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10-18-22

FARMERS, FISHERFOLK'S DEMAND ON WORLD FOOD DAY

By Krixia Subingsubing @krixiasINQ

TITLE :

Farmers and fisherfolk marked World Food Day on Monday by urging President Marcos to address hunger by rejecting all reclamation activities on Manila Bay and to stave off inflation.

Peasant groups like Pamalakaya, Amihan and Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) went to the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to protest the rising prices of goods while they suffer the brunt of reclamation and importation policies that affect their harvest.

Among others, the groups urged Mr. Marcos to "unconditionally revoke" all environmental compliance certificates (ECCs) for Manila Bay reclamation projects and to pursue instead its rehabilitation and restoration.

"We are here to remind the government of its mandate to protect the environment and oceans against destructive projects," said Ronnel Arambulo, spokesperson for Pamalakaya...

At least 21 ECCs for Manila Bay reclamation projects have been approved by the DENR so far, prompting Sen. Cynthia Villar to scold the agency for approving so many projects that would narrow the historic bay.

### No clear solutions

Among the reclamation projects with approved ECCs were the 420-hectare reclamation project in Bacoor City, Cavite; 360-hectare Pasay Reclamation Project; 318-ha Manila City Waterfront Project; and the 419-ha Horizon Manila project.

According to Arambulo, they were disappointed in Environment Secretary Toni

Yulo-Loyzaga, once seen as Farmers, fishers and food profer clear solutions to their food systems." plight.

Peasant women's group Amihan also scored Mr. Marcos for his poor response to the food crisis by failing to address the rising costs of production and depressed farm gate prices of agricultural products.

"It is ironic that an agricultural country like the Philippines is a net importer of its basic food needs. Thousands of tons of agricultural products are being thrown away and wasted because [they are] not bought while importation continues," said Cathy Estavillo, secretary general and spokesperson for Bantay Bigas.

KMP chair Rafael Mariano agreed, saying that "food access [was] not just about availability or affordability of food.

a possible champion in gov- ducers should be in control of ernment, who has yet to of- the production and the entire

### Passage of bills pushed

He urged the administration to buy palay from farmers at P20 per kilo and to stop the importation of rice and other agricultural products.

Meanwhile. Estavillo urged the administration to pass the food self-sufficiency bills filed by the Makabayan bloc in Congress, including the House Bill (HB) No. 1161, or the Genuine Agrarian Reform B ll, HB 405 or the Rice Industry Development Act and HB 2024, seeking the provision of a P15,000 production subsidy for farmers and fishers.

The peasant women group also pushed for the enactment of HB 5504 seeking to exempt basic commodities such as bread, sugar and cooking oil from value-added tax. INQ



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Protest rally. Members of the Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas hold a protest rally at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Central Office in Quezon City demanding the "unconditional evocation" of all the environmental compliance certificates for Manila Bay reclamation projects.

PHITO BY ROLLY SALVADOR









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### LMB: Land issues in Batains By CORY MARTINEZ to undergo 'resurvey

MEASURES are in place to settle land-related is-sues in Mabini town, Ba-

sues in Mabini town, Batangas province.

This was the assurance made by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Land Management Bureau (DENR-LMB), together with the DENR-CALABARZON because of the concern raised by Batangas 2nd District Rep. Gerville Luistro about the "extremely erroneous" cadastral survey that led to boundary disputes and filing of cases

in said town.

During the deliberations of the House of Representatives on the DENR's protatives on the DENN's proposed P23.04-billion budget for 2023, LMB Director Emelyne V. Talabis explained that they will be conducting a "resurvey" to address the errors in the cadastral mapping of Mabini town. bini town.

A cadastral map is a map that shows the boundaries and ownership of land

parcels.
"One of the remedies available in case of errone-

ous surveys or surveys with lacking records is indeed a resurvey of the cadastral. We recognize that there are cadastral errors, particularly in Mabini, which was done a long time ago. We will look into the possibility of proposing a possibility of proposing a program for Mabini, Ba-tangas. So, we will discuss this with the regional exec-

utive director of Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon)," Talat is said.

DENR-Calabarzon Regional Executive Director Nilo B. Tamoria, on the other hand, said that the DENR will also work on the resurveying of Batangas City, which is near the municipality of Mabini.









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### MINERAL THEFT VERSUS YINGLONG

TILA nakatawag pansin kay Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos ang nakaraang malawakang pagbaha sa Bulacan na naging sanhi nang pagmatay ng limang (5) rescue volunteers at pagkasira ng daang milyong halaga ng ari- arian.

Kaya marahil sa first 100 days niya bilang ama ng bansa, isa sa nabanggit at natalakay sa kanyang ulat ay ang problema sa kalikasan na sa tuwi-tuwina na lamang ay nagdudulot ng delubyo at trahedya sa mamamayan.

Kasabay ng kanyang ulat ay inatasan ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources na imbestigahan ang mga nangyayaring illegal mining na patuloy na lumalabag sa umiiral na environmental laws.

Isang illegal miner na nakatawag pansin sa Pangulong Marcos ay ang Yinglong Steel Corporation na ang operasyon sa Sta Cruz at Candelaria sa Zambales ay pinahihinto ng DENR dahil sa paglabag sa mga alituntunin at batas ng kalikasan.

Mapag-alaman ng DENR na nag-o-operate ang naturang mining firm na walang kaukulang government permits, isa rito ay ang importatanteng requirement na environmental compliance certificate.

Dahil sa pambabalahura ng Yinglong sa batas ng kalikasan, nag-isyu si Engr William Cañudo ng cease and desist order na nagaatas sa kompanya na huminto



sa kanilang pagmimina.

Suhestiyon natin kay DENR Secretary Ma. Antonia Yulo - Loyzaga, hindi lang dapat maipasara ang Yinglong, bagkus ay sampahan ng kaukulang kaso ang mga may- ari para magsilbing babala sa iba pang illegal miners.

Dumating sa mining site ang nasabing company, naghukay pagkatapos ay dinala ang barkobarkong nickel mineral sa buyer sa China na walang ECC at iba pang government permits, aba'y "mineral theft" 'yan.

Sa report ng DENR, umabot na sa walumpu't walong ektarya ang binungkal na lupain sa kubundukan ng Sta. Cruz at Candislaria pagkatapos ay dinala palabus ng bansa para ibenta at pagkukitaan.

Dahil walang permiso, maliwanag na ninakaw ang tone-tonisladang nickel mineral kaya swak ang Yinglong sa mabigat na kasong mineral theft na maituturing din na economic sabotage.



# The Manila Times

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# 9 arrested for illegal mining in Bulacan

BY FREDERICK SILVERIO

after they were caught extracting "escombro" minerals at Sitio Batia, Barangay Lambakin, Marilao on October 12, Bulacan Environment and Natural Resources Office (Benro) head Julius Victor Degala said on Monday.

Degala said the operation was jointly conducted by the Benro, Marilao Police Station and the 4th Maneuver Platoon of 1st Provincial Mobile Force Company.

According to a report, the owner

and operator of the quarry was identified as Victor Sta. Rosa who was nabbed along with quarry workers Virgilio Cabucoy, Jesus Cabucoy, Pelagio Cuervo, William Lorenzo, William Jocson, Melchor Carida, Jerry Abunda and Jun Pasios.

Degala said the arrested suspects were not able to present any permit for the extraction of escombro, a material used in construction.

An estimated 470.5 cubic meters of escombro were obtained from the miners, which costs around

P16,762

Authorities also seized the manual tools used in the operation, including 100 pieces of chisel, four shovels, three claw bars, three axes and one sledgehammer.

Earlier, Bulacan Gov. Daniel Fernando emphasized his desire to eliminate illegal quarrying operations in the province.

"Nobody shall be spared by the provincial government and I assure you, with the help of Benro chief Atty. Juvic Degala, that everyone who engages in illegal quarrying

will answer to the law," the governor said.

"That is why I am asking you to abide by the law and the other environmental laws and also put an end to this illegal practice. Rest assured that we will intensify our operations to finally end illegal quarrying in the province."

The arrested individuals will be charged with violations of RA 7942 (Mineral Theft), Provincial Ordinance C-005 (Bulacan Environmental Code) and Executive Order 21-2022. Moreover, individuals who sell escombro using the Facebook marketplace were also arrested last month in an operation led by Benro, where four dump trucks loaded with escombro with no delivery receipts were confiscated and impounded at the old Provincial Engineering Office at Barangay Tabang, Guiguinto, Et lacan.

Executive Order 21 mandates the temporary suspens on of quarrying and other related activities to preserve nature and natural resources in Bulacan.







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## MWSS gets bigger allocation from Angat Dam

Amid the inadequate water supply in Metro Manila, the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) has increased the allocation of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) from Angat Dam from 46 cubic meters to 48 cubic meters per second.

At a press briefing yesterday, NWRB executive director Sevillo David said the higher allocation was approved on Wednesday.

"The increased allocation for the MWSS will be until Oct. 31," David said. "This will help address the current situation of inadequate Metro Manila supply."

Manila Water Co. Inc. corporate communication affairs group head Jeric Sevilla said the company currently provides water to customers of the East Zone around the clock.

"Additional allocation will further ensure continuous supply for our customers," he said.

Maynilad Water Services Inc. announced water service interruptions in the city of Manila this week due to the high demand in the Bagbag reservoir.

Maynilad said the water

service interruption would run from Oct. 17 to 24, from 7 a.m. to 10 pm.

The NWRB sets and approves the MWSS' allocation every month.

"We will review next week the situation in Angat and Ipo clams as well as the MWSS requirement for the November allocation," Sevillo said.

- Danessa Rivera



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THE National Water Resources Board (NWRB) said that the volume of water at Angat Dam remains below the 212-meter level, which is deemed to provide an adequate safety margin for supply during the dry months, despite the rains brought by recent typhoons.

Sevillo O. David, Jr., NWRB executive director, said in a Laging Handa briefing on Monday that Angat Dam's water level is currently around 189.4 meters.

"It is in normal operating level, but not 'comfortable' to supply the needs of Metro Manila residents and farmers in Bulacan and Pampanga," Mr. David said.

Mr. David described the current water supply situation for Metro Manila as limited, Angat Dam is the main source of water

for Metro Manila, accounting for about 90% of the capital's potable water.

"Angat Dam's water level must reach around 212 meters by year-end to ensure enough water supply in Metro Manila and irrigation for farmers especially for the summer months," he added.

Angat Dam also supplies irrigation water for Bulacan and some Pampanga rice farms

through Bustos dam, which distributes water from Angat.

Mr. David said that the NWRB is also working with other government agencies like the Department of Health (DoH) to ensure good water quality amid a rise in cholera cases.

At a briefing last week, the DoH reported 3,729 active cholera cases. - Ashley Erika O. Jose



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### Increased water allocation approved

THE National Water Resources Board (NWRB) approved last week the request of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) to increase water allocation from the Angat dam to 48 cubic meters per second (cms) from 46 cms for its concessionaires until the end of the month.

NWRB executive director Sevillo David said at the Laging Handa public briefing yesterday this will provide additional water

source in Metro Manila amid the recent string of supply disruptions.

David said Angat dam's current water level of 189.4 meters while considered normal is not a "comfortable level" to secure the potable water needs of Metro Manila residents as well as irrigation requirements of Bulacan and Pampanga.

"The additional allocation from 46 to 48 cms is effective October 12 to 31. The board usually approves the allocation every month. We will review next week the situation in Angat Dam and Ipo Dam and the requirement of MWSS for the allocation for November," David said.

The NWRB said Angat dam's water level at the end of the year must reach at least 212 meters to ensure there will be no supply disruptions especially during the

See INCREASED➤ Page A2

summer months next year.

David also said despite the recent rains in Luzon, other dams like the Pantabangan and San Roque still have low water levels.

Manila Water said it currently provides 24/7 supply to custom-

ers of the East Zone and the additional allocation will further ensure continuous supply.

Maynilad Water Services Inc. said increased release from Angat Dam will result in the avoidance of any major service interruption.

The company said the higher allocation will help keep water elevation in Ipo Dam within manageable levels given the lack of local rains at the said watershed.

Maynilad added maintaining

water elevation in Ipo Dam is important for the company to ensure it has enough raw water supply for treatment plants unlike Manila Water which has buffer stock through the La Mesa Dam.

- Jed Macapagal



# The Manila Times











### Saving our coral reefs

N environmental group has said that only 2 percent of the Philippines' coral reefs remain healthy. Plastic pollution is killing the corals and there are 5 trillion plastics in the world's surface water, says Haribon Foundation chief operating officer Anna Varona.

There are more plastics than there are people on the planet Earth. Imagine what plastics do for us, what plastics do for ecosystems - nothing. They suffocate the marine environment, they suffocate the forest, and the land and the mountains. The land where they [are] dumped, dies," Varona said.
She cited a study released by the Department of Science and

Technology (DoST) on the dwindling coral reefs. In 2017, the DoST said initial findings of coral reefs nationwide showed 90 percent of the 166 reefs that were sampled were classified as either poor or fair. The latest study was that we only have 2 percent healthy coral regis in the Philippines.

"We are an archipelago surrounded by the oceans, and we are made up of islands. We are the center of the center of biodiversity on the planet. If coral reefs are not healthy, the animals, the turtles, the octopus and fish are also affected," Varona said.

She gave an alarming act that every seafood eater must know. "Because there are so many plastic particles in the marine environment, they have already entered our food chain. When you are a lover of seafood, most likely you have 70,000 particles of microplastics ... in your system, every year on an average," she added. Of the 90 species of whales, it is estimated that 18 percent are considered endangered species. Five of them have an alarming rate of death. Many die because of climate change.

This environmentalis: has put her finger on the pulse. The effects of climate change have, indeed, been felt in the last 10 years. They have been seen in the deserts of Saudi Arabia experiencing heavy rains, Australia being flooded, and the Philippines being lashed by the strongest typhoons in the world.

It is a situation that is particularly alarming for people in Asia. Etty Riani, an expert in fisheries resource management from the Bogor Agricultural University in Indonesia, sounded the alarm bells.

He said the climate crisis has triggered a rise in sea levels, water temperature and acidification. This affects fishery production and the carrying capacity of the ecosystem. Rising seawater temperatures interfere with fish reproduction, and drive the fish to move to deeper, cooler locations. This results in catch areas moving and tending to be further away than usual. "It is not surprising that fishermen now often complain that their catch is smaller," said Dr. Etty. "And also fishermen have to sail farther from their catch areas because of fish migration."

Bleaching due to climate change and destructive fishing activities has also disrupted coral reef ecosystems and other marine biota, which in turn affects the number of fish the sea can carry, Etty said. Experts have said that extreme weather will occur more frequently with longer duration, including heavy rains accompanied by lightning and thunder, tropical cyclones, high waves, hail and droughts.

But all is not lost. The Philippines has some of the most comprehensive environmental laws in the world, which when implemented would mitigate the effect of climate change. We can also adapt what Indonesia has done. It set up a "Climate School" as an effort to equip fishermen and farmers with knowledge about the growing crisis and how to deal with it. The Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries in collaboration with a service provider company PT XL Axiata Tbk has also launched an application called "Laut Nusantara" to make it easier for fishermen to catch fish.

The United Nations Development Program in the Philippines used to have programs to save the coral reefs, among them a project where tires were submerged in areas with dead corals. Seaweed, fish and other marine life began to grow around the tires that resurrected as corals. Residents near the beaches used to pick up plastic sachets and trash left on the beach by visitors or thrown back by the sea itself. Banning fishermen from fishing within 12 kilometers from the shore three months of the year should continue so the fish can regenerate.

We need to save our corals - and ourselves - from the apocalyptic effects of climate change.







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## Marcos bats anew for Department of Water Resources

By ARGYLL CYRUS B. GEDUCOS

resident Marcos renewed his push to establish a Department of Water Resources to address the "critical" need for freshwater supply in the country.

In a statement, Malacañang said Marcos made this remark in a meeting with top officials of Isabela province, who expressed support for the Chief Executive.

Marcos said the immediate establishment of the Department of Water Resources would set policies and implement structural reforms on water management that will address various issues, particularly on the "critical" fresh water supply.

"Water is too important. Supply, our freshwater supply, is generally going down, and irrigation is not as widespread as it should be," the President said last week.

"The problem is too large that we need to have a team of experts directing the 20 different concerned agencies under one roof to ensure that they would manage our water resources efficiently," he added.

In his inaugural State of the Nation Address (SONA) in July, Marcos included the establishment of the Department of Water Resources in the legislative agenda that he presented to Congress.

In August, the Office of the President (OP), in a Facebook post, said President Marcos was studying a proposal to adopt an Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) program for the country.

"This program is an approach to promote the coordinated development and management of water, land, and related resources to maximize economic and social welfare without compromising our ecosystem," the OP said.

President Marcos had said that he wanted the government to look into the freshwater supply situation in the country, especially in urban areas.

He noted that many of the country's water supply systems date back to the 1950s and must be rehabilitated and improved.



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# PBBM eyes new department to manage water resources

**By Vince Lopez** 

PRESIDENT Marcos Jr. is looking for a new government agency to efficiently manage the country's water resources for drinking and irrigation needs.

"Water is too important. Supply, our freshwater supply, is generally going down and irrigation is not as widespread as it should be," the President said state television during the recent Legislative-Executive Advisory Council (LEDAC) meeting.

The Chief Executive hinted that he would support a bill proposing the creation of a Department of Water Services.

"The problem is too large that we need to have a team of experts directing the 20 different concerned agencies under one roof to ensure that they would manage our water resources efficiently," Marcos explained.

There are pending bills in both legislative chambers for the creation of the Department of Water Resources and a Water Regulatory Commission.

Lawmakers, however, said that to save money, a commission should be created instead of a full department.

In his State of the Nation Address in July,

Marcos mentioned the creation of the Department of Water Resources in his legislative agenda that he presented to Congress.

He said the government would also look into the "precarious" freshwater supply situation in the country, especially in the urban areas. He added that many water supply systems date back to the 1950s, and they must now be rehabilitated and improved.

The new department will implement the Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM), which Mr. Marcos has proposed as the strategic framework for national water management, policy making, and planning.

The President described the IWRM as "an approach to promote the coordinated development and management of water, land, and related resources to maximize economic and social welfare without compromising our ecosystem."

Meanwhile, the president also discussed at the LEDAC job generation, trade policy, pandemic recovery efforts, and the need to improve tourism services and infrastructure.

The proposed DMR supposedly will set policy and implement structural reforms on water management and address supply issues.

In a meeting with officials from Isabela, Marcos also discussed several programs to address agricultural challenges in the region, including building new dams and rehabilitating the existing ones.

They talked about the enhancement of post-production and irrigation facilities, as well renewable energy.

The creation of the proposed department is among the priority pieces of legislation of the Marcos administration.

Senator Grace Poe in July refiled a bill seeking the creation of the Department of Water Resources.

Under Poe's bill, the DWR will be the primary policy, planning, coordinating, implementing, monitoring, and administrative entity of the executive branch of the government responsible for the comprehensive and integrated development and management of the water resources of the Philippines.







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# Majority of ASEAN firms focus on becoming sustainable

Majority of organizations in ASEAN, including the Philippines, are focusing on becoming sustainable but only a small portion of them have clear strategy backing them, according to a study.

This was revealed by Kyndryl, the world's largest IT infrastructure services provider in its recently launched Kyndryl ASEAN Digital Transformation Study 2022, in collaboration with technology research and advisory firm Ecosystm, which aims to outline the

key business priorities and technology trends in ASEAN enterprises, including their sustainability goals.

Five hundred C-suite leaders participated in the study across ASEAN, and the findings revealed that Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) awareness is growing exponentially in the region with some industries leading the way.

The Kyndryl study revealed that 77 percent of organizations in ASEAN are focusing on becoming sustainable, but only 4 percent of organizations have a holistic sustainability strategy and are focusing on addressing last-mile challenges.

These firms are being driven to develop and demonstrate an ESG consciousness in their actions and investment, by their customers, investors and by governments' sustainability mandates.

Many organizations pursue sustainability goals without a strategy backing them up. In fact, the study noted that only 23 percent of organizations in ASEAN have a corporate sustainability strategy.

Despite the greater focus on sustainability, organizations are still lacking a holistic strategy and are grappling with how to integrate their data to set science-based targets, all while navigating external challenges such as stricter regulations. The results indicate that while organizations in ASEAN are aware about their responsibility to balance sustainability and profitability, there are still challenges that hinder

them to set and achieve their sustainability goals.

While the majority of organizations are focusing on budget allocation for sustainability initiatives, they have not gone beyond that to identify the right skills and data required to support the initiatives.

The study also revealed that responding to customer expectations has become a norm for every successful business today and this extends to en-

vironmental and social consciousness. In fact, customers are driving environmental and social responsibility in organizations, in most cases more than regulations are. This is especially true in Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand.

The study further showed the leading barriers to sustainability projects in ASEAN Majority or 60 percent operational costs, 55 percent data availability and 50 percent lack of dedicated resources. (Bernie Cahiles-Magkilat)















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GUEST CELUMNIST

### Marcos, Duterte to address PH business at the 48th PBC&E

resident Ferdinand Marcos Jr., and Vice President Sara Duterte - Carpio, will speak before the Philippine business community at the 48th Philippine Business Conference & Expo (48th PBC&E) happening on Oct. 19-20 at the Grand Ballroom of the Manila Hotel.

Over a thousand delegates from across the country and overseas will gather at the historic Manila Hotel, for the first time in two years after being captive virtually due to Covid-19, to listen to the policy pronouncements of President Marcos, specifically on the government plans and priorities toward moving the country forward and sustaining our economic growth.

This is I suppose the first time that the President will appear and speak before a huge number of Filipino businessmen after his overwhelming win in the May 2022 national elections. We are extremely overwhelmed and we look forward to listening to the President as he takes the lead in navigating our country to prosperity.

The 48th PBC&E chairman and my good friend, Perry Ferrer, had earlier enunciated that this year's conference will look at how this administration will drive our economy, build on the economic reforms instituted by the previous administration and sustain our growth trajectory. In his words, he said that "the business community is looking forward to having a more participative role in crafting policies and directions in order for several important industries to grow and create opportunities for Filipinos."

Indeed, our country is in a position for a strong economic rebound with the easing of economic restrictions. Hence, the need for us to take this opportunity to collectively work in crafting policies and programs that would renew the trust and confidence of businessmen in investing in the country.

The conference will open with the keynote address of Vice President Duterte. It will immediately be followed by Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno setting the tone of the conference with Finance Undersecretary Juvy Danofrata to discuss fiscal policy matters. Thereafter, an exciting fireside chat with Secretary Arsenio Balisacan of the National Economic Development (NEDA) hosted by GMA 7 News Anchor Ivan Mayrina.

We also have put together some of the country's top business executives

for Plenary 3: Regaining Lost Ground: Perspectives from the Private Sector. Confirmed to join are Teresita Sy-Coson, vice chairman, SM Investment Corp.; Anthony Oundjian, managing director and partner, Boston Consulting Group; Raoul Eduardo C. Romulo, chief finance officer, San Miguel Holdings Corp; George Royeca, CEO, Angkas; Benito C. Bengzon, Jr., executive director, Philippine Hotel Owners' Association; and Manuel Lozano, chief finance officer, Aboitiz Equity Ventures. The session will be moderated by CNN Philippines News Anchor, Rico Hizon.

Interior and Local Government Secretary Benjamin Abalos will be the speaker for Plenary 4: The Governance Agenda: Strengthening Competitiveness for Trade and Investment Expansion. He will be joined by Anti-Red Tape Authority Officerin-Charge, Undersecretary Ernesto V. Perez and panel discussants, Atty. Arch. Felino A. Palafox, Jr., principal Architect-Urban planner and founder, Palafox Associates and Atty. Dante R. Bravo, president and COO, Global Ferronickel Holding, Inc. and chairman for PCCI mining committee to discuss the issues in the implementation of the ease of doing business. Dr. Carl Balita, entrepreneur educator, chairman, PCCI basic education committee and chairman Emeritus will be moderating the session.

Plenary 5: Maximizing Opportunities for Economic Growth: Developing the Country's Natural Capital Agriculture and Fishery will be an equally interesting session. We will have Agriculture Undersecretary Domingo F. Panganiban, Trade Secretary Alfredo E. Pascual, Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga. This session will be moderated by seasoned economist and trade expert, Dr. Cielito F. Habito of the Ateneo de Manila University.

Another interesting session is on infrastructure development. Plenary 6: Competitive Infrastructure, the Foundation of a Resilient Economy will discuss the state of the Build. Build. Build program in the country and insights from the private sector on how the Philippines can be transformed into Asia's logistics hub. For this session, we are happy to have Secretary Jaime Bautista of the Transportation Department and Secretary Manuel Bonoan of Public Works and Highways and Dr. Robert H. Yap, executive chairman, YCH Group and





dent, Air21. Moderating this session will be Dr. Enrico L. Basilio, senior adviser for Transport and Logistics, PCCI and chief of Party, USAID-RESPOND Project.

Moreover, an equally important discussion will be on digital infrastructure. Plenary 7: Leaving No One Behind in the Digital Era: Is our Infrastructure Ready? will have Secretary John Ivan E. Uy of the Department of Information and Communication Technology, Secretary Renato Solidum, Jr., Department of Science and Technology, and Dr. Joel Joseph S. Marciano, Jr., director-general, Philippine Space Agency, as speakers. Joining them in the panel discussion are Gabriel Pinentel, Trans-Pacific Broadband Group International; Edward Du, Negros Oriental Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Dennis Anthony H. Uy, founder, Converge ICT Solutions, Inc. and chairman, digital technology committee, PCCI; Usec. Angelo G. Nuestro, Department of Information and Communications Technology. The session will be moderated by Engr. Ramon D. Escueta, president, Apsys Solutions and Technologies, Inc. and chairman, science and technology committee, PCCI.

Finally, Plenary 8: Building Competitive Partnerships, Sustaining Economic Transformation will talk about how the Philippines can build strategic alliances to expand markets and attract more investments and obtain cutting-edge technology. To talk more and present their respective insights on the copic are H.E. Huang Xilian, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Philippines, and Ms. Heather Variava, deputy chief of Mission, Embassy of the United States of America to the Philippines.

There will also several breakout sessions and business matching as side events of the conference. Some business delegations are coming to attend the even; and explore possible business opportunities and joint ventures with Flipino businessmen.

(Full text of this column is on mb.com. ph)

(Dr. William S. Co is chairman of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) and director of the Agriculture and Fishery committee)



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# 57 retailers ordered to explain high prices

By BERNIE CAHILES-MAGKILAT

The Department of Trade and Industry has issued Show Cause Order (SCO) to 51 retailers for selling basic necessities and prime commodities (BNPCs) at 10 percent higher than the preceding month's prices while six others were issued Letter of Inquiry (LOI) for selling items above the suggested retail price (SRP).

These orders were issued by DTI following an inspection conducted by Fair Trade Enforcement Bureau (DTI-FTEB) Officer-In-Charge (OIC) Director Marimel Dancel Porciuncula and FTEB OIC Assistant Director Joseph Manuel P. Pamittan on 76 retail firms in the cities of Pasig, Parañaque, Malabon, and Quezon.

The monitoring and inspection was conducted as part of the FTEB's newly launched "Sweeptember" campaign in the National Capital Region (NCR) to ensure stable prices and supply of BNPCs.

The DTI noted that out of the 76 retail firms that were inspected, 70 were compliant with the SRP bulletin released on 12 August 2022. This translates to over 92 percent SRP compliance rate in the NCR.

However, DTI issued SCOs to 51 retail firms for apparently selling BNPCs priced more than 10 percent higher than the preceding month and without or with an inconsistent price tag. The SCO gave them 48 hours from receipt of SCOs to submit a written explanation.

The six retailers who were issued LOIs for selling items higher than the SRP were given 72 hours to submit a written explanation from receipt of the letter.

So far, four of the six retailers already submitted their written explanations.

"The launch of the 'Sweeptember' initiative is a step ahead of the price movement that the rainy season might

cause to ensure that only quality and reasonably-priced products will be a vailable for our consumers," said Porciuncula.

Meanwhile, Consumer Protection Group (CPG) Undersecretary Ruth B. Castelo commended the cities with firms that have shown adherence to the SRP bulletin, which gives consumers the freedom to choose products they can afford.

"We encourage sellers and manufacturers to comply with the SRP bulletin as such informs and protects consumers from deceptive or unconscionable transactions," Castelo said.

Republic Act No. 7581 (The Price Act) gives the DTI and other implementing agencies — Departments of Agriculture, Health, Environment and Natural Resources, and Energy — the mandate to ensure the availability of basic necessities and prime commodities at reasonable prices at all times without denying legitimate businesses a fair return on investment.

The DTI-FTEB weekly monitors the price and supply of basic necessities such as, but not limited to, canned sardines, processed milk, powdered milk, coffee, bread, instant noodles, salt, detergent soap, bottled water, and candles; and prime commodities such as, but not limited to, canned meat, vinegar, fish sauce, soy sauce, toilet soap, paper, school supplies, batteries, flour, cement, G.I. sheets, hollow blocks, construction nails, light bulbs, electrical supplies, and steel wires.

The DTI enjoins consumers to report retailers, distributors, and manufacturers that sell basic necessities above their SRPs, through the Consumer Care Hotline at DTI (1-384) or consumercare@dti.gov.ph.



# Rusiness Mirror editorial



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# Kudos to UN team in the Philippines

HE creation of the United Nations on October 24, 1945 is one of the defining acts of the 20th century. From an original 50 charter members that include the Philippines, UN membership has exponentially grown to 193 countries today.

Established to preserve peace and build a better world for the human race, the UN maintained its relevance in line with current geopolitical realities by becoming the port of call for "problems without passports" like the Covid-19 pandemic, war crimes, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, ervironmental degradation, and mass migration.

October is "UN Month." UN Resident Coordinator Gustavo González said it is one of the best times in the year to celebrate the life and legacy of the United Nations in general, and of the UN System in the Philippines in particular. The UN has been a partner of the Philippine government for over seven decades, supporting state institutions to respect, uphold and implement the international treaty obligations and agreed development goals that the country has voluntarily adhered to over the years.

The UN Country Team in the Philippines consists of 11 resident funds, programs, and specialized agencies (The Food and Agriculture Organization International Fund for Agricultural Development, International Labour Organization, International Organization for Migration, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, World Food Programme, and World Health Organization), six project offices (UNAIDS, Unesco, UN Habitat, UNODC, UNOPS, UN Women), five non-resident agencies (UNEP, OHCHR, UNOCT, DCO and ITC), and three secretariat offices (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, United Nations Information Center, and UN Department of Safety and Security).

González recently congratulated the members of the Philippine UN team for working so hard every day amid the pandemic to achieve their goals. He said: "Looking back on the last year, the more than 2,000 men and women serving the Philippines through the United Nations demonstrated tenacity, commitment and sacrifice to serve Filipinos in so many different ways and through a large number of programs and projects."

Thanks to the UN's intensive emergency response after Typhoon Odette hit the Philippines in December 2021, some 80,000 people have participated in World Food Programme's Food Assistance for Assets projects in the provinces of Bohol and Southern Leyte and in the Caraga region. The projects are designed to meet immediate food gaps through cash and to give opportunities to communities in the affected areas to work together in cleaning and repairing damaged roads, restoring mangroves, cleaning coastal areas of massive amounts of debris, and organizing community gardens.

In the aftermath of the typhoon that affected almost 12 million people in the Visayas and Mindanao, pregnant women were especially distressed. Many of them deliberately missed their prenatal checkups in order to prioritize their family's pressing needs. Those who were about to deliver their babies lacked supplies and essentials. As part of the UN Population Fund's Typhoon Odette response, thousands of women received cash for health assistance to enable them to resume prenatal checkups. They were also given maternity packs, including maternity pads, newborn clothes, cloth diapers and blankets.

As we join the world in celebrating UN Month, we wish the United Nations more power and greater success as a center for global diplomacy. As the foundation for shared global progress, may the UN succeed in promoting a fair distribution of income and development opportunities in the world in line with its 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development where 193 member states pledged to ensure "no one will be left behind."







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### SA DAMI NG KALAMIDAD NA NANGYARI, 'PINAS DAPAT MAS HANDA NA



ARAMI pa rin ang namamatay sa mga kalamidad o sakuna tulad ng bagyo at lindol, tsunami, tagtuyot at heatwayes.

Kaugnay nito, ayon sa United Nations (UN), kalahati ng mundo ay hindi handa sa mga ganitong pangyayari.

Bigo umano ang mundo na mag-invest para protektahan ang buhay at kabuhayan laban sa mga kalamidad.

Ang masaklap, kung sinuman ang may pinakamaliit na nagawa upang labanan ang climate crisis ay siyang magbabayad nang may pinakamataas na presyo.

Kaya patuloy ang panawagan sa lahat ng mga bansa na maginvest sa early warning systems.

Ito ay paraan upang mabawasan ang pinsala sa mga tao at ari-arian bago ang paparating na mga panganib.

Batid natin na may mga limitasyon at kakulangan ang Pilipinas pagdating sa ganitong usapin. Gayunman, umaasa tayong magagawan pa rin ng paraan na maging mas handa.

Kailangang patatagin ang mga ahensyang namamahala pagdating sa paglaban sa mga kalamidad.

Tiyak namang natututo na tayo sa pagharap sa mga pagsubok na ito, mapapansin naman kung paano na nagiging mas alerto at responsable ang taumbayan kapag may sakuna.

Hindi tulad noon na marami ang matitigas ang ulo.

Kung magpapatuloy ang pagkakaisa ng lahat mula sa bawat bansa hanggang sa buong mundo, masasabing kaya pa ring harapin ang anumang kalamidad.

At higit sa paghahanda at pagharap sa kalamidad, napakahalaga na pangalagaan ang ating kalikasan.

Ito pa rin ang magpoprotekta sa atin, at sa kalikasan pa rin tayo tatakbo kapag nag-umpisa na sa pagbangon.



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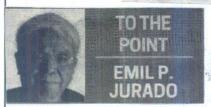




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### Need for DDR has become imperative



When I read a report that the Philippines is now considered the country most prone to disasters and calamities, I was not surprised.

I am now 95 years old and I have seen and gone through all kinds of disasters and calamities that the country has gone through--super typhoons, cyclones, floods and storm surges, that have killed thousands of people and devastated infrastructure and agriculture, strong earthquakes and volcanic eruptions that destroyed centuries-old churches and historical structures, and killing people by the hundreds and thousands, and devastated agriculture and livelihood.

I cannot remember when, but typhoon "Yoling" which had its eye in Metro Manila, was so powerful that from my house along EDSA at Philamlife Homes, I saw the house of the squatters across the highway from us fly and be wiped out.

And, of course, how can people forget "Ondoy" which poured into Metro Manila the equivalent of rains for 30 days that soon

enough flooded the metropolis.

Lately was super typhoon "Karding" which could have devastated Metro Manila were it not for the Sierra Madre Mountains that protected the metropolis from many more calamities and disasters to which the country is prone to.

Yes, we have an ad hoc government agency-the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), an agency that has since devolved in municipalities, cities and regions, that are put into action whenever

there is a disaster or calamity.
Strangely, all through these years and decades, there has never been a President who thought of creating a department, knowing full well how the country is prone to disasters and calamities.

Fortunately, during the Last Congress the House of Representatives passed a bill creating the Department of Disaster Resilience or DDR which has since long been pending at the Senate.

But, sad to say, only Senator Bong Go seems to realize the urgency and critical need for such a department.

Santa Banana, it is sad to note that it seems that only he knows the imperative need and urgency for such a department to take charge of "rescue, relief and rehabilitation" in the aftermath of disasters and calamities.

Bong Go, who realizes the imperative need for such a DDR keeps on pushing for the creation of such a department

that focuses and strategizes solely on the mitigation in the aftermath of a disaster and calamity, knowing fully well that in the aftermath of a disaster or calamity people affected by the thousands are in dire need of immediate relief and continue to rely on donations from private sectors and even from abroad.

There is a need for a department with its own budget for relief, my gulay!

Such a department can even strategize the need for building evacuation centers with the necessary amenities and facilities so we no longer have to take over school buildings, gyms and basketball courts and a department that focuses on areas which are prone to landslides and mudslides.

Mister President, your hesitancy in naming a permanent member of the Cabinet—the DOH, the DA—has become a negative thing in your presidency

Such a DDR is imperative and critically needed, Santa Banana.

And yet, President Marcos Jr. wants instead an agency under the Office of the President, not a desperately-needed department, because, he says, a DDR would cost money.

Santa Banana, since when did a President measure the need for a department with money.

It is precisely for this reason why I admire and commend Senator Bong Go for continually pushing for the enactment of a DDR; he is involved in helping fire victims, flood victims, and other victims of

earthquakes, volcanic eruptions.

Sen. Go knows full well, my gulay, the plight of the people who become victims of such disasters and calamities.

For the nth time, such a DDR should be enacted.

We need it like yesterday and especially so with the report that the Philippines is now considered the most prone to disasters and

Mister President, for the sake of millions of our countrymen who have become victims of disasters and calamities, please, please prioritize and declare the urgency of the long pending bill at the Senate to be enacted into law.

The problem of whether or not to outlaw POGOs (Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators) has become a choice of either outlawing the POGOs entirely or partially keeping those that have paid their taxes, permits to operate and other government

By doing so, the government will be losing P200 billion revenue and the reported 'social cost" of POGO workers abandoning houses and condominium units that they have rented and possible loss of work for Filipinos attached to the POGOs.

As far as I am concerned, there is no choice at all, with gangs from Mainland China like he Triad and Bamboo, coming to the Philipp nes and making the country their playground to kidnap their fellow Chinese for ransom and even killing them.

BBM should use his political will and

outlaw once and for all the POGOs.

There is really no choice for him, considering that soon enough the country will be opening its doors to tourism

If the country must attract foreign investors, BBM must realize that peace s first and foremost to foreign and order investors.

Aside from this, reports have it that China has blacklisted the Philippines as a tourist destination for mainland Chinese following crime and criminality involving POGO Chinese workers.

Mister President, it's time you show some teeth and ban once and for all all POGOs in



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### Giving corporate flesh to RE resolve

The country is facing a myriad of problems relating to energy, which is always subject to political, economic, and other headwinds. - Makati Business Club chairman Edgar Chua

WHAT is the best indication of government fidelity to its avowed policy of embracing Renewable Energy in the face of atmospheric global fuel prices and the unabated climate change?

It is the establishment of an entity to explore, develop, and operate RE generation facilities

Thus, Cagayan de Oro City 2nd District Rep. Rufus Rodriguez has pushed for the passage of a bill estab-lishing the Philippine Renewable Energy Corp. that would focus on the development of RE resources in the

Under his House Bill 4205, Rodriguez said Congress needs to enact measures that would help ensure stable, affordable and reliable supply of electricity to sustain economic growth and enhance the well-being of the na-

"It is imperative for the government to take a more active role in ensuring adequate supply of electricity with the use of renewable energy sources, thereby reducing the country's dependence on imported fossil fuels and mitigating the impact of climate change," he said.

The bill seeks to abolish the Philippine National Oil Corp.-Renewables Corp. and transfer its power, functions, projects, investments, funds, property and other assets, and personnel to the proposed PREC

The bill also proposes the inclusion of P7 billion in the national budget as an initial appropriation for PREC. PREC would be governed by a board

of directors composed of seven members to be appointed by the President for a term of three years. The Cagayan de Oro lawmaker

stressed the necessity of developing RE projects could not be stressed

**PED XING** 

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Dennis F. Fetalino

enough following the warning of Energy Sec. Raphael Lotilla of a tight power supply situation in the first half of 2023.

"Accelerating existing (RE) projects and finding new sources will eventually boost supply," he said.

He said other RE resources under HB 4205 include biomass, solar, wind, geothermal, ocean energy, and hydro-

The use of RE is on top of the agenda of President Marcos

In his State-of-the-Nation Address. the President stressed the need to increase the level of energy production in the country as "our demand for energy far exceeds our reliable sup-

ply".
"We must look at every possible for option that would be appropriate for the Philippine situation. Our search for new power sources should always be with an eye to improving the mix of the energy supply between traditional and renewable sources," Marcos said.

"The technology on renewable energy is progressing rapidly. And many of these technologies are appropriate for the Philippines," he added. However, the proposal for a new

state RE corporate entity seems to run counter to the administration's plan to privatize some government owned and/or controlled corporations.

In fact, about 10 GOCCs are being

rolled into the auction block pending the evaluation of their financial and

economic status, among others. Governance Commission for GOC Cs Chairman, Alex L. Quiroz declined to give specifics, citing the need to protect the GOCCs' status pending the results of the ongoing assessment.

"Different GOCCs have their own peculiarities." Quiroz said.

The GCG has jurisdiction over 118

GOCCs, which excludes the Bangko Sentral, local water districts, and research institutions.

The agency is mandated to safe-guard the government's rights and ensure that COCCs' operations re-main transparent and responsive to the government's bid to provide services to the public.

Heexplained that overall, the GCG is studying the viability of the continued operations of GOCCs, which employ about 600,000 personnel

Among the GOCCs that are under the GCG's juris diction are the National Food Authority, Social Security System, Government Service Insurance System, Sugar Regulatory Administration, Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, Land Bank of the Philippines, Development Fank of the Philippines, Civil Aviatior Authority of the Philippines, and the Clark Development Corp.

The GCG has recommended the

abolition of 25 GOCCs now in various stages of liquidation, its executives

The DoE's demand; Prime Infra's vow The State does not give out conces-

sions without conditions.

It is not in business purely for good works or humanitarian purposes

Afterallisar economic entity-the biggest, in fact.

The government approval of the sale of the 45-percent stake of Shell Philippines Exploration B.V. in the Malampaya gas-to-power project to a company of tyroon Enrique Razon

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### Giving...

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was premised on Prime Infrastructure's commitment to expand gasproduction and possibly develop other nearby resources, according to Energy Sec. Raphael Lotilla.

ergy Sec. Raphael Lotilla.

"The approval by the DoE of the sale of Shell's interest in SC38 of Malampaya was premised also on the commitment of the new entrant to maximize the development of the existing resources in the Malampaya Camago reservoir with a view to developing the nearby fields as well," Lotilla said, referring to Service Contract 38.

Prime Infrastructure vowed to contribute by doing all it can to produce as much gas as possible to sustain production in support of the power demand in Luzon.

The DoE approved the sale of SPEx shares to a subsidiary of Razon's Prime

Infra after a thorough review, he said.

"The new entrant is committed to maximize the utilization of the remaining natural gas in the Malampaya-Camago reservoir with a view to developing nearby gas fields," he

"I am confident that this trend will continue as we reaffirm to prospective investors the openness of our economy to foreign and local investors and we assure them of the continued stability of our legal framework especially in the upstream oil and gas sector," he added.

The DoE cleared the sale early this month after Prime Infra was found to be technically, financially and legally qualified to take over as new operator of Malampaya.

of Malampaya.

Under the deal, SPEx would remain as a subsidiary of Prime Infra, which would assume full ownership and control of SPEx upon completion by Nov. 1, 2022 of the process for safe and seamless turnover of operations

from Shell.

The Malampaya project is one of the country's most important power assets, producing natural gas for power plants in Batangas City that provide up to 20 percent of Luzon's total electricity needs.

It started operations in 2001 with the consortium I cense for the project set to expire in 2024.

set to expire in 2024.

Prior to the Do 3 approval, the sale of SPEx shares to Prime Infra had been given consent by the Malampaya consortium and PNCX Exploration Corp.

"Prime Infra's energy portfolio has always been aligned with the national government's objective towards attaining energy ir c ependence and security, while recu cing the country's reliance on fossil fuels," said Guillaume Lucci, Prime Infra and chief executive officer.

Behold God's Islory and seek His

Pause, ponder, pray, and act, peo





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FILINVEST ALABANG, INC., Applicant.

Case No. 22-3442

### NOTICE OF HEARING

Applicant, an authorized operator of the waterworks system within Filinvest Corporate City, Barangay Alabang, Muntinlupa City, Metro Manila, applies for the renewal of Certificate of Public Convenience.

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

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

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

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

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

Witness the Honorable Executive Director of the National Water Resources Board this 22nd day of September 2022.

By Authority of the Board:

Dr. SEVILEO D. DAVID, JR. CESO III
Executive Director









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Republic of the Philippines

Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Office of the Regional Director

Regional Office XI, Km. 7, Lanang, Davao City, 8000 Philippines

Telephone Nos. (082) 234-0811/233-2779/234-5599

Email: oredenrxi@yahoo.com Website:r11 denr.gov.ph

### NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the award granted to Mr. Tirso Dalondonan on March 22, 1967 covering Lot 6, Block 4, Psd-41087 of the Pangit Barrio Site Residential Subdivision, Brgy. Pangi. Maco, Davao de Oro which is under the jurisdiction of this Office is deemed CANCELLED for his failure to comply with the provisions of Republic act No. 477 as amended and the same is hereby declared VACANT. This particular lot shall be disposed of to qualified applicants pursuant to the provisions of Republic Act No. 477, as amended, and Presidential Decree No. 967 and 1304.

Davao City, Philippines

BAGANI FIDE A. EVASCO Regional Executive Director