomatic protests have not stopped China’s

incursions.

Thus, it is necessary to resort to other measures. The Alliance for Life and the Law of the Sea which I helped form in 2021 has proposed a unified, multi-pronged, and whole-of-country strategy to fight off transgressions in the WPS. The DFA campaign can certainly be a major part of the strategy.

The strategy also calls for our civil society organizations to educate members on the significance of the EEZ, UNCLOS, and the Award through webinars, symposia, and town hall meetings organized at regional, provincial, city, town, and barangay levels, in cooperation with local government units.

CSOs must also form alliances with international counterparts to enlist support for our cause, leading to the creation of a Global Alliance for Life and the Law of the Seas.

Also, the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education must include the WPS, EEZ, UNCLOS and the Arbitral Award as part of a mandatory study on the Philippine Constitution in high school and college, to ensure that Filipinos, including future generations, are more aware of Philippine territory and national patrimony.

Indeed, with fortitude and determination, we can confront the formidable challenge to our sovereignty and sovereign rights by embarking on these measures to let everyone know the significance of the historic Award and to garner worldwide support for our cause.

Email: finding.lina@yahoo.com



STRATEGIC
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NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the award granted to Mr. Tirso Dalondonan on March 22, 1987 covering Lot 6, Block 4, Psd-41087 of the Pangit Barrio Site Residential Subdivision, Brgy. Pangl, Maco, Davao de Oro which is under the jurisdiction of this Office is deemed CANCELLED for his failure to comply with the provisions of Republic act No. 477 as amended and the same is hereby declared VACANT.

This particular lot shall be disposed of to qualified applicants pursuant to the provisions of Republic Act No. 477, as amended, and Presidential Decree No. 967 and 1304.

Davao City, Philippines


BAGANI FIDEL A. EVASCO
 Regional Executive Director