

12 October 2022, Wednesday



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service
SUMMARY OF DENR NEWS ALERTS
 12 October 2022

NEWSPAPER	TITLE	SPECIFIC ISSUES
Top stories		
BusinessMirror, p. A4 by Jonathan Mayuga	DENR's Yulo bats for 'whole-of-society' approach to develop mining industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DENR's meager annual budget, including the proposed 2023 budget, is "not within the top 10" of the biggest share in the NEP 2023 national budget" despite its mandate to oversee the management of the country's natural assets which explains for DENR's limited capabilities "to establish new standards and guidelines for the mining industry and mining sectors; • For the mining sector, DENR's 2023 proposed budget of P1.23 billion is 8 percent lower than the 2022 GAA budget .
BusinessWorld, p. S1-5 by Luisa Maria Jacinta Jocson	Augmented DENR budget proposed to aid mining supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senators present at the Senate Subcommittee on Finance are keen on increasing DENR's proposed budget, specifically to enable the agency to keep pace with its "increasing responsibilities" for ensuring compliance with environmental laws in the mining industry.
The Phil. Star , p. 3 by Delon Porcalla	House vows 'swift passage' of LEDAC-endorsed bills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House Speaker Martin Romualdez said counterpart measures have been filed at the Lower House for the 20 priority bills submitted by PBBM which include bills on the creation of the Department of Water and the National Land Use Act.

<p>Malaya Business Insight, p. B1 by Peter Tabingo</p> <p>Manila Standard , p. B1 Editorial</p>	<p>Rody spent P4.5 intel, confidential funds in 2021</p> <p>Climate change global a global health threat</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DENR received in 2021 some p15 million from former President Duterte's P4.5 billion confidential and intelligence Fund (P2.25 billion and P2,25 billion confidential and intelligence funds) • Global and local initiatives to combat the impacts of climate change are just as important in equal measure, yet "longer-term" effects on health due to climate change largely influenced by the the "transformational" action" (behavioral)taken by individuals to , in particular, "reduce emissions" and address global warming.
<p>Police Report: Tonite, p. 2 By Mylene Alfonso</p> <p>Bulgar, Boses ng Masa, Mata ng Bayan, p. 1 by Mylene Alfonso</p> <p>Abante: Una sa Balita, p. 1- 2 by Dindo Matinig</p>	<p>Sen. Villar napamura vs. DENR official dahil sa Cavite reclamation project</p> <p>Sen. Villar sa DENR: Tang*** N'yo</p> <p>Villar Minura DENR Exec: Napikon sa reclamation project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sen. Villar threw cuss expletives at the Senate budget hearing for DENR's proposed 2023 DENR budget over the issuance of the ECC for a reclamation project in connection with the Manila-Cavite Expressway Project.
<p>People's Journal Tonight, p. 6 by PS JUN</p>	<p>Robin: Time to revisit laws on</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sen. Padilla calling for review and amendments in RA 7942 (Phil. Mining Act) to specifically increase

Sarmiento People's Journal Tonight, p. 6 by Camille Balagtas	responsible mining Protect PH's ecosystem, biodiversity, DENR urged	"meager" penalties for pollution violations of the Act. • DENR Loyzaga assures senators present at the Senate budget hearing for DENR's proposed 2023 budget of DENR's vigilance to "protect and preserve the environment and natural resources of the country" with her at the helm, citing the need to review Philippine Mining Act " and other laws pertaining to the development of the country's natural resources.
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DENR's Yulo bats for 'whole-of-society' approach to develop mining industry

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

[@jonlmayuga](#)

ENVIRONMENT Secretary Ma. Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga has stressed the need for a whole-of-society approach to develop the country's mining industry.

Speaking during the Senate's 2023 budget hearing on Monday, Yulo said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the agency mandated to manage the country's natural wealth, needs to enhance its capacity to observe, monitor, and make standards and guidelines for the mining sector to comply and achieve the mining sector's full potential, citing the country's huge gold reserve and other non-metallic minerals.

The DENR's Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB)'s proposed budget for 2023 is P1.23 billion, 8 percent lower than the current year's budget.

She noted that the DENR's budget for 2022 is P25 billion which is "not within the top 10." The proposed 2023 budget is around P2 billion lower at P23 billion.

According to Yulo, because of this, the capacity of the DENR to establish new standards and guidelines for the mining industry and mining sectors

has been limited.

"We are not fully able to move ahead unless we have established our capacities," she said.

Yulo was responding to Senator Robinhood Padilla who asked the question about the reason behind the failure of the industry to develop over the years despite its potential.

Padilla, said he does not believe that mining per se is destructive adding that it is a matter of "managing" mining.

The actor-turned-politician said he knows mining even as a teenager because of his father, Roy Padilla Sr. who he said was President of the National Mines and Allied Workers' Union and England-based Mining International Federation and a one-time Philippine Representative to the International Labor Organization.

In response, Yulo said that while the industry's resources are rich, she admitted that the DENR is constrained by its limited budget.

She added that the DENR is pushing for responsible mining as an approach in mining activity to ensure compliance.

She noted that The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) has a set of standards and the DENR is seemingly always on the

catch-up "because we have limited resources to enhance industry activities."

Loyzaga also said inconsistent mining policies, alluding to the previous administration's changing policies and decisions to disallow or suspend mining activities, somehow prevent the development of the sector.

She also noted that certain types of mining were not allowed but later on were eventually allowed.

Moreover, Yulo said there's a need for the country to develop its own processing and value-adding subsector so that the Philippines will not just export raw materials.

"We need investment in the value-added processing to realize the full value of what we export," she said.

Yulo said that to do this, there's a need for the DENR to work with the Department of Science and Technology, Department of Trade and Industry, the Private Sector, the Academe, and Civil Society Organizations "so we can assure the social protection of our mining communities."

"We need a whole-of-society approach. The idea is to look at the DENR for support. But it requires a whole-of-society approach," she said.



TITLE:

Augmented DENR budget proposed to aid mining supervision

AN EXPANDED budget for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has been proposed in the Senate commensurate with its increased responsibilities as the mining industry grows.

"You need to give opportunities to mine and if you need the budget to function well, then we need to ask for an additional budget. Let's develop the mining industry now that they have allowed open-pit mining," Senator Cynthia A. Villar said at a hearing of the Senate subcommittee on finance on Tuesday tackling the DENR's 2023 budget.

"If we don't give you the right funding, we won't be able to fully open this industry," Senator Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay added.

The proposed 2023 budget of the department is P23.04 billion, against the 2022 budget of P25.4 billion.

The department submitted an initial budget proposal of around P40 billion, according to Environment Secretary Ma. Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga.

The proposed budget sets aside P1.39 billion for the Mines and Geosciences Bureau.

"Compared to the scale of resources it's supposed to be overseeing and possibly enhancing, the budget is quite small. The budget was decreased by 8% in order to conform with what the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) provided us. We are living within what the DBM allotted for us," Ms. Yulo-Loyzaga said.

"We are trying to identify high-risk and high-opportunity (mining) areas for the development of the country," she added.

She said the laws governing mining need to be reviewed, without elaborating.

"It is time to revisit our mining laws to make sure our environment remains protected while the government establishes the appropriate policies to maximize revenue from the sector," Senator Robinhood Ferdinand C. Padilla said.

He added that the current rules prescribe weak penalties for polluters and other violators.

Ms. Loyzaga said the DENR's regulatory capacity is being built up for the mining industry, specifically the process of assess-

ing mining applications and the monitoring of operations.

"We need to develop our own processing and value-adding. The private sector must be engaged constructively in this process...the mining industry (is a driver of) economic recovery," she added.

Environment Undersecretary Jonas R. Leones said that the department is starting with improving its efforts to monitor small-scale miners.

"In terms of large-scale mining, we have been very serious in our campaign to force them to comply with environmental laws. For small-scale mining, it's the problem because the permit comes from local government units. The direction there is we declare a program to allow us to regulate small-scale miners," he said.

Senator Lorna Regina B. Legarda said a balance must be achieved between mining earnings and the conservation and restoration of degraded areas.

"We need to restore (mined areas) so local communities don't suffer from the degradation and extraction of land. We cannot totally ban mining. It's impossible and improbable. We also can't just exploit without any safeguards... (we need) nature and science-based solutions," she added.

Ms. Yulo-Loyzaga said that the department is also looking at expanding the forms of rehabilitation that mining companies must undertake.

"We are exploring this. Where we cannot avoid the disturbance of the ecosystem, we are required to reduce and mitigate. There is a move internationally being explored by several global mining companies (involving) a combination of rehabilitation and compensatory action where they must also invest in the enhancement of high biodiversity areas nearby," she said.

"As they are extracting, they are also required to rehabilitate where they have operated to ensure there is some form of restoration. Realistically speaking, there will never be a full restoration. Rehabilitation only goes so far. It will never return to its original state," she added. —

Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocsón



Robin: Time to revisit laws on responsible mining

IT is time to revisit our mining laws to ensure our environment remains protected while the government establishes the appropriate policies to maximize its revenues from the sector, Sen. Robinhood "Robin" C. Padilla said Tuesday.

Padilla said the present law – such as Republic Act (RA) 7942, which was passed way back in 1995 – provides "meager" penalties against polluters and violators.

Under the current law, violators of the Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) face up to six years imprisonment and/or a fine of up to P200,000 only.

"Ang pinakamataas dito na puwede natin singilin sa talipandas na ito, P200,000 lang. Pambihira, napakapambihira po!" Padilla said at the hearing of the Senate Finance Subcommittee B, which tackled the 2023 budget of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

DENR Secretary Ma. Antonia Loyzaga agreed with Padilla, saying: "Yes, we feel it's time to review the mining law." She added what is needed now is a "stability of [the] business environment."

Loyzaga also noted the government does not have the capacity to attract investments that would ensure social protection for workers.

Padilla also pushed for improvements in the mining sector such that it can follow the example of Sweden, where the government earned 26 million krona (P135.422 billion) from mining.

If this can be replicated in the Philippines, Padilla said the government could pay off a huge chunk of its P13-trillion debt, as the Philippines has gold reserves amounting to \$1.4 trillion – and reserves of up to \$7 trillion, including nonmetallic reserves.

Also, Padilla said he wants to return to the time when foreign companies could invest much in the Philippines such that the rights of laborers are addressed, including housing and education for their children. Currently, he lamented the government is at the losing end in terms of revenue while the workers

in the sector are faring poorly.

Because of this, Padilla asked if there is a need to amend some provisions in the 1987 Constitution, particularly the 40% limitation on foreign investments. "Sa palagay ninyo, meron tayong kailangan baguhin sa Konstitusyon? May epekto ang 60-40 sa Konstitusyon sa exploitation, development and utilization ng ating mineral resources?" he asked.

Wilfredo Moncano of the DENR's Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) noted that while foreigners can have more than 40% share in investments under the Financial Technical Assistance Agreement setup, the capital requirement is so large that Filipinos with foreign partners do not avail of this.

PS Jun M. Sarmiento



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Reclamation projects put DENR in hot seat

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said it gave clearance to 21 proposed reclamation projects on Manila Bay, drawing the ire of senators, who noted the environmental harm they may bring to Metro Manila and adjacent provinces. Sen. Cynthia Villar scolded DENR officials for issuing environmental compliance certificates to the developers without proper consultation with stakeholders. —STORY BY MELVIN GASCON **A4**

DENR gets scolding for reclamation projects

By Melvin Gascon
@melvingasconINQ

Senators on Tuesday castigated the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for approving 21 proposed reclamation projects on Manila Bay despite the environmental harm they may bring to Metro Manila and its neighboring localities.

At the budget briefing of the DENR, Sen. Cynthia Villar, who chairs the Senate committee on environment and natural resources, scolded DENR officials who disclosed that the agency had issued environmental compliance certificates (ECCs) to 21 projects without proper consultation with stakeholders.

“(Former Public Works Secretary Rogelio Singson) had told me never to agree to any reclamation project there because it will cause flooding in southern Metro Manila by a depth of 6 to 8 meters—[which is] as high as a three-story building,” she said.

The issue arose on questioning by Sen. Nancy Binay, who said that from her Senate office window, she often spots barges pouring sand in the middle of Manila Bay.

Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga said among the projects with approved ECCs in the southern part of Manila Bay are 407.4 hectares (ha) of the New Manila Reclamation Project; 318 ha of the Manila City Waterfront Project; a total of 419 ha under the Horizon Manila proj-



STAKEHOLDERS Members of activist group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) troop to the main office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in this Aug. 5 file photo, as they called on the agency to take a tougher stand against reclamation projects in Manila Bay. —NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

ect; 148 ha for the Manila Gold Coast Reclamation Project; 265 ha under the Pasay Harbor Reclamation; 360 ha for the Pasay Reclamation Project; and 844 ha for the Manila Bay Land Reclamation Project.

Villar was visibly upset after DENR officials said some of the approved projects are at the Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland Park, a protected area.

“I had talked to Bacoor [officials] and they told me they would not proceed with it. I want to know if they are proceeding with it because I ha[d] warned them that if they go beyond Cavitex (Manila-Cavite Expressway), we will see each other in court,” she said, adding that any project near the Cavite coast will block four rivers that drain into Manila Bay: the Parañaque, Las Piñas,

Zapote and Molino rivers.

“For what reason will I spend 10 years of my life cleaning 30 kilometers of the river if you’re just going to block it? I worked hard and spend so much on this, that’s why I’m so passionate about it,” she said.

‘You have no shame!’

Hinting that the project was tainted with corruption, Villar bawled out at Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) Director William Cuñado for supposedly reviving an ECC for the reclamation project long after it expired.

“Why did you revive it? It’s because huge amounts of money flowed,” she said.

Villar said she was not invited in EMB public consultations and hearings on the proposed reclamation projects.

“We have been trying to take care of our cities, and now you come here and approve these projects without even telling us? You have no shame!” she said in Filipino.

She told Cuñado: “Don’t you dare do that to me! We don’t know anything about (those projects). You came from Cebu, and now you come (to Manila) and create a mess here.”

Sen. Joel Villanueva also questioned the motive for the project approvals, some of which are also feared to pose environmental hazards to his home province of Bulacan.

“So the million-dollar question is: what prompted (the EMB) to reclaim the area?” he said.

Undersecretary Jonas Leones explained that the DENR is not the sole government agency that approves reclamation projects.

He also said the reclamation projects were approved by the Office of the President during the Duterte administration.

Villar disputed this, saying that Presidents Benigno Aquino III and Rodrigo Duterte had told her they did not know anything about the projects.

“I will talk to President Marcos about this as I have talked to all presidents about the reclamation. It took me 10 years to clean my river, and now you just block its flow?” she said.

Yulo-Loyzaga gave the committee her commitment that the DENR will undertake a review of its policies on reclamation. —WITH A REPORT FROM INQUIRER RESEARCH INQ



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THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
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Villar fumes over issuance of 21 ECCs for Manila Bay reclamation projects

By MARIO B. CASAYURAN

Senator Cynthia A. Villar lost her temper upon hearing an official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) testifying on Tuesday, Oct. 11, that the agency had issued 21 Environmental Compliance Certificates (ECCs) for the reclamation of hundreds of hectares in the Manila Bay.

Villar could hardly contain her anger on this issue after leading hours earlier the opening of the Wetland ▶ **7**



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Villar fumes over issuance of 21 ECCs for Manila Bay reclamation projects

Center Building at the Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland Park (LPPWP), which coincided with the celebration of the World Migratory Bird Day.

The questioned reclamation projects start from Manila to parts of Cavite, along the coastal road.

She appeared angry when DENR officials had a difficult time replying which part of Cavite would the reclamation projects cut through.

Villar said she talked with Bacoor (Cavite) officials and was told that they would not proceed with the reclamation projects.

Only six of the 21 ECCs issued for the Manila Bay reclamation projects were named.

The identification of the ECCs was cut short when Villar, who was presiding over the committee hearing, alleged that money changed hands in the issuance of the ECCs.

Six of the 21 ECCs were issued to:

- New Manila Reclamation Project (407.42 hectares) issued by the City of Manila on March 13, 2019
- Manila City Waterfront Project (318 hectares) issued on

July 18, 2018

- Horizon Manila Reclamation Project (419 hectares)
- Manila Gold Coast (18 hectares)
- Pasay Harbor Reclamation Project (366 hectares)
- Manila Bay Reclamation Project (844 hectares)

Villar said she was warned by former Public Works and Highways Secretary Rogelio Singson that Las Piñas City and other neighboring coastal towns of Cavite would experience flooding, from six to eight meters high, if reclamation projects are pursued in areas facing these municipalities.

Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo Loyzaga, in an effort to appease Villar, said the DENR needs to review its policy on reclamation.

Villar was presiding over the committee public hearing on the proposed ₱23-billion budget of the DENR.

The amount covers budget allocations of the Office of the DENR Secretary, Forest Management Bureau, Land Management Bureau,

Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau, Environmental Management Bureau, Mines and Geosciences Bureau, National Mapping and Resource Information Authority, the National Water Resources Board, Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff, and DENR field offices in the regions, provinces and in certain cities and municipalities in the country.

Villar said past presidents – Benigno Aquino III and Rodrigo Duterte – were against reclamation projects in Manila Bay.

“I’ll talk to President Bongbong Marcos” about the reclamation issue, Villar said.

She said she has worked for the past 10 years against any reclamation project that would affect the Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland Park.

She said any reclamation work in the coastal area in Parañaque and Las Piñas will cause flooding in Las Piñas and Cavite coastal towns because the outflow of water in four critical rivers would be blocked.



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Senators slam ongoing DENR rehab projects

By Macon Ramos-Araneta

SENATOR Cynthia Villar expressed disappointment over the reclamation projects in Manila Bay of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Villar is currently the chairperson of the Senate Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Climate Change. The committee recently held a hearing on the proposed 2023 budget of the DENR.

During the hearing, Sen. Nancy Binay inquired from the agency's officials about the status of the Manila Bay Dolomite Beach and the reclamation area in Manila Bay.

Binay said from her office at the Senate of the Philippines, she can see ships placing sand on the beach.

But DENR Usec. Atty. Jonas Leones said that the project on Dolomite Beach had ended.

"(Former) President Duterte, I think it was 2019 or 2020, he said there is a moratorium on the reclamation at Manila Bay. But at Manila Bay, from my office, I can see the view of Manila Bay. I can see sand still being dropped," Binay said.

Leones said the rehabilitation at Manila Bay is continuous. He said the DENR has stopped placing sand at the site.

The Manila Bay project has yet to get a budget, the official added. The budget for its rehabilitation will go to enforcement as well as protection efforts, Leones said.

Regarding the reclamation project, DENR Secretary Maria Antonia Loyzaga, said as of August 2022, 21 companies have been given environmental compliance certificates. She said the ECC is intended for the reclamation from Cavite to Navotas.

"It appears that the moratorium was not in effect when these ECCs were actually granted," Loyzaga said.



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Senators urge DENR to protect ecosystem, bio-diversity

By Camille P. Balagtas

SENATOR Cynthia Villar presided over the Finance subcommittee hearing on the proposed P23 billion budget of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources yesterday.

The amount covers the budget allocations of the Office of the DENR Secretary, Forest Management Bureau, Land Management Bureau, Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau, Environmental Management Bureau, Mines and Geosciences Bureau, National Mapping and Resource Infor-

mation Authority, the National Water Resources Board, Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff, and DENR field offices in the regions, provinces and in certain cities and municipalities in the country.

In the hearing, Senate President Pro Tempore Loren Legarda asked the agency to submit

a complete list of legal and illegal mining companies and their activities in the country.

"It is important to balance livelihood which is generated by sustainable and responsible mining. At the same time, the conservation and preservation of degraded areas so that to the best extent possible through nature-based solution, we will be able to restore it in order that the local communities do not suffer from the degradation of extraction from the land which was mined," Legarda said.

In response, Environment and Natural Resources chief Ma. Antonia "Toni" Yulo-Loyzaga vowed to do the DENR's best to protect and preserve the environment and natural resources of the country.

For his part, Senator Robinhood Padilla asked the DENR if it sees the need to amend Republic Act (RA) No. 7942 or the Philippine Mining Act of 1995.

Camille P. Balagtas



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Protect PH's ecosystem, biodiversity, DENR urged

By CAMILLE P. BALAGTAS

SENATOR Cynthia Villar presided over the Finance Subcommittee B hearing on the proposed P23-billion budget of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Tuesday, October 11, 2022.

Villar noted that the amount covers budget allocations of the Office of the DENR Secretary, Forest Management Bureau, Land Management Bureau, Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau, Environmental Management Bureau, Mines and Geosciences Bureau, National Mapping and Resource Information Authority, the

National Water Resources Board, Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff, and DENR field offices in the regions, provinces and in certain cities and municipalities in the country.

Senate President Pro Tempore Loren Legarda, during the hearing, asked the agency to submit a complete list of legal and illegal mining companies and their activities in the country.

Legarda sought the assurance of the department on the protection of the country's ecosystem and biodiversity.

"It is important to bal-

ance livelihood which is generated by sustainable and responsible mining. At the same time, the conservation and preservation of degraded areas so that to the best extent possible through nature-based [solutions], we will be able to restore it in order that the local communities do not suffer from the degradation of extraction from the land which was mined," Legarda said.

In response, DENR Sec. Ma. Antonia "Toni" Yulo-Loyzaga assured that the department under her leadership will do its best to protect and preserve the environment and natural

resources of the country.

For his part, Sen. Robinhood "Robin" Padilla asked the DENR if it sees the need to amend Republic Act (RA) No. 7942 or the Philippine Mining Act of 1995.

Padilla lamented that the fines and penalties for violators of RA 7942 are "too low", with the maximum fine set at only P200,000.

"Do you think it is time to revise our mining law?" Padilla asked in Filipino.

Sec. Yulo-Loyzaga replied there is really a need to review RA 7942 and other related laws that are more than 20 years old for the country's development.



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Sen. Villar napamura vs DENR official dahil sa Cavite reclamation project

INALMAHAN ni Senador Cynthia Villar, chairman ng Senate committee on environment, natural resources, and climate change, nang talakayin ang reclamation project sa budget hearing para sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) kahapon.

Ikinagalit ni Villar nang marinig na ang reclamation project malapit sa Manila-Cavite Expressway o CAVITEX ay nakatanggap ng ECCs.

Nagpantig ang tainga ni Villar nang marinig na ang isa sa mga ito ay nasa coastal road sa bahagi ng Cavite.

"Huwag 'nyong gagawin

sa akin 'yan, t— a mo. Dumating ka dito galing ka sa Cebu, ginulo mo kaming lahat," diin ni Villar habang nangagalaiti kay DENR-Environmental Management Bureau Director William Cuñado na sumasagot sa kanyang mga katanungan.

"Ang kapal-kapal naman ng mukha 'nyo. Alam 'nyo nang babaha kami nang katakot-takot, ayaw 'nyo pang tigilan 'yan," sabi ni Villar patungkol sa kanilang lungsod ng Las Piñas.

Sinabi pa ni Villar na binalaan niya ang mga opisyal ng pamahalaang lungsod ng Bacoor sa Cavite, na kabahagi ng border sa Las Piñas dahil ang recla-

mation ay magdudulot ng anim hanggang walong metro ng baha sa kanyang lungsod.

"It took me 10 years to clean my river so there will be no flooding, tapos sasahan niyo 'yong daan ng river ko?" aniya pa.

"I cleaned 30 kilometers of river, ba't hindi sasama loob ko?" hinaing pa ng senadora.

Sa panig naman ng DENR, sa kasalukyan ECC pa lang at hindi pa umano nagsisimula ang proyekto dahil kailangan pa itong aprubahan ng Philippine Reclamation Authority at Office of The President.

(Mylene Alfonso)



Babaha ng 8 metro dahil sa Manila Bay reclamation

SEN. VILLAR SA DENR: TANG*** N'YO

NI: M. ALFONSO (p.2)

Babaha ng 8 metro dahil sa Manila Bay reclamation

SEN. VILLAR SA DENR: TANG*** N'YO

INALMAHAN ni Senador Cynthia Villar, chairman ng Senate committee on environment, natural resources, and climate change, nang talakayin ang reclamation project sa budget hearing para sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) kahapon.

Ikinagalit ni Villar nang marinig na ang reclamation project malapit sa Manila-Cavite Expressway o CAVITEX ay nakatanggap ng ECCs.

Nagpantig ang tainga ni Villar nang marinig na ang isa sa mga ito ay nasa coastal road sa bahagi ng Cavite.

"Huwag n'yong gagawin sa akin 'yan, tang*** n'yo. Dumating ka dito galing ka sa Cebu, ginulo mo kaming lahat," diin ni Villar habang nangagailait kay DENR-Environmental Management Bureau Director William Cuñado na sumasagot sa kanyang mga katanungan.

"Ang kapal-kapal naman ng mukha n'yo. Alam n'yo nang babaha kami nang katakot-takot, ayaw n'yo pang tigilan 'yan," sabi ni Villar patungkol sa kanilang lungsod ng Las Piñas.

Sinabi pa ni Villar na binalaan niya ang mga opisyal ng pamahalaang lungsod ng Bacoor sa Cavite, na kabahagi ng border sa Las Piñas dahil ang reclamation ay magdudulot ng anim hanggang walong metro ng baha sa kanyang lungsod.

"It took me 10 years to clean my river so there will be no flooding, tapos sasarhan niyo iyong duan ng river ko?" aniya pa.

"I cleaned 30 kilometers of river, but hindi sasama loob ko?" hinaing pa ng Senadora.

Sa panig naman ng DENR, sa kasalukuyan ECC pa lang at hindi pa umano nagsisimula ang proyekto dahil kailangan pa itong aprubahan ng Philippine Reclamation Authority at Office of the President.

(Mylene Alfonso)



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Napikon sa reclamation project

VILLAR MINURA DENR EXEC

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Engr William

VILLAR MINURA DENR EXEC

SINERMUNAN na ay minura pa ni Senadora Cynthia ang isang opisyal ng Department of Environment and National Resources (DENR) kaugnay ng reclamation project sa Cavite na kanyang tinutulan dahil magreresulta umano sa posibleng pagbaha sa ilang bayan sa Cavite.

Sa pagdinig ng panukalang P23 bilyong budget ng DENR para sa 2023, nabuwisit si Villar nang mabigo si Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) Director William Cuñado na isa-isahin ang mga lugar sa Cavite na sakop ng nasabing proyekto.

"T—ina 'to. Ano 'yong coastal road? I-enumerate mo anong bayan sa Cavite," nanggalaing sabi ni Villar.

Ayon sa senadora, nasabihan umano siya ng mga lokal na opisyal ng Bacoor na hindi nila itutuloy ang naturang reclamation project.

Sabi ni Cuñado, sakop ng proyekto ang 846 hektarya at nang tanungin ni Villar kung ano mga lugar na tatamaan ng proyekto, nabigo ang opisyal na sagutin ito.

"Ako huwag ninyong gagawin sa akin 'yan. T—ina ninyo. Dumating ka dito galing ka sa Cebu, ginulo mo kaming lahat. Ilista mo sa akin

ano 'yang coastal road na 'yan, hindi narin alam 'yan," galit na pahayag ni Villar kay Cunado.

Kinansela na rin umano ang Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) sa naturang proyekto subalit muli umanong iyong binuhay.

Sinabi naman ni DENR Undersecretary Jonas Leones na nag-isyu lang ang DENR ng ECC subalit ang Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) at Office of the President ang magdedesiyon kung itutuloy o hindi ang proyekto.

"I talked to President [Noynoy] Aquino during his time, I talked to President [Rodrigo] Duterte during his time. Hindi alam ng mga presidente 'yan. Di ba sinabi President [Duterte] ayoko ninyang reclamation kasi it's source of corruption. So 'yon ang reason, corruption," ayon pa sa senadora. **(Dindo Matining)**



DENR to reopen Bangan Hill National Park

DIADI, Nueva Vizcaya: The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Cagayan Valley will reopen to the public the Bangan Hill National Park (BHNP) in Bayombong in November this year, DENR-2 Regional Executive Director and Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) Chairman Gwendolyn Bambalan said.

Understanding the need to promote ecological tourism in protected areas (PA), Bambalan said the park will reopen with a "sustainable development" approach for greater economic livelihood opportunities

and preservation of natural habitat and resources.

"The Board is directing the improvement of Bangan Hill into being a PA show window that features the verdant forest and mountainous landscape of Nueva Vizcaya province," she said.

The BHNP is a protected area located in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya. It covers 12,777 hectares and was declared a national park by Republic Act 7954.

Aside from the majestic scenery overlooking the capital town of Bayombong,

the park will also establish a coffee shop serving locally manufactured coffee and native rice cakes. Memorabilia and woodcraft production are also potential livelihood projects the PAMB will introduce to the BHNP People's Organization.

In March this year, the DENR inaugurated the rehabilitation and improvement of ecotourism facilities at BHNP which is funded by the Biodiversity Management Bureau.

The visitors, however, were reminded to be responsible ecotourists when inside the PAs to preserve the natural environment

and biological diversity in the national parks.

Fourteen protected areas are found in Cagayan Valley, including seven which are already open to visitors and tourists namely; Dupax Watershed Forest Reserve, Fuyot Spring National Park, Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park, Quirino Protected Landscape, Tumauini Watershed Natural Park, Palau Island Protected Landscape and Seascape, and Batanes Protected Landscapes and Seascapes.

VINCE JACOB VISAYA



Extended Producers Responsibility Law addresses PH waste disposal problems

The enactment of Republic Act 11898, otherwise known as the Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR) Law, is a bold step to further address the country's waste problems.

Manufacturers, including cement companies, and plastic products manufacturers under the Philippine Plastics Industry Association (PPIA) and the Philippine Alliance for Recycling and Materials Sustainability (PARMS), and the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector members, are now all preparing for the implementation of the new law.

These groups cited the law as a landmark legislation, boosting the earlier efforts by the government in the implementation of Republic Act No. 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, which is an integrated solid waste management approach based on the 3Rs (reduce, reuse, and recycle).

The EPR law requires large companies to recover the plastic packaging waste they are producing, meaning; these enterprises are mandated to be environmentally responsible throughout the life cycle of their products, especially at their post-consumer or end-of-life stage.

Covered companies or enterprises should recover wastes they produced through: (1) Buy-back; (2) Collection for reuse/recycling; (3) Clean-up of wastes; (4) Establishment of recycling, composting, thermal treatment, and other waste diversion or disposal facilities.

Beginning Dec. 31, 2023, covered companies are required to recover at least 20 percent of their plastic footprint in 2022. The rate of recovery increases every year until it reaches 80 percent recovery rate on Dec. 31, 2028 and every year thereafter. The failure to implement recovery measures will be penalized through fines ranging from P5 million to P20 million.

In the case of cement firms, they can undertake co-processing. It is a solution that converts residual

wastes such as plastics into alternative fuels for cement kilns that forms part of the process in making cement.

With co-processing, this avoids methane emissions in landfills since non-recyclable wastes are redirected instead to cement kilns. Methane has a global warming potential of 80x higher than CO2 in the first 20 years of release.

Co-processing is a sustainable solution and supports a circular economy making it a perfect solution for EPR compliance not just at 20 percent recovery rate but even as high as 100 percent recovery thereby achieving the plastic neutrality goal of covered companies in the EPR law.

In addition, the passage of the EPR law creates an opportunity for Public-Private Partnership in waste management.

New opportunities are expected to arise from the important role of EPR systems, which will usher in a practical approach to waste management, focusing on waste reduction, recovery and diversion, and the development of environment-friendly products.

For its part, the PPIA emphasized that the domestic plastics manufacturing industry are strongly advocating for the circular economy path to be taken not only in solving the plastic waste problem in the country but also to perk up the local economy.

A World Bank study estimated a potential P100 billion revenues in pushing for the waste plastics circularity roadmap.

The group is pushing for partnership with local government units and civil society in promoting public consciousness, awareness, and education on EPR towards sustainable consumption and production practices that are necessary in bolstering a circular economy.

Though a developing country, the Philippines is in step with the rest of the world in fighting against climate change and ensuring sustainability.



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Villar launches facility to drum up public awareness on wetlands

By Macon Ramos-Araneta

TO mark the observance of the World Migratory Bird Day, Senator Cynthia Villar led the opening of a facility at the Las Pinas-Paranaque Wetland Park (LP-PWP) designed to educate and raise public consciousness about wetlands.

Villar, chair of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, stressed that wetlands are "critically important ecosystems that contribute to biodiversity, climate mitigation and adaptation, freshwater availability and to economies, among its many functions."

This Wetland Center is our solid edifice and contribution for the Philippine wetlands," she said.

"With our country's archipelagic nature, we have an abundant number of wetlands that call for much-needed attention," the senator added.

The 2016 Atlas of Philippine Inland Wetlands and Classified Caves, showed that the country has 314 inland wetlands and 2,487 river systems. Out of the 314 wetlands, there are 221 lakes, 12 marshes and swamps, nine peat lands, 39 water storage, and 31 ponds.

Villar noted however, that some Filipinos do not fully recognize and appreciate the significance of wetlands.

She specifically mentioned the case of Las Pinas-Paranaque Wetland Park (LPPWP), which has always been facing reclamation threats.



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IN BRIEF

Groups warn vs return of quarrying in Albay

CATHOLIC Church leaders in Albay province aired concerns over the decision of the Commission on Elections First Division to disqualify Governor Noel Rosal, saying this could "pave the way for the resumption of destructive quarrying activities in the province".

The Church leaders voiced out concern following the resolution of the election body disqualifying Rosal based on allegations that he violated the election ban on government spending prior to the May 2022 elections. Rosal defeated former Governor Al Francis Bicharra in that gubernatorial contest by more than 200,000 votes.

Legazpi Bishop Joel Baylon said that prior to the move to disqualify Rosal, the new Albay governor had taken drastic measures to stop illegal quarrying in the province, particularly in the areas surrounding Mayon Volcano. On his first day in office, Rosal issued the provincial government's first executive order suspending the quarry operations in the entire province.

Baylon said the "drastic moves by Governor Rosal to stop illegal quarrying in the province may have inspired the political scheme to have him removed from office".

"The people of the province are aware that the new governor may have hurt many business interests despite his honest motive to protect the environment and the lives of the people living in the areas around Mayon Volcano," he said.



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Balik illegal quarrying sa Albay binabala ng obispo

Nagpahayag ng pangamba ang ilang mga pinuno ng Simbahang Katoliko sa Albay na maaaring magbalik ang malawakang ilegal na quarrying sa kanilang lalawigan kasunod ng pagkakadiskuwalipika ng Commission on Elections (COMELEC) First Division kay Gobernador Noel Rosal.

Ginawa ng mga lider ng simbahan ang pahayag matapos maglabas ng resolusyon ang COMELEC na nagdidiskuwalipika kay Rosal kasunod ng paratang na nilabag nito ang ban sa pamamahagi ng perang ayuda ilang linggo bago ang eleksyon ng Mayo 2022. Tinalo ni Rosal si dating Albay Governor Al Francis Bicharra sa lamang na mahigit 200,000 boto.

Ayon kay Legazpi Bishop Joel Baylon, nababahala sila dahil ang pagkakadiskuwalipika kay Rosal ay nangyari kasunod ng mga hakbang ng bagong gobernador para patigilin ang ilegal na quarrying sa kanilang lala-

wigan.

Sinabi noon ni Rosal na bukod sa maaaring epekto nito sa kalikasan, kapaligiran at kaligtasan ng mga taga-Albay, marami din umanong quarry operators ang humahakot ng buhangin at bato mula sa mga ilog ng Albay na lampas sa itinakdang dami. Marami rin umano sa mga ito ang nag-o-operate nang walang kaukulang environmental compliance certificates at clearances mula sa Department of Public works and Highways.

Matagal na ring tinutuligsa ng mga lider ng Simbahan sa pangunguna ni Bishop Baylon ang mga naturang pagku-quarry.

Sa isang malaking rally sa Legazpi City para sa pagsuporta kay Rosal, nanawagan si Baylon sa COMELEC na "kilalanin at igalang ang tinig ng mga mamamayan. Kasalukuyan nang nirerepaso ng COMELEC First Division ang desisyon nitong pagdiskuwalipika kay Rosal.



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Pagbabalik ng quarrying sa Albay pinangangambahan

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kasunod ng mga hakbang ng bagong gobernador para patigilin ang ilegal na quarrying sa kanilang lalawigan.

Sa unang araw pa lamang ng kaniyang panunungkulan bilang bagong punong-lalawigan, agad na naglabas si Rosal ng utos na nagpapatigil sa lahat ng quarry operations sa buong Albay.

Matagal na ring tinutuligsa ng mga lider ng Simbahan sa pangunguna ni Bishop Baylon ang mga naturang pagku-quarry matapos na 10 tao ang namatay at may 300 kabahayan ang nasira matapos ragasain ng lahar mula sa bulkang Mayon ang kanilang mga barangay sa kasagsagan ng Bagyong Rolly noong 2020.

Kasalukuyan nang nirerepasso ng Comelec First Division ang desisyon nitong pagdiskwalipika kay Rosal.



Renewable energy and community development

It looks like things are going well for the country's shift to renewable energy for its electricity requirement. The necessary elements appear to be present and both the government and the private sector are committed to make that move from coal and oil to clean energy sources happen.

President Bongbong Marcos gave that urgent shift the needed push in his first State of the Nation Address. He said, "the use of renewable energy is on top of our climate agenda." "We must take advantage of all the best technologies that are now available, especially in the area of renewable energy," the President underscored.

The good news is that the participation of the private sector in the shift to renewable energy has already been in high gear. Corporate giants are leading the transformation. For example, one group – which owns and operates a good number of the country's coal-fired power plants – has put its resources behind renewable energy. One of its business units is reportedly expanding its portfolio beyond the "big hydro-power plants" into solar, wind and the smaller hydro-power plants using so-called "run-of-river" technology.

Another group is on a similar track. It announced that it intends to be "the largest listed renewables platform in Southeast Asia," aiming to produce some 20 gigawatts of electricity from renewable power technologies by 2030.

Based on reports, as of July this year, some 58.5 percent of the country's electricity is still generated using traditional fuel – coal and oil. Of the country's 208 power plants, 21 are coal-fired. The good news is that some 35.5 percent of our power supply now comes from power plants running on renewable energy like hydro, solar and wind.

The commitment to the shift to renewables is great for the environment and, of course, for the health of our respiratory systems.

There's more. According to the Energy Tracker Asia, an institute dedicated to studying the use of renewable energy, the shift could bring about other major benefits to the country: energy security and sufficiency; reduced reliance on imports; local economic development and a favorable investment climate.

The good news is that some 35.5 percent of our power supply now comes from power plants running on renewable energy like hydro, solar and wind.

There is one other major benefit that may not have been emphasized in the studies now being done. This is the accelerated economic and social development of remote communities where new power plants using renewable energy bring about.

A good illustration of this benefit is the power plant run by wind energy built by Alternergy Wind One Corporation in partnership with the Rizal provincial government. Nine years ago, the construction of that "wind farm" on 4,500-plus hectares of land owned by the Rizal provincial government in the hilly town of Pililla in Rizal Province began.

In 2013, the 27 "windmills" started to contribute some 54 megawatts of electricity to the nation-

al grid. The contribution is enough to supply some 66,000 households with power.

Barely a year after it started operations, close to 400,000 tourists from many parts of the country had visited that wind farm and stood at the view deck to have their pictures taken.

This is a new experience which can only happen in a "wind farm." Coal and oil-fired power plants are high-security, off-limits facilities. Tourists are highly unlikely to come in droves and have their pictures taken inside such facilities.

At this point, Rizal is awaiting the completion of the second renewable energy-run power plant in the province. This is the 115-megawatt solar farm being built in a 130-hectare area in Barangay Pinugay, Baras.

Once completed, this new Rizal Province-based facility will be the biggest solar farm in the country.

Alternergy, together with the Rizal Provincial Government are also set to build their second wind farm in Rizal – bigger than the first one in Pililla. The proposed site of the 86.8-megawatt renewable energy plant is in Tanay. On top of this, two more studies are being done for renewable energy facilities that may rise soon in Antipolo and Binangonan.

Thanks to the commitment of the national leadership and the drive of the private sector, it looks like the age of renewable energy has dawned on our country.

(For feedback, please email it to antipolocitygcv@gmail.com or send it to Block 6 Lot 10 Sta. Barbara 1 cor. Bradley St., Mission Hills Subd., Brgy. San Roque, Antipolo City, Rizal.)



**THE VIEW
FROM RIZAL**
DR. JUN YNARES



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Heat waves will make regions uninhabitable

HEAT waves will become so extreme in certain regions of the world within decades that human life there will be unsustainable, the United Nations and the Red Cross said Monday (Tuesday in Manila).

Heat waves are predicted to "exceed human physiological and social limits" in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and south and southwest Asia, with extreme events triggering "large-scale suffering and loss of life," the organizations said.

Heat wave catastrophes this year in countries like Somalia and Pakistan foreshadow a future with deadlier, more frequent and more intense heat-related humanitarian emergencies, they warned in a joint report.

The UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) released the report in advance of next

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Heat waves will make regions uninhabitable

month's COP27 climate change summit in Egypt.

"We don't want to dramatize it, but clearly the data shows that it does lead toward a very bleak future," said IFRC Secretary-General Jagan Chapagain.

They said aggressive steps needed to be taken immediately to avert potentially recurrent heat disasters, listing steps that could mitigate the worst effects of extreme heat.

Limits of survival

"There are clear limits beyond which people exposed to extreme heat and humidity cannot survive," the report said.

"There are also likely to be levels of extreme heat beyond which societies may find it practically impossible to deliver effective adaptation for all.

"On current trajectories, heat waves could meet and exceed these

physiological and social limits in the coming decades, including in regions such as the Sahel and south and southwest Asia."

It warned that the impact of this would be "large-scale suffering and loss of life, population movements and further entrenched inequality."

The report said extreme heat was a "silent killer," claiming thousands of lives each year as the deadliest weather-related hazard — and the dangers were set to grow at an "alarming rate" due to climate change.

According to a study cited by the report, the number of poor people living in extreme heat conditions in urban areas will jump by 700 percent by 2050, particularly in West Africa and Southeast Asia.

"Projected future death rates from extreme heat are staggeringly high — comparable in magnitude by the end of the century to all cancers or all infectious diseases

— and staggeringly unequal," the report said.

Agricultural workers, children, the elderly, and pregnant and breastfeeding women are at higher risk of illness and death, the report claimed.

"As the climate crisis goes unchecked, extreme weather events, such as heat waves and floods, are hitting the most vulnerable people the hardest," said UN humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths.

"The humanitarian system is not equipped to handle crisis of this scale on our own."

'Previously unimaginable'

Chapagain urged countries at COP27 to invest in climate adaptation and mitigation in the regions most at risk.

OCHA and the IFRC suggested five main steps to help combat

the impact of extreme heat waves, including providing early information to help people and authorities react in time, and finding new ways of financing local-level action.

They also included humanitarian organizations testing more "thermally appropriate" emergency shelter and "cooling centers," while getting communities to alter their development planning to take account of likely extreme heat impacts.

OCHA and the IFRC said there were limits to extreme heat adaptation measures.

Some, such as increasing energy-intensive air-conditioning, are costly, environmentally unsustainable and contribute themselves to climate change.

If emissions of the greenhouse gases which cause climate change are not aggressively reduced, the world will face "previously unimaginable levels of extreme heat." AFP



EDITORIAL

Climate change a global health threat

WORLD leaders are one in saying that climate change, the long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns, has become among the world's greatest health risks.

They agree that while no one is safe from these risks, the people whose health is being harmed first and worst by the climate crisis are the people who contribute least to its causes, and who are least able to protect themselves and their families against it — people in low-income and disadvantaged countries and communities.

The climate crisis threatens to undo the last 50 years of progress in development, global health, and poverty reduction, and to further widen existing health inequalities between and within populations.

We remember what President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said, in his address during the 77th session of the UN General Assembly in New York last month: "Climate change is the greatest threat affecting our nations and peoples. There is no other problem so global in nature that it requires a united effort, one led by the United Nations."

Mr. Marcos lamented that further inaction would result in the extreme

suffering of "least responsible" smaller nations such as the Philippines.

"Although it is unequivocal that climate change affects human health, it remains challenging to accurately estimate the scale and impact of many climate-sensitive health risks"

We hold the argument that the crisis, sweeping across the inhabited continents, severely jeopardizes the realization of universal health coverage in various ways — including by compounding the existing burden of disease and by exacerbating existing barriers to accessing health services, often at the times when they are most needed.

We understand more than 930 million people — around 12 percent of the world's population — spend at least 10 percent of their household budget to pay for health care.

Experts add that climate change, sadly, is also undermining many of the social determinants for good health, like livelihoods, equality and access to health care and social support structures.

These climate-sensitive health risks are disproportionately felt by the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, including women, children, ethnic minorities, poor communities, migrants or displaced persons, older populations, and those with underlying health conditions.

Although it is unequivocal that climate change affects human health, it remains challenging to accurately estimate the scale and impact of many climate-sensitive health risks.

But — if this is any short-term consolation — scientific advances progressively allow people to attribute an increase in morbidity and mortality to human-induced warming, and more accurately determine the risks and scale of these health threats.

We agree with experts that in the short- to medium-term, the health impacts of climate change will be determined mainly by the vulnerability of populations, their resilience to the current rate of climate change and the extent and pace of adaptation.

In the longer-term, the effects will increasingly depend on the extent to which transformational action is taken now to reduce emissions and avoid the breaching of dangerous temperature thresholds and potential irreversible tipping points.

The people must not blink against the climate change challenge.



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Pitmaster focuses support on climate change mitigation initiatives

MANILA - Pitmasters Foundation has extended its helping hand as it branches to environmental conservation efforts in a bid to support the government's effort to eliminate carbon emissions and create the eco-friendly Philippines.

Atty. Caroline Cruz, the foundation's Executive Director said that as the planet aims to transition to the use of green technology, they are in support of the initiative while stressing that their relief operations coincide with environmental efforts.

The foundation sponsors relief operations in typhoon-hit areas and COVID-19 relief efforts, alongside providing dialysis assistance to individuals suffering from kidney-related diseases.

With this, the foundation sponsored a Disaster and Climate Emergency Policy Forum dubbed "2023-2028 Policy Roadmap: Charting the Urgency of the PBBM Climate Agenda and the Philippine Contribution to Achieve the Global Goal of Net Zero 2030 and 2050 Targets," wherein stakeholders from different sectors were invited to talk about Climate Emergency measures.

"We are here to support the government's call on the climate change issue. We are here to support [undermine] the root cause of the disaster," Cruz said in a forum organized by the foundation to address climate-related issues on Thursday, September 29.

Cruz also said that they want solutions that are focused on environmental conservation.

"We want solutions that will both create growth and solve our climate problems. We are proud to have engaged in environmental conservation since early in our founding as a non-profit organization," she added.

Some of the agencies that participated in the said event were the Department of Finance, Climate Change Commission, Local Climate Change Adaptation for Development, National Economic and Development Authority, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Department of Energy, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the Department of Interior and Local Government, among others.

The foundation initially partnered with the DENR for tree planting activities in the province of Laguna to plant more than 6,000 trees in



Pitmaster Foundation Executive Director Atty. Caroline Cruz with Albay 2nd District Representative Joey Salceda, Climate Change Commission Secretary Robert Borje, Department of Finance Assistant Secretary Niel Cabiles, National Economic and Development Authority Undersecretary Rosemari Edillon, and Department of Energy Undersecretary Feliz William Fuentesbela at a side conference during the "2023-2028 Policy Roadmap: Charting the urgency of the PBBM Climate Agenda and the Philippine Contribution to Achieve the Global Goal of Net Zero 2030 and 2050 Targets," event on September 22, at the Discover Primea Hotel in Ayala, Makati. They talked about how government agencies can team up to offer solutions that can mitigate the effects of climate change through their respective agencies.

trees across 250 hectares.

As of today, the foundation has helped the University of the Philippines Resilience Institute, 4K Foundation, and Komunidad to plant 7,225 trees.

Similarly, they are also working with UP Los Baños for planting endangered species.

They are also open to partnering

with non-government offices, academe, student organizations, or government agencies for reforestation projects to ensure ecological benefits for Filipinos now and in the future.

The said measure is also in response to President Bongbong Marcos' initiative to bring justice to the country as it suffers more than

it should when it comes to carbon emissions, noting that addressing climate change is the true test of our time.

The Philippines is the 4th country that suffers the most vulnerable country to climate change even if it only brings .04 percent of the total carbon emissions in the last two decades.



Various stakeholders from different private companies and agencies gather to conclude the first part of the "2023-2028 Policy Roadmap: Charting the urgency of the PBBM Climate Agenda and the Philippine Contribution to Achieve the Global Goal of Net Zero 2030 and 2050 Targets," event on September 22, at the Discover Primea Hotel in Ayala, Makati. Some of the individuals who were present are Albay 2nd District Representative Joey Salceda, Climate Change Commission Secretary Robert Borje, Department of Finance Assistant Secretary Niel Cabiles, National Economic and Development Authority Undersecretary Rosemari Edillon.



Pitmasters Foundation Executive Director Atty. Caroline Cruz hands out the Certificate of Appreciation and gift baskets to the private sector and bank representatives and panelists at the "2023-2028 Policy Roadmap: Charting the urgency of the PBBM Climate Agenda and the Philippine Contribution to Achieve the Global Goal of Net Zero 2030 and 2050 Targets," event on September 22, at the Discover Primea Hotel in Ayala, Makati.



Pitmasters Foundation Executive Director Atty. Caroline Cruz with National Security Adviser Secretary Clarita Carlos



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Binay backs climate financing

Makati Mayor Abigail Binay is pushing for the use of three climate-financing instruments that would give the city access to grants, loans and funding opportunities to boost climate action.

Binay made the statement after attending Daring Cities 2022, an event organized by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability in Bonn, Germany.

She is a member of ICLEI global executive committee and heads its innovative financing portfolio.

Binay said the three instruments – the city climate gap fund, green cities program and the local climate adaptive living facility – would make Makati and other cities more resilient.

“I will introduce these three climate-financing instruments to the Makati climate change committee so that we can study how we can use them to improve the quality of life of Makatizens and, at the same time, reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the impact of climate change,” she said.

Binay will attend the 27th UN Climate Change conference to be held in Egypt from Nov. 6 to 18.

– Emmanuel Tupas



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Makati City to boost climate action

THE Makati City government will push for the use of three climate-financing instruments that will give the city access to grants, loans, and funding opportunities to boost climate action and make the city more resilient.

Mayor Mar-Len Abigail "Abby" Binay said that she will use the city's climate finance gap fund, green cities program and the local climate adaptive living facility.

Makati City spokesman Jun Salgado told *The Manila Times* in a text message that the local government unit (LGU) is poised to discuss the city's climate finance gap fund allotment for 2023.

Binay said the move was inspired by her attendance at Daring Cities 2022, an event organized by International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives orICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability in Bonn, Germany, last week where she learned that there are three climate-financing instruments.

Binay is a member ofICLEI Global Executive Committee and heads the Innovative Financing Portfolio ofICLEI World.

Local Governments for Sustainability, founded in 1990 as the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, is the world's leading network of local and regional governments committed to sustainable development.

She said that plans are underway to apply for support from the World Bank and the European Investment Bank through its city climate finance gap fund.

The climate action trust fund provides technical assistance and capacity building to help cities in developing countries turn climate-focused ideas into concrete project proposals.

Binay added that the city is exploring

the possibility of tapping the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development through its green cities program, which supports cities by helping them create a green city action plan that includes sustainable infrastructure investments and policy measures.

She said Makati City is considering applying for the local climate adaptive living facility, a mechanism designed and hosted by the United Nations Capital Development Fund that provides technical assistance and tools for local government to access climate funds and integrate climate change adaptation into local planning and budgeting system.

"I will introduce these three climate-financing instruments to the Makati Climate Change Committee so that we can study how we can use them to improve the quality of life of Makatizens and, at the same time, reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the impact of climate change," Binay told reporters Tuesday.

"I think a lot of cities are missing out by not being able to tap these international organizations. It is essential for us to benchmark and get information on how successful climate initiatives were done, what mistakes were committed, and how these projects were sustained," the mayor added.

She also expects to learn more about climate-financing schemes in the coming meetings with various international organizations and share new strategies with fellow local leaders to help them get access to grants, loans, and funding opportunities.

Binay is set to attend the 27th United Nations Climate Change Conference to be held from Nov. 6 to 18, 2022 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt.

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TESDA launches cold chain exhibit

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority — with its partner stakeholders in both the private and public sectors — had a week-long exhibit to showcase the latest cold chain technology.

TESDA director general Danilo Cruz and United Nations Industrial Development Organization country representative Teddy Monroy, who represented UNIDO director general Gerd Müller, led the opening of the exhibit at the TESDA-UNIDO Cold Chain Innovation Hub in Taguig City recently.

Cruz, in his message, recognized the urgent need to address global warming as demonstrated by the Marcos administration's direction towards low-carbon development for low-emission and climate-resilient economic growth.

The TESDA chief also expressed its gratitude to its partners — particularly the UNIDO and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources — for the project.

“Building the capacities of our skilled workers and technicians for the industry, we must ensure that they are qualified to safely handle climate-friendly refrigerants and efficiently maintain new cold chain refrigeration technologies. They must also be fully aware of their responsibility to help this nation attain its goals for a greener economy,” said Cruz.

“We look forward to more collaborations that will guide the cold chain industry toward a more climate-friendly, energy-efficient, and sustainable future,” he added. ALVIN MURCIA



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House vows 'swift passage' of LEDAC-endorsed bills

By DELON PORCALLA

The 30 endorsed bills that comprise the legislative agenda of President Marcos will be passed by the House of Representatives "with dispatch," without sacrificing the quality of legislation, Speaker Martin Romualdez said yesterday.

"The House and the Senate will give these 30 measures utmost priority. President Marcos clearly spelled out a roadmap of governance in the next six years for economic recovery, with agriculture as the major engine for growth and employment," he said, referring to the bills approved or listed during this week's meeting of the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (LEDAC) as its Common Legislative Agenda (CLA), presided over by Marcos.

These vital pieces of legislation are expected to create jobs and help as well the country's health and economic recovery to protect the country's most vulnerable people following the COVID-19 pandemic.

The two bills that were also adopted were the newly signed SIM Card Registration Law or Republic Act 11934 - Marcos' first law - and the deferment of the December 2022 barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections to October 2023, which is now awaiting Marcos' signature.

Romualdez said the House also invoked and will continue to use Rule 10, Section 48, which authorizes the House committees to dispose of priority measures already filed and approved on third reading in the immediately preceding Congress.

"We have the internal mechanism for an expeditious approval process that is enshrined in the rules of procedure," he said, explaining that this would greatly hasten consideration and endorsement by any committee of any covered bill and its eventual plenary approval.

"The House is in full support of the President's entire legislative agenda, including the key priority measures for legislation he has asked Congress to consider. We will act on these with dispatch," Romualdez said.

"With the guidance and support of President Marcos Jr. and the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office, these priority measures will become laws, which the Filipino people can benefit from," he stressed.

Twenty of these measures were enumerated by Marcos in his first State of the Nation Address (SONA) last July 25, and were included in the 30 CLA bills.

"I am proud to say that the members of both houses of Congress have already filed bills on the 20 priority measures identified by President Marcos," Romualdez said.

The 20 priority measures enumerated by Marcos in his SONA that were part of the total 32 CLA bills were the Valuation Reform Bill, Passive Income and Financial Intermediary Taxation Act (PIFITA), E-Governance Act, E-Government Act, Internet Transaction Act, Government Financial Institutions Unified Initiatives to Distressed Enterprises for Economic Recovery (GUIDE) bill, Medical Reserve Corps bill, National Disease Prevention Management Authority bill, Virology Institute of the Philippines bill, Unified System of Separation, Retirement and Pension bill, Department of Water Resources bill, National Land Use Act, Mandatory Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) and National Service Training Program, Budget Modernization bill, National Government Rightsizing Program, National Defense Act, Enactment of an Enabling Law for the Natural Gas Industry, Amendments to the Electric Power Industry Reform Act, Amendments to the Build-Operate-Transfer Law and the Condonation of Unpaid Amortization and Interests of Loans of Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries.



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PH, a vocal ally of UN refugee body

By JEFFREY G. DAMICOG

Department of Justice (DOJ) Secretary Jesus Crispin C. Remulla has called for "real actions" to address displacement of people due to humanitarian crises, armed conflicts, and climate change.

"The growing and continuing forced displacement of peoples from all over lead us to the conclusion that the global humanitarian agenda is, and must be, about people, their well-being, health, livelihood, and basic human dignity," Remulla said last Monday, Oct. 10.

He spoke during the 73rd Session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Program Office of the United Nations

High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Geneva, Switzerland.

Remulla pointed out that the Philippines affirms and confirms "our continuing, strong, and active support and cooperation to ensure the success of the global humanitarian agenda."

"Despite our being a modest country, facing serious domestic issues like the energy crises, climate change, and disaster-induced internal displacement, we stand hand in hand with the international community in pushing the boundaries of how much we can help, to go beyond our comfort zone," he stressed.

He said it has been the advocacy of President Marcos to "rally for an international system that must work for the most vulnerable, especially the marginalized, migrants, refugees."

"Our national development plan also gives a clear directive to unlevel our policies and programs," he said. "We assure the High Commissioner of the Philippines' resolve to continue to be one of this organization's most vocal ally,"

Remulla said that the Philippines is "a nation of migrants, a land of people on the move, a safe haven for nine waves of refugees fleeing persecution"

with a history "replete with images of our welcoming of refugees from all over the world under our longstanding open-door policy towards displaced people and other persons of concern."

"This year, we ratified the 1961 Statelessness Convention, passed the Founding Act, established an inter-agency body for protection services, and piloted Complimentary Pathways for Rohingyas," he cited. "We are also already looking ahead. Our focus is refining our small but scalable programs that suit

'Despite our being a modest country, facing serious domestic issues like the energy crises, climate change, and disaster-induced internal displacement, we stand hand in hand with the international community in pushing the boundaries of how much we can help, to go beyond our comfort zone.'

our own national condition as a modest host country, while also remaining a friend to UNHCR and other humanitarian friends. Our vision is for my country to continue to carve its niche and become an example of how us in the 'missing middle' can help carry the burden as member of our community of nations," he added.

To UNHCR, Remulla said: "It is imperative that we must take real action and solid plans, not mere token gestures, to help ensure a better future for the displaced and the most vulnerable, including women and children, persons with disabilities, older persons, and indigenous peoples."

He said there must be "a clear direction to the UNHCR on how to integrate climate change mitigation, and adaptation with defined action areas and operational guidelines in the work of the organization."

Thus, he said, there should be "sufficient support for developing countries to address climate change displacement, which is within the obligations under the Paris Agreement."

"We must also ensure that the global food crisis and the rising inflation do not detract from our ability to deliver

humanitarian services, nor create more vulnerabilities for displaced persons," he said. "This requires political will from all parties, including ending protracted and new crises, and demanding comprehensive political solutions to end conflict and build enduring peace."

He then urged nations to "ensure that the UNHCR has the resources and political support to fulfill its mandate."

"Our vision is also for an efficient fit-for-purpose UNHCR that can respond with agility and efficiency to any humanitarian crises, in any part of the world," he said.

He also urged for "for equitable attention to different crises in different regions—to ensure that no refugee situation and no hosting community remain ignored or underfunded."

There is the "need to provide sufficient support for all hosting communities, who do much of the heavy lifting and divert limited resources to help those in need" and "emphasize the generosity of donors, and urge them to explore how assistance can be scaled up," he said.



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World Bank to launch new trust fund for emissions reduction grants

WASHINGTON- The World Bank said on Monday it is launching a trust fund aimed at pooling public funds to provide grants for projects to reduce carbon emissions, including decommissioning coal-fired power plants.

The Scaling Climate Action by Lowering Emissions (SCALE) fund will provide grants to developing countries as they deliver pre-agreed results in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, World Bank President David Malpass said in a LinkedIn post.

SCALE will be the new umbrella trust fund for the bank's results-based climate finance activities. Malpass said the World Bank was in the process of capitalizing the new fund, with the aim of launching it at the COP27 climate change conference in Egypt in November.

In a paper provided to the World Bank's and International Monetary Fund's joint Development

Committee, the bank said it has identified three areas that are particularly well suited to such results-based financing grants: natural climate solutions based on agriculture, forestry, land-use and oceans; sustainable infrastructure such as energy and transport; and fiscal and financial solutions that directly or indirectly mobilize resources for climate actions.

The bank said the SCALE fund will bring new resources to emissions reduction projects in low- and middle-income countries, help generate larger projects, generate high-quality carbon credit assets and help countries enhance access to international carbon markets.

The World Bank did not identify a projected size for the new fund. The world's biggest multilateral development lender in fiscal 2022, ending on June 30, delivered over \$30 billion in

climate-related finance.

But US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen last Thursday urged the World Bank and other multilateral development banks to shift their business models beyond country-specific project finance and to dramatically boost lending to address climate change and other pressing global needs.

More than 150 leading companies and organizations including oil majors and port authorities called for the global shipping industry to be fully decarbonized by 2050, urging governments to step up action warning time was limited.

With about 90 percent of world trade transported by sea, global shipping accounts for nearly 3 percent of the world's CO2 emissions and the sector is under growing pressure to get cleaner.

UN shipping agency the In-



Container ship RDO Concord sails through the Suez Canal as Egypt. (Reuters Photo)

ternational Maritime Organization (IMO), has said it aims to reduce overall greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from ships by 50 percent from 2008 levels by 2050, but industry groups

are calling for accelerated action from governments.

In the latest initiative companies and groups - from shipping, chartering, finance, ports, and fuel production - say stronger

measures are needed to ensure the sector will meet the climate goals set by the Paris accord, which seeks to limit global warming to less than 2 degrees Celsius. - Reuters



Communication: Integral to disaster recovery

According to the World Bank, the Philippines is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world. Ten million people are affected by natural disasters every year, and P177 billion are lost from typhoons and earthquakes. Recently, we felt the wrath of Typhoon "Karding," the country's 11th tropical cyclone for 2022. Though there is now very little news about its aftermath, many communities are still recovering from the damages caused by strong winds and floods.

Typhoons, earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, landslides are no longer unusual to us. We have been learning how to recover fast and build back better. Recovery is not easy, as there are just too many demands and challenges, especially at the community level, where the disaster is mostly felt by the old, women, children, people with disabilities, and other marginalized groups.

One of the challenges of recovery is communicating between the affected people and the government authorities at the local and national level. Depending on the extent of destruction and damages, the media, local and international donors, and civil society organizations may also deserve attention, so communicating with them would be equally important.

Communication should be an integral part of the recovery process, yet it is most often taken for granted. Every local government unit (LGU) should have a communication strategy in place, even before a disaster happens. A team should be ready to be activated once a disaster hits. This team should be able to quickly assess the situation, determine the first official messages, identify a spokesperson, and determine the best ways to send out the information.

A communication plan can be immediately drawn from a communication strategy based on a sound analysis of the context of the LGU or community. Who are the opinion leaders in the community who have influence

COMMENTARY

LESLEY JEANNE Y. CORDERO
AND LEONORA AQUINO-GONZALES

on the attitudes and behavior of the people? Who should you be communicating with during the recovery process? What is the best way to communicate to the people—how do they get their information? And how can we get timely feedback from the community?

When a disaster hits, it is important for the people not to lose hope and to trust the authorities managing the recovery process. The goal of a good communication strategy is to inject hope among the victims of the calamity and build their trust on the authorities and the process, so they can act on their own recovery and seek help when needed. Even before a disaster hits, the local chief executives should already know how to gather, analyze, send, and evaluate information. Messages should be clear, relevant, focused on the target audience, and timely. This does not mean that we should be contented with one-way communication and messages that only make politicians look good. *Bawal umepal*. To earn the trust of the communities, it's important that they are free to ask questions, voice their views and opinions, including unfavorable ones to the authorities, and, of course, receive a timely response.

Here are some tips from the Disaster Recovery Guidance Series published by the World Bank's Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme and the European Union:

Be quick in disseminating early messages about the recovery activities and how to get information and assistance from the government.

If possible, provide an initial assessment of the situation and steps for recovery. This sends the message that you are on top of the situation, and you can be trusted. You may not be able to control the onset of a disaster, but you can certainly manage your response.

Validate their feelings and express your care and concern. Empathy is much needed at this stage.

Update and communicate regularly. Assign a credible spokesperson. Sometimes it's the mayor, but he might be too busy attending to his constituents.

Use the appropriate channels and tactics to reach out to your target constituencies. A blast text message may be the quickest way to communicate to some communities, but in areas with weak internet, it's better to tap respected local leaders to relay information. Use existing networks of communication, like local churches, civic organizations, women's groups.

Monitor the flow of information and feed-

back from communities, and address the spread of rumors or wrong information. Nip misinformation in the bud through immediate feedback.

Be flexible. The situation may change, and what was urgent and necessary in the beginning may change over time. Adjust your messages and delivery channels accordingly.

Remember that information sharing is just the beginning. Constant engagement with the communities, which results in empowering the people to help themselves recover, is the ultimate goal of communication during the recovery process.

Lesley Jeanne Y. Cordero is a lawyer and senior disaster risk management specialist at the World Bank. Leonora Aquino-Gonzales teaches in UP College of Mass Communication and used to work at the World Bank as senior communication specialist.



Manila Observatory@167

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration is better known to Filipinos by its wonderful acronym Pagasa (Hope). On stormy days, when I was a boy, I would sit beside a radio with my fingers and toes crossed, hoping Pagasa would cancel classes. I learned, later in life, to be careful what I wish for because the forced holiday I welcomed in Manila was dreaded by those in the path or eye of the storm. Crops and homes were devastated by typhoons that hardly made a dent in Manila.

Fr. Jett Villarin, SJ, immediate past president of the Ateneo de Manila University, invited me over to the Manila Observatory a month ago to deliver some remarks, not an academic paper with footnotes, just "kwentuhan" as he termed it, to celebrate the 167th anniversary of the Observatory. That a storm disrupted our original schedule was quite appropriate. I spoke mainly about Fr. Federico Faura, SJ, not as the first Observatory director, but as a teacher of a young boy named Jose Rizal, who became the national hero of the Philippines. Padre Faura predicted typhoons based on data, painstakingly gathered by the Observatory and numerous stations in the provinces. That was not his only gift. In 1887, Faura warned the author of "Noli me tangere" that he would end up on the gallows. Nine years later, when Faura went to Fort Santiago to comfort Rizal in his death cell, the author of "Noli" reminded him that his prediction had come true.

The Manila Observatory figures prominently in the history of disasters in the Philippines, and two of its early directors have been honored with street names in the distinguished and ever-loyal city of Manila: Jose Algue in Tondo and Federico Faura in Ermita, though the street signs read P. Algue and P. Faura for Padre Algue and Padre Faura. It is not well known that the present Robinson's Ermita Mall stands on the site of both the pre-war Ateneo and the Manila Observatory after they relocated out of the walls of Intramuros.



LOOKING BACK

AMBETH R. OCAMPO

DATA WERE GATHERED
INTO WEATHER
BULLETINS ISSUED BY
THE OBSERVATORY FROM
1879 TO 1945, NOW AN
UNTAPPED MINE OF
HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Postwar, both Ateneo and the Observatory found green pasture in the wilds that is now Loyola Heights, Quezon City.

Today's Manila Observatory, with its modern and sophisticated equipment, traces its humble beginnings not to Padre Faura, but to a Jesuit scholastic named Francisco Colina, who established a primitive weather station on the rooftop of the Ateneo Municipal in Intramuros in 1865. Located in an abandoned pigeon coop, it had but four instruments: for temperature, a repurposed

household thermometer; for humidity, a homemade Hygrometer, described by Jesuit historian Horacio de la Costa as a "tiny contraption consisting principally of hair"; for atmospheric pressure, a homemade barometer described as "a glass siphon filled with an oily liquid of sickly hue"; and finally for wind velocity and direction, an anemometer made from "a rag fluttering from a length of twine."

I presume people thought Colina was an eccentric with nothing better to do, but when his daily record, pure raw data, was correlated with a typhoon that struck in 1865, it gave birth to the Observatorio Meteorológico del Ateneo Municipal de Manila. Using better instruments, Faura accurately predicted the approach of typhoons that landed on July 7, 1879, and again in November. These were the first weather bulletins in the Philippines. Due to the need of seafarers and fishermen, data were gathered into weather bulletins issued by the Observatory from 1879 to 1945, now an untapped mine of historical information. In 1880, the Observatory started monitoring earthquakes. By 1884, the Ateneo Observatory was renamed Observatorio Meteorologica de Manila and by royal decree recognized as the official weather forecasting authority for the Philippines. In 1901, under the American colonial administration, the Observatory acted as the Philippine Weather Bureau, until it was destroyed in the 1945 Battle for Manila. Postwar, weather forecasting was taken over by an official weather agency now Pagasa.

So much historical information lies in the archives of the Manila Observatory, and on my quick visit, I already found weather, temperature, cloud information, etc. for Dec. 30, 1896 (Rizal's execution) and May 10, 1897 (Bonifacio's execution). Trivial detail to some, but important to a historian taught by the late Teodoro Agoncillo "not to invent or guess anything in history, not even the weather."

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu



The hidden price of food security

THE first 100 days is really nothing more than a honeymoon period. We give the new president some slack for missteps. But 100 days are enough to glean the tone and direction of the new administration for the next six years. On two fronts at least — diplomacy and agriculture — I'd say it is turning out to be a Marcos redux. The President's sister Sen. Imee Marcos, said "Marcos is agriculture," referring to the legacy of her father and the need to return to the primacy of agriculture.

Like most campaign promises, the P20-peso per kilogram rice was easily said but can't be easily done, at least not anytime soon. Lost in the motherhood statements of politicians and fearmongering in media are the cost and price of every policy decision. Cheap rice can be achieved, but it will hurt farmers. Government can protect farmers, but it will cost us. Whether it's through government subsidy or through high prices, the consumer or taxpayer always pays. "Free" simply does not exist, despite what politicians say. The economist Thomas Sowell put it another way: There are no real solutions; only trade-offs. Among environmentalists and social scientists, it's called a "wicked problem." These are problems that are symptoms of another.

So, what are the costs of food security? Let's face it, the world cannot feed itself through organic fertilizers alone. Sri Lanka just recently demonstrated that. It replaced imported fertilizers with organic fertilizers to save on dollars. The result was calamitous: harvests fell sharply and that contributed to the collapse of the country's economy. Going all-organic was a fine example of what Sowell refers to as things that sound nice but don't work.

Weekend farmers like me don't have to feed others, so I can go hardcore with chicken droppings and cow dung to fatten the soil. I also practise composting in the city to help regenerate our soil. I'm not an agriculturist. I just learned the basics of regenerative farming through some workshops, enough to apply a holistic approach. Animals graze on our property in be-



URBANISTA

**DAPHNE
OSEÑA PAEZ**

tween planting. We rotate our crops. We don't use pesticides. We have a little arboretum of native trees as well. But because I do not live in our little "farmette," I don't get to apply all the techniques. I am aware that sometimes, when I am not looking, our helper in the farmette treats the soil with "abono" or urea fertilizer. He says my organic system can only go so far. I win with the compost, and when I'm not looking, the soil gets extra nutrients like nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium from his synthetic source. His system works well. After planting season, we end up with too much harvest for our household, but too little to go commercial. Then we try again in a new cycle.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources has just issued a red tide warning in 10 areas encompassing Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao. Red tide causes massive fish kill and makes shellfish dangerous to eat. According to NOAA, or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the US, red tide is from harmful algal blooms or HABs — think algae in the beaches of Boracay, water hyacinths along the Pasig River and Laguna Lake. The HABs proliferate in fresh and sea water due to excessive nutrients that run off from soil. These are the nitrogen and phosphorus, mostly from agricultural fertilizer, that end up seeping into the soil and running off into our waters. The algae and water hyacinths themselves aren't all harmful, but their presence in the surface of the waters block the oxygen that is needed for fish and sea life to grow. When the HABs die, their decomposition depletes oxygen in water. When this happens, we have fish kill and toxic shellfish, known as red tide.

Food security will come at a cost. The need to weigh the pros and cons often slows decision-making. It was easy and tempting, for ex-

► PaezA6



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The hidden price of food security

ample, to see in the sugar order controversy a hint of anomaly. In truth, it was a display of the competing interests of consumers, planters, traders and industrial users, each lobbying the government to push their own interests. Traders make money from imports; planters and farmers oppose it

because it drives their prices down; and soft drinks companies want cheaper imported sugar. That episode in the first 100 days ended where it started — with sugar importation, albeit in smaller quantities.

It is not easy balancing economics, food security and the environment. This is why

the big guns are called in to make policies and run the country. There are many vocal champions for agriculture and the economy. It is our basic and primal need to survive. At some point we need to talk about the trade-offs and the true cost of food security on our environment and our future.



REIMATE OPINION



ANGINYONG LINGKOD

NI DR. HILDA C. ONG

MARCOS ADMINISTRATION, PASADO SA FIRST 100 DAYS

MATAAS na approval ratings ang nakuha ng administarsyon ni President Ferdinand "BBM" Marcos, Jr. mula sa publiko kaugnay sa kanyang unang isang-daang araw na panungkulan ayon sa Publicus Asia at sa Pulse Asia.

Sa 2022 Pahayag Third Quarter Survey na isinagawa ng Publicus Asia mula September 16 hanggang 20, lumabas na 62% ng 1,500 respondents, ay nagugustuhan nila

ang pamamalakad ni Pangulong BBM. Gayundin, 58% ang lubos ang pagtitiwala sa kanya, 56% ang naniniwala na sinusunod ng administrasyon ang mga batas sa pagdedesisyon, 53% ang nagsabi na hindi ito abusado sa kapangyarihan, 50% naman ang nakita siya bilang responsableng lider at 51% ang nagsabi na matatag ang estado ng bansa sa ilalim ng pamahalaang Marcos.

Napag-alaman din ng Pub-

licus Asia na 71% ang nagsabi na nasa tamang direksyon ang tinatahak ng bansa at 65% ang naniniwala na uunlad ang ekonomiya ng bansa sa huling bahagi ng taong 2022.

Pasado din ang pagtingin ng publiko sa paghawak o posisyon ng Marcos administration sa iba't ibang usapin katulad ng –

- Renewable energy 88%;
- Text spammers and scammers 87%;
- Pagpapatuloy ng EDSA Carousel bus service 78%;
- Serbisyo sa marginalized sector 77%;
- Pagbabawal sa mga sexual offenders na magturo 76%;
- Hybrid work arrangement 72%;
- Pagbabalik sa face-to-face classes 71%.

Pinulusuhan din ang mahalagang usapin na para sa mga Pilipino ay kinakailangang pakatutukan, at ang mga nanguna ay ang –

- Economy, 11%;
- Corruption, 12%;

- Poverty, 11%;
- Inflation, 11%; at
- Job creation, 10%

Sa survey naman na isinagawa ng Pulse Asia mula September 17 hanggang 21, nakakuha rin ng pag-apruba mula sa publiko ang Marcos administration sa labing-isa sa labing-tatlong national issues.

78% ang nakuha nito sa pag-responde sa pangangailangan ng mga tinamaan ng kalamidad at ng COVID-19; pagpapalaganap ng kapayapaan 69%; proteksyon ng mga overseas Filipino workers 68%; pagliban sa kriminalidad 67%; pagpapatupad ng mga batas 62%, at 59% sa paglikha ng trabaho at pagtaas ng suweldo.

May magandang grado rin sa pagliban sa korapsyon 58%; proteksyon sa kalikasan 57%; at pagdipensa sa teritoryo ng bansa 52%.

Pero baha ang mababa naman pagdairig sa pagkontrol sa inflation 42% at 39% sa poverty reduction.



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Solon prods Congress to pass bill defining maritime boundaries

BY JOVEE MARIE N. DELA CRUZ

@joveemarie

A SENIOR lawmaker on Tuesday urged Congress to finally pass a bill delineating the country's maritime boundaries, including its 200-mile exclusive economic zone.

Cagayan de Oro City Rep. Rufus Rodriguez made the appeal in the wake of the reported agreement between the Philippines and Indonesia on rules on how to delimit their overlapping territorial boundaries.

The agreement was an offshoot of the visit to Jakarta of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. last month.

"The projected talks between the Philippines and our neighbor Indonesia should prompt Congress to now approve a maritime zones bill," Rodriguez said in a statement.

He said such a law would serve as the framework for negotiations on territorial limits between and among nations claiming islets and maritime areas in the South China Sea.

"It will also be our weapon in enforcing our laws, exploring resources and protecting our fishermen in these areas," he said.

He added that Congress should not be afraid of how China would

react to the enactment of such a law.

"Enacting it is our right under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos). Let us not worry about what the Chinese will say. Let us think of our own national interest," Rodriguez stressed.

The Mindanao lawmaker has filed Bill No. 2467, which is titled, "An Act declaring the maritime zones under the jurisdiction of the Philippines."

He introduced the measure in the last Congress. The House passed it but the Senate sat on it.

Panatag Shoal

RODRIGUEZ'S proposed definition of the country's maritime territory includes the Chinese-occupied Scarborough or Panatag Shoal off Zambales and Pangasinan, locally known as Bajo de Masinloc, a tradition fishing ground of Filipinos.

The Chinese Coast Guard routinely patrols this area, which Beijing seized in 2012 after a standoff between Chinese and Philippine Coast Guard vessels.

In House Bill 2467, Rodriguez said the Philippines, as a signatory and party to the 1983 Unclos "recognizes the establishment of

various maritime zones and jurisdiction of coastal states, including its own, over which sovereignty and appurtenant sovereign rights can be exercised."

"Thus, the country exercises sovereignty over its internal waters, archipelagic waters, territorial sea and airspace over it, as well as its seabed and subsoil in accordance with Unclos and other existing laws and treaties," he said.

He said the Philippines also exercises sovereign rights over its "contiguous zone, exclusive economic zone and continental shelf, including the right to explore and exploit living and nonliving, organic or nonorganic resources."

The House leader pointed out that Unclos allow party-states to define their maritime territory.

Under the Rodriguez bill, aside from its internal and archipelagic waters and territorial sea, the country's maritime territory includes its 200-mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ) that is measured from its shoreline and its continental shelf.

A large part of the Philippine EEZ is claimed by China, which has transformed some disputed islets in that area into military installations.



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IN BRIEF

Solon to House: Pass PH maritime zone bill

CAGAYAN de Oro City Rep. Rufus Rodriguez appealed to Congress to finally pass a bill delineating the country's maritime boundaries, including its 200-mile exclusive economic zone.

Rodriguez made the appeal in the wake of the reported agreement between the Philippines and Indonesia on rules on how to delimit their overlapping territorial boundaries.

The agreement was an offshoot of the visit to Jakarta of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. last month. "The projected talks between the Philippines and our neighbor Indonesia should prompt Congress to now approve a maritime zones bill," Rodriguez said. **Maricel V. Cruz**



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Rufus asks Congress to enact maritime zones bill, EEZ

CAGAYAN de Oro City Representative Rufus Rodriguez on Tuesday urged Congress to finally pass a bill delineating the country's maritime boundaries, including its 200-mile exclusive economic zone.

Rodriguez made the appeal in the wake of the reported agreement between the Philippines and Indonesia on rules on how to delimit their overlapping territorial boundaries.

The agreement was an

offshoot of the visit to Jakarta of President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. last month.

"The projected talks between the Philippines and our neighbor Indonesia should prompt Congress to now approve a maritime zones bill," Rodriguez said.

He said such a law would serve as the framework for negotiations on territorial limits between and among nations claiming islets and maritime ar-

reas in the South China Sea. "It will also be our weapon in enforcing our laws, exploring resources, and protecting our fishermen in these areas," he said.

"Enacting it is our right under the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)," Rodriguez stressed.

The Mindanao lawmaker has filed House Bill (HB) No. 2467, which is titled, "An Act declaring the maritime zones under the jurisdiction of the Philippines."

He introduced the measure in the last Congress. The House passed it, but the Senate sat on it.

Rodriguez's proposed definition of the country's maritime territory includes the Chinese-occupied Scarborough or Panatag Shoal off Zambales and Pangasinan, locally known as Bajo de Masinloc, a traditional fishing ground of Filipinos.

The Chinese Coast Guard routinely patrols this area, which Beijing seized in 2012 after a stand-

off between Chinese and Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) vessels.

He said the Philippines also exercises sovereign rights over its "contiguous zone, exclusive economic zone and continental shelf, including the right to explore and exploit living and nonliving, organic or non-organic resources."

The House leader pointed out that UNCLOS allows party states to define their maritime territory.

Ryan Ponce Pacpaco



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Rody spent P4.5B intel, confidential funds in 2021

BY PETER TABINGO

FORMER President Rodrigo Duterte spent P2.25 billion confidential funds and P2.25 billion intelligence funds in 2021, his last full year in office.

The P4.5 billion total confidential and intelligence fund (CIF) spending of the Office of the President was P1.73 billion higher than the P2.769 billion combined CIF spending of the Department of National Defense (DND) and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) in the same period.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP)

is under the DND while the PNP, Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), and the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) are all under the DILG.

These figures were revealed in the 2021 Annual Financial Report (AFR) on National Government Agencies released by the Commission on Audit last October 7. The AFRs are released every year and may be accessed online at the COA's official website.

Year on year, the national government's CIF spending dropped from P9.443 billion in

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2020 to P9.082 billion in 2021 or a decrease of P361.3 million.

Total confidential fund spending increased from P3.863 billion in 2020 to P3.99 billion in 2021.

In contrast, intelligence spending declined by P493.19 million from P5.58 billion in 2020 to P5.087 in 2021.

In the case of the Office of the President, its CIF tab went down from P4.636 billion in 2020 to P4.5 billion.

Among the offices under the Executive branch, the DND spent P1.860 billion for CIF (P1.838 billion intelligence; P22.25 million confidential); DILG incurred P908.45 million CIF (P848.45 million intelligence; P60 million confidential); and "other executive offices" posted P1.537.2 billion (P1.397 billion confidential and P140.2 million intelligence).

Also in the list under confidential fund spending were the Department of Justice (DOJ) P258.21 million; Department of Finance (DOF) P60.625 million; Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) P31.74 million; Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) P20.038 million; Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) P15 million; Office of the Ombudsman P13.04 million; Department of Transportation (DOTr) P6.85 million and P10 million for intelligence; Commission on Audit P10 million; Commission on Human Rights (CHR) P500,000 and P136,600 for intelligence; Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) P50,000.

The DICT spent P100 million in confidential expenses in 2020 while the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), which spent P25 million confidential funds in 2020, had zero expenses in 2021.



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NOTAM mananatili dahil sa alerto sa Bulkang Mayon - CAAP

Kinumpirma ng Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) na mananatili pa rin ang kanilang NOTAM (Notice To Airmen) hanggang bukas kung ibababa na ng Phivolcs ang category ng bulkang Mayon.

Ayon kay CAAP spokesperson Eric Apolonio nakabantay pa rin sila sa pronouncement ng Phivolcs kung mananatili ang Alert Level 2 sa bulkang Mayon para sa pagpapalawig ng NOTAM.

May mga pagbubuga pa rin umano ng abo ng bulkan na maaaring magdulot ng panganib sa mga eroplano. Pinaiiwas din ang mga eroplano na lumipad malapit sa tuktok ng bulkan mula sa 10,000 feet ang taas mula sa bunganga ng bulkang Mayon.

Dagdag pa ni Apolonio nanatiling normal ang operasyon sa mga airport sa Bicol Region at wala ring mga napaulat na cancelled flights dulot ng pagbubuga ng abo ng naturang bulkan. *(Butch Quejada)*