

29 October 2022, Saturday



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B2
PAGE

UPPER
 LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

29 OCT 2022

1111

PAGE

DATE

DENR vows revitalization of mining industry

BY BELLA CARIASO

ARANKING official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Friday assured the revitalization of the mining industry as the agency has issued at least 35 explorations permits.

In his speech before the members of the Philippine Mining Club, Environment Undersecretary Jonas Leones said that one of the priority programs of the administration of President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. is to ensure a viable mining industry.

"The mining contribution in recent years has plummeted to less than one percent in the country's gross domestic product (GDP), thus the resurgence of the Philippine mining industry is a long overdue. To ensure the stakeholders economic condition improves, we must increase mining production, production value, taxes, royalties, employment and leakages," Leones told the members of the mining industry.

"The Philippines is blessed with both metallic and non-metallic minerals. Out of our land areas of 13 million hectares, around nine million hectares have high minerals potentials. Out of these, approximately 2.39 percent or 7,117,000 hectares are covered by mining contracts and permits, and out of these figures, about .27 percent our about 81,000 hectares are active mining areas," he added.

Leones noted that several factors contributed on the mining industry decline.

"However, reforms are underway to revitalize the mining industry as pro-people and pro-environment vehicle for sustaining wealth creation and improving our people quality of life," he said.

Leones said the department lifted the moratorium on the acceptance, processing and the approval of exploration permits.

He said that in December 2021, the ban on pit mining was lifted, allowing open pit mine to proceed.

"While we envision a robust mining industry, it will not be business as usual as it was ... as few environmental mining disasters stigmatized the industry," he stressed.

Leones said the Mining Industry Coordinating Council has conducting fact-finding science-based review of 45 large-scale surface metallic mining companies, assessing their performance in legal, social, environmental and economic aspects.

"Of the 45, we found out that four have excellent benchmarks, 24 needed mining reforms and 15 needed major reforms, and only two got a poor rate. Still ongoing is the review of 22 non-metallic mine nationwide and four large non-metallic mines at the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region

of Muslim Mindanao," he said.

Leones said at least 45 mining mineral exploration companies are being subjected to audit annually to assess compliance with the terms and conditions of their contracts and their management of mines safety, health and social development.

"These environmental initiatives have restored confidence in the industry and its prospect. As [of] April 22, 2022, 717 mining covering 734 hectares have been approved. We have 1,377 applications under processing covering over 4.23 million hectares. These figures tell us the industry is poised for tremendous growth," he said.

Leones said the DENR is also addressing illegal mining through the declaration of the Minahang Bayan areas, where small-scale mining will be allowed but regulated.

"We will undertake geological mapping to complete the geological survey and mapping of the entire country which should expand our geo-scientific mineral information database," he noted.



DENR vows shift to climate resiliency action

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) vowed to shift its efforts from the current disaster response and recovery to disaster prevention and building climate resiliency in the country's most-vulnerable provinces.

During the 35th meeting of the Task Force Build Back Better (TFBBB), the DENR presented a new policy direction that would give focus on disaster prevention and climate-resiliency capacity building in provinces identified as most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

These provinces include Masbate, Sorsogon, Catanduanes, Apayao, Kalinga, Mountain Province, Ifugao, Negros Oriental, Western Samar, Eastern Samar, Northern Samar, Southern Leyte, Siquijor, Sarangani, Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, Dinagat Islands, Zamboanga del Norte, Bukidnon, North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao, Sulu and Lanao del Sur.

"One aspect of the gains that the task force can look into is on how we can shift our mode from response and recovery to putting in place governance frameworks that will prevent climate-related disasters and climate resiliency in these identified provinces," DENR Undersecretary for Finance, Information Systems and Climate Change Analiza Rebueta-Teh, who also serves as the TFBBB Secretariat head, said.

Rebueta-Teh explained that the direction was pursuant to the blueprint of action set out by Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga, which focuses on strengthening climate risk capacities through improved coherence and implementation of climate-resiliency and adaptive programs under the whole-of-society approach.

Also discussed in the meeting was the harmonization of TFBBB's role in relation to the functions of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) as the lead implementor of Republic Act 10121, or the "Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010," through the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) of the Department of National Defense.

Rebueta-Teh likewise emphasized TFBBB will take part in the drafting of the 2023-2028 Philippine Development Plan, specifically Chapter 17 or Accelerate Climate Action, and Strengthen Disaster Resilience of the document that will lay out specific actions on climate and disaster resiliency.

"The DENR is in charge of Chapter 17. We will interface with the OCD in the development of this chapter so that we can craft more specific and concrete plans, rather than motherhood and generic directions," Rebueta-Teh added.

TFBBB was created by Executive Order 120 issued on Nov. 18, 2020 by then-president Rodrigo Duterte to expedite and lead the preparation, implementation, and monitoring of post-disaster rehabilitation and recovery programs for typhoon-ravaged areas.

TFBBB's focus areas include the Cagayan River Basin, Marikina River Basin and the Bicol River Basin that were damaged by Typhoons "Rolly" and "Ulysses" in 2020, as well as Region 6 (Western Visayas), Region 7 (Central Visayas), Region 8 (Eastern Visayas), Region 10 (Northern Mindanao), Caraga and Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan) that were ravaged by Typhoon "Odette" in 2021.

TFBBB oversaw the widening of the Cagayan River to address floodings in the province, clearing a total of 515,441 cubic meters (m3) from a big sandbar in Magapit Narrows, exceeding its target of 344,304.51 m3. Another 142,220.7 m3 were dredged from a huge sandbar constricting the river in Barangay Dummun in Gattaran town.

Some 119,340 bamboo planting materials through TFBBB's initiatives were planted covering 585 hectares along the stretch of Cagayan River to stabilize its riverbanks.

Marikina River chokepoints consisting of 67,425 m3 were likewise removed, resulting in the river's improved water flow at 3 meters per second (mps) from 2.3 mps before the dredging operations in February 2021. Its current flow rate is now close to its ideal flow rate of 4 mps. **BELLA CARIASO**



TFBBB shifts to disaster prevention

The Task Force Build Back Better created by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources is shifting its efforts from the current disaster response and recovery to disaster prevention and building climate resiliency in the country's most vulnerable provinces.

The DENR presented a new policy direction which focuses on disaster prevention and climate-resiliency capacity building in provinces identified as most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

The provinces include Masbate, Sorsogon, Catanduanes, Apayao, Kalinga, Mountain Province, Ifugao, Negros Oriental, Western Samar, Eastern Samar, Northern Samar, Southern Leyte, Siquijor, Sarangani, Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, Dinagat Islands, Zamboanga del Norte, Bukidnon, North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao, Sulu, and Lanao del Sur.

According to the DENR Undersecretary for Finance, Information Systems, and Climate Change Analiza Rebueta-Teh, one aspect of the gains that the task force can look into is how to shift to putting in place governance frameworks that will prevent climate-related disasters and climate resiliency in the identified provinces.

PAULA ANTOLIN



29 OCT 2022

TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____

TFBBB vows 'stronger' climate risk capacity for PH

By **CORY MARTINEZ**

DISASTER prevention and building climate resiliency in the country's most vulnerable provinces are now the policy directions of Task Force Build Back Better (TFBBB) in order to strengthen climate risk capacities.

The move of the TFBBB, which is led by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), is in line with the blueprint of action set out by DENR Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo Loyzaga.

Analiza Rebuelta-Teh, DENR Undersecretary for Finance, Information Systems, and Climate Change and TFBBB Secretariat Head, explained that the said blueprint focuses on strengthening climate risk capacities through improved coherence and im-

plementation of climate-resiliency and adaptive programs under the "whole-of-society" approach.

The DENR presented the shift of the policy direction during the recently-held 35th TFBBB meeting, wherein it identified the provinces which are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

These provinces include Masbate, Sorsogon, Catanduanes, Apayao, Kalinga, Mountain Province, Ifugao, Negros Oriental, Western Samar, Eastern Samar, Northern Samar, Southern Leyte, Siquijor, Sarangani, Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, Dinagat Islands, Zamboanga del Norte, Bukidnon, North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao, Sulu, and Lanao del Sur.

"One aspect of the gains that the task force can look

into is on how we can shift our mode from response and recovery to putting in place governance frameworks that will prevent climate-related disasters and climate resiliency in these identified provinces," Teh said.

Also discussed in the meeting was the harmonization of TFBBB's role in relation to the functions of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) as the lead implementor of Republic Act 10121. or

Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010, through the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) of the Department of National Defense (DND).

On Nov. 18, 2020, then-President Rodrigo Duterte issued Executive Order 120 for the creation of TFBBB to expedite and lead the preparation, implementation, and monitoring of post-disaster rehabilitation and recovery programs for typhoon-ravaged areas.



WHY AREN'T THEY TAKING ACTION?

THE TICKTOCKING TIME BOMB THAT IS THE CLIMATE CLOCK

My future dances in the hands of the enablers sitting prettily on their thrones, the very hands tossing my future aside to make room on their palms for their riches

By **Nik Aguanta**
@Inq_Lifestyle

The news of the launch of the climate clock greeted me one morning in 2015 as I was scrolling on my iPad. We had just talked about our dream careers in class the previous day—I had a big smile on my face as I ardently discussed how much I wanted to become a scientist, or a doctor, possibly even both.

But as I stared at my screen, the gap between my eyebrows narrowed. Suddenly, my hopes and dreams vanished into thin air as I was hit with the realization that I probably wouldn't have enough time to even pursue a career.

My brain was haunted by the thought of never being able to achieve anything ever—it was a feeling that swallowed me whole. Sylvia Plath wrote, "I can never read all the books I want; I can never be all the people I want and live all the lives I want. I can never train myself in all the skills I want. And why do I want? I want to live and

feel all the shades, tones and variations of mental and physical experience possible in my life. And I am horribly limited."

The quote never resonated with me more. My potential entailed that I had a future, but it seemed as if the future would only be a short-lived few years before the world ended.

Each New Year's celebration felt like an added limb to hangman. The years went by and the sand in the Earth's hourglass dauntingly descended to the lower chamber. I caught a glance of this hourglass every time I saw older people advance in their professions and my stomach churned with the feeling that there is a chance I would never get to live like them. I lived with what felt like the ticktocking of a time bomb.

Climate crisis

I was regularly assigned essay topics about the climate crisis for my writing training. My frustration grew as I checked the environment tab of news sites each night

to matterload for my upcoming competitions, scanning through news stories about world leaders and supposed changemakers, not at all fazed or perturbed by the deteriorating world around them. Why weren't they taking action? Why were they merely ignoring the fact that entire ecosystems could crumble at any minute?

My handwriting progressively started to resemble chicken scratches as I passionately proposed solutions to environmental problems in response to an essay prompt, except it wasn't just an essay prompt to me anymore: my future danced in the hands of the enablers sitting prettily on their thrones, their very hands tossing my future aside to make room on their palms for their riches. I soaked in the sun that felt hotter that day, though it was in the middle of July, after sitting in an air-conditioned room for two hours.

I dreamed up solutions and technological advancements, though

C2

THE TICKTOCKING TIME BOMB THAT IS THE CLIMATE CLOCK

FROM C1 my essay topics called for simple student solutions such as recycling and planting trees. Learning at a young age that I most likely wouldn't be able to do much with my actions to help the Earth was a difficult reality to accept. It was impossible for me to singlehandedly campaign against multimillion-dollar corporations that destroyed our Earth;

it was impractical for most people to commit to an eco-friendly sustainable lifestyle with a hefty price tag. Though I did know one thing, words have power.

"Words are singularly the most powerful force available to humanity ... Words have energy and power with the ability to help, to heal, to hurt, to harm, to humiliate and to humble," said Yehuda Berg.

I came across that quote as I browsed for an essay for school and the realization hit me at full speed: my words have the opportunity to create a wave, a long-standing echo, the chance to change the course of action for years to come (it's such a heavy responsibility to place onto an essay, there's a chance at least!), hence the paragraphs.

—CONTRIBUTED INQ



Climate pledges still 'nowhere near enough'

PARIS—The world's current climate pledges are far off track to limit temperature rises to 1.5 degrees Celsius and will steer a world already wracked by increasing floods, heatwaves, and storms towards "catastrophic" warming, the UN said Wednesday.

In a report released just over a week before high-stakes climate negotiations, the United Nations climate change organisation, said combined commitments from nearly 200 nations put Earth on track to warm around 2.5C compared to pre-industrial levels by the century's end.

With the planet already battered by weather extremes after 1.2C of warming, experts say the world is failing to act with sufficient urgency to curb greenhouse gas emissions.

"We are still nowhere near the scale and pace of emission reductions required to put us on track toward a 1.5 degrees Celsius world," said UN Climate Change chief Simon Stiell.

"To keep this goal alive, national governments need to strengthen their climate action plans now and implement them in the next eight years."

The UN's climate experts have said emissions -- compared to 2010 levels -- need to fall 45 percent by 2030 to meet the 2015 Paris climate deal's more ambitious 1.5C goal.

Current commitments from governments around the world will in fact increase emissions from the 2010 benchmark by 10.6 percent by 2030, the UN said. This was a slight improvement from a similar analysis a year ago.

UN chief Antonio Guterres stressed that the goal of limiting warming to 1.5C was still within reach but warned that the current trajectory of countries' climate commitments was "catastrophic".

"We must absolutely start reducing emissions now," he said in an interview with the BBC.

When nations met for landmark climate talks in Glasgow last year, they agreed to speed up national climate pledges to cut carbon pollution and increase financial flows to vulnerable developing nations. **AFP**



House solon wants CCC to outline climate action plans

By **RYAN PONCE PACPACO**

CAMARINES Sur Rep. LRay Villafuerte on Friday said he wants the Climate Change Commission (CCC) to explain to the public how it intends from hereon to move forward on its climate action plans, after President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. has assured environmentalists that among the top priorities of the national agenda is building the country's resiliency against planet warming by upgrading its mitigation and adaptation measures amid the worsening global climate crisis.

"We welcome President Marcos' avowed commit-

ment to give top priority to mitigation and adaptation measures for climate change in our country that is among the developing economies most vulnerable to the backlash from global warming," said Villafuerte, who is president of the National Unity Party (NUP) that is the second biggest power bloc in the House of Representatives.

Villafuerte said the government's climate action agenda had acquired "greater urgency" in the face of a report that the Philippines has become the most disaster-prone country in the world because of its high risk, exposure, and vulnerability to natural calamities and disasters.

In the World Risk Report 2022 on the disaster risks of 193 countries, the

Germany-based Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft and the Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict at Ruhr University Bochum (IFHV) have bared that the Philippines rose in rank from no. 3 in 2018 to the current no. 1 spot, with a risk index score of 46.82.

The same report also listed the Philippines as among the "Top 10" countries with the highest exposure to disasters, landing at no. 4 with 39.99 exposure, after China, Japan, and Mexico.

"I believe it is now up to the CCC to spell out for our people, especially to those living in low-lying or coastal villages that are of highest risk to human-induced climate change, what mitigation and adaptation step it intends to carry out from hereon to prepare for and

respond to perilous situations related to planet heating, even as the government aims to increase our domestic economic output," Villafuerte said.

Villafuerte, who is the majority leader of the Commission on Appointments (CA), also wants the CCC to explain to the public how the government plans to accelerate the country's transition from coal to clean energy.

Last year, Villafuerte commended the Philippine delegation for "punching above its weight class" in announcing at the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) or COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland - its "Sustainable Financing Roadmap" for climate action.



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Editor
Rachelle V. Moral
Subsection Editor
Pam Pastor

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
**to be
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The school has been planting mangroves for 12 years

Bonuan Buquig National High School wins global prize for environmental action

School in flood-prone Dagupan City restored lost mangroves to reverse environmental damage

By Jemps Gallegos Yuvienco
@Inq_Lifestyle

On Oct. 19, Bonuan Buquig National High School (BBNHS) won the World's Best School Prize for Environmental Action. The Dagupan City school restored lost mangroves to reverse the environmental damage affecting its students.

The prize recognizes the importance of youth, students and schools that engage in global warming solutions. BBNHS bested other finalists like Green School Bali in Indonesia and the International School of Zug and Luzern in Switzerland.

G. L. David Memorial Integrated School in Balanga City, Bataan, was shortlisted for the World's Best School Prize for Community Collaboration. Dunoon Grammar School in the United Kingdom won the award.

Malitbog National High School in Calinog, Iloilo, was shortlisted for the World's Best School Prize for Supporting Healthy Lives. The award went to *Curie Metropolitan High School*



Teachers make sure students connect with the activity and its importance.

in the United States.

The World's Best School Prize for Innovation was awarded to Escuela Emilia Lascar in Chile. Project Shelter Wakadogo in Uganda won the World's Best School Prize for Overcoming Adversity.

Prize money

The five World's Best School Prizes honor schools everywhere for their pivotal part in producing the next generation of students and contributing to society's

progress. Each winning school will receive \$50,000 to help sustain and improve its work and fortify its school and community.

BBNHS plans to use the prize money to build a nursery that could support about 50,000 mangrove seedlings yearly and fund research to improve their mangrove propagation and preservation.

Being only a meter above sea level, Dagupan is vulnerable to floods. In 2009, Typhoon "Pepeng" (international name:

Pharma) left most of the city submerged, with fishponds, rice fields and other industries destroyed. The city government dredged rivers to minimize flooding.

However, the mangroves died off, too—the rivers were exposed to the sun's direct heat and killed off aquatic life crucial to the ecosystem. With their primary food source gone, many students had to stop schooling to support their families.

To save the waterways, the



TITLE: Bonuan Buquig National High School wins global prize for environmental action PAGE 2/3

school launched a mangrove planting program.

"The first thing we did was meet the entire team including the head teachers," said teacher Lin Ventenilla. "Different ideas came in, and they said, 'As we embark on this mangrove planting, we will also integrate into our specific learning areas how important the activity is.' It must be connected with the students, their studies and their way of life."

The school contacted the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to learn more about planting mangroves.

To help its students and save the local environment, BBNHS mobilizes over a hundred volunteers and plants thousands of mangrove propagules annually, building new homes for marine life.

Far-reaching effect

"It is indeed a much-needed project," said Winston, a student at BBNHS. "It's for myself, my family and all the people who depend on the waterways for our livelihood."

"For 12 years, we've been doing this because of our love for nature," said principal Renato Santillan. "Even if it is a small and simple endeavor, it has a far-reaching effect."

Today, the mangroves along the Longos riverbanks are almost restored and stable. The fish stocks have since returned, and the waterways are clean.'

"The Bakawan Mangrove Planting Project is not all about planting mangroves," said a student named Ken. "It also covers coastal cleanup."

In 2014, BBNHS began an international coastal cleanup. Volunteers collected garbage along Bonuan Beach. They segregated biodegradable and non-biodegradable trash and upcycled plastics into plant pots and decor. The school also planted trees to rehabilitate a local dump site.

Added Ventenilla, "We cannot prepare the future for our learners, but we can prepare them for the future. We want them to realize that their actions will also

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BONUAN BUQUIG NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL WINS GLOBAL PRIZE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

FROM C1 benefit the next generation after them."

About 50,000 people worldwide voted for their favorite schools. Winners were chosen based on rigorous criteria by a judging academy involving distinguished leaders worldwide: academics, educators, nongovernmental organizations, social entrepreneurs, government, civil society and the private sector.

All 50 shortlisted schools across the five prizes will share their best practices through School Transformation tool kits, demonstrating their innovative approaches. The step-by-step methods will enable others to replicate their success and help upgrade education everywhere. This is available on the new T4 Communities app launched at World Education Week.

Best practices

The World's Best School Prizes was launched this year



Ken, a student at BBNHS, says that the project also includes coastal cleanup.



Teacher Lin Ventenilla

by T4 Education, together with Accenture, American Express, Yayasan Hasanah, Templeton World Charity Foundation and Lemann Foundation. It shares the best practices of schools that impact their learners' lives, making a real difference in their neighborhoods.

Vikas Pota, founder of T4 Education and the World's Best School Prizes, said: "It's time

for world leaders to sit up and listen to schools like Bonuan Buquig National High School in the Philippines. Far too many children will continue to be left behind in the wake of COVID unless governments take urgent action to tackle the education crisis.

"As a first step, they must turn to the knowledge and experience contained within

our schools because those at the front-lines of education know better than anyone else the change we need to see. We founded the World's Best School Prizes to surface the expertise of trailblazing schools from every corner of the globe so that leaders can learn from their incredible stories."

Peter Lacy, Accenture global management committee member, said: "Congratulations to Bonuan Buquig National High School for winning the first-ever World's Best School Prize for Environmental Action. Teachers everywhere will be inspired by the example of this outstanding Philippine school, whose inspirational work is lighting the way towards a better future."

Madge Thomas, head of corporate sustainability at American Express, said, "I want to congratulate Bonuan Buquig National High School for this fantastic achievement. We are pleased to recognize students and educators taking action in



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PAGE

UPPER
 LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

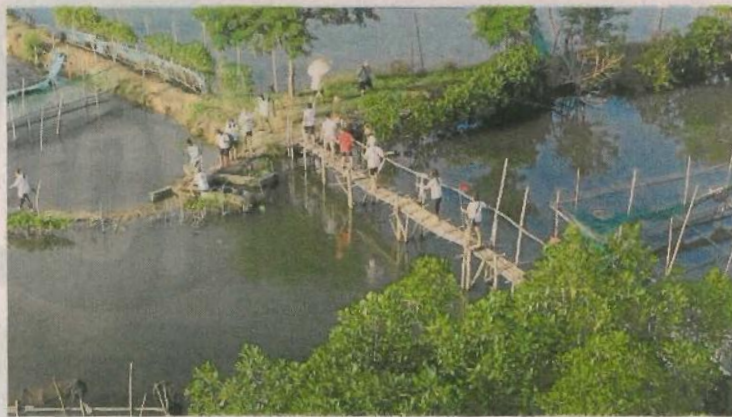
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29 OCT 2022

TITLE: Bonuan, Buquig National High School wins global prize for environmental action

PAGE 3/3

DATE



Today, the mangroves along the Longos riverbanks are almost restored and stable.



Volunteers collect garbage on Bonuan Beach.

schools to protect the environment and their futures. We are proud to support programs and partnerships like this to help build more climate resilient

and equitable communities."
—CONTRIBUTED INQ

Visit t4.education.



DAGUPAN'S BONUAN BUQUIG NATL HS DECLARED 'WORLD'S BEST SCHOOL FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION'

BONUAN Buquig National High School (NHS) in Dagupan City, which restored destroyed mangroves to reverse environmental devastation impacting its students, was adjudged as top winner of the inaugural World's Best School Prize for Environmental Action.

The high school bested two other finalists for the prize: Green School Bali in Indonesia and International School of Zug and Luzern in Switzerland. *(Read in the BusinessMirror: Bonuan Buquig National HS: Finalist for World's Best School Prize for Environmental Action; October 1, 2022).*

"Congratulations to Bonuan Buquig NHS... Teachers everywhere will be inspired by the example of this outstanding Philippines school; [its] inspirational work is lighting the way toward a better future," Accenture's Global Management Committee member Peter Lacy said. "[We are proud to collaborate with T4 Education on the award], which celebrates schools' incredible efforts to empower the next generation to harness new technologies and innovative practices that tackle the global sustainability issues that impact us all."

Lacy added: "Through this prize, we aim to recognize tools and techniques nurtured by schools, [then] share them with a broad audience, enabling others to replicate their work and multiply the impact at speed and scale."

For T4 Education and World's Best School Prizes founder Vikas Pota: "It's time for world leaders to sit up and listen to schools like Bonuan Buquig NHS in the Philippines. Far too many children will [still] be left behind in the wake of Covid-19—unless governments take urgent action to tackle the education crisis."

Pota furthered: "As a first step, they must turn to the knowledge and experience contained within our schools, because those on the frontlines of education know better than anyone else the change we need to see."

American Express Head of Corporate Sustainability Madge Thomas commented: "I...congratulate Bonuan Buquig NHS for this fantastic achievement. We are pleased to recognize students and educators... taking action in schools to protect the environment and their futures. As we at American Express work to advance climate solutions, we are proud to support programs and partnerships like this one to help build more climate-resilient and equitable communities."

The five World's Best School Prizes, founded this year by T4 Education in ties with Accenture and American Express, are the world's most prestigious education prizes—said the organizers—as winning schools shared \$250,000 in cash awards.

The five World's Best School Prizes: for "Community Collaboration," "Environmental Action," "Innovation," "Overcoming Adversity" and "Supporting Healthy Lives," celebrate schools everywhere for the pivotal role they play in developing the next generation of learners, and for their enormous contribution to society's progress—especially in the wake of the pandemic.

Prizes were founded by T4 Education in collaboration with Accenture, American Express, Yayasan Hasanah, Templeton World Charity Foundation, and the Lemann Foundation to share the best practices of schools that are transforming lives of their students, and making a real difference to their communities.



TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____



Editorial

Earthquake drill nalimutan na

HINDI pa nakakabangon ang Abra sa magnitude 7.0 lindol na tumama noong Hulyo 2022, tinamaan muli ng 6.4 na lindol noong Martes ng gabi na ikinamatay ng 10 katao. Sa lindol noong Hulyo na tumama sa Tayum, 11 ang namatay at higit 600 ang nasugatan.

Ngayon ay 11 katao na ang naiulat na namatay batay sa report ng Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (PDRRMO).

Ayon sa tala ng Abra-PDRRMO, ang mga nasugatan ay nagmula sa mga bayan ng Lagayan, San Quintin at San Juan. Karamihan sa mga namatay ay naguhuan ng mga nawasak nilang bahay. Apat na biktima ang natagpuan sa ilalim ng nagibang bahay.

Ayon sa Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs), ang sentro ng lindol ay naitala 7 kilometro sa hilagang silangan ng Lagayan, Abra.

Karamihan sa mga residente ay nagkaroon ng trauma kaya ayaw pang bumalik sa kaniyang bahay. Karamihan ay nagtayo ng tent sa bakuran at doon pansamantalang natutulog. Natatakot sila sa mga aftershocks.

Sa mga kuha ng CCTVs, nakita ang pagkataranta o pagpapanic ng mga residente na hindi malaman kung saan susuling o magtago. Sa halip na mag-duck, cover and hold, nagtatakbuhan sila na mas delikado sapagkat maaring mabagsakan ng mga nabasag na salamin, kahoy at mga bato o hollowblock.

Ang regular na earthquake drill ay nararapat na buhayin. Mula nang magkapandemya, ang quake drill ay hindi na ginagawa.

Mabuting maibalik ang drill lalo na sa mga school. Mahalaga ang may kahandaan sa lindol upang maiwasan ang malalagim na trahedya.



TITLE:

PAGE

DATE

Responding to the country's vulnerabilities

Being first in the world in risk among 193 countries and with 49 percent or half of our population regarding itself as "poor" are two of the greatest challenges in the country today.

The first comes from the World Risk Index 2022 where we ranked first as reported by Guillermo M. Luz who noted that the risks are from typhoons and earthquakes and natural calamities. "These risks are worsened or mitigated by societal conditions and the ability to respond quickly and provide assistance. The weaker the response infrastructure and lack of access to services such as public health and other essential services leads societies to become more susceptible to disasters."

Luz heads the Philippines Disaster



PAGBABAGO
FLORANGEL ROSARIO BRAID

Resilience Foundation which was established for the purpose of helping us cope and adapt so that we become more resilient to disasters.

The second challenge is based on the recent survey of Social Weather Stations where 49 percent considered itself as "poor."

This finding did not come as a surprise as an earlier survey had shown a mere difference of one percent at 48. It reinforced the growing acceptance by policy makers and other sectors of society that our capitalist system where resources are owned and controlled by a small percentage of oligarchs had been primarily responsible

for widening the gap between the center and the periphery. But even with this knowledge, our leaders continued to pursue the path of GDP growth as the way forward. Even Nobel laureates such as economists Joseph Stiglitz and Amartya Sen observed that the obsession with GDP and similar economic models had widened inequalities and had "failed to address the asymmetric of power and representation."

"The capitalist system could result in high costs to the environment in the form of pollution as captains of industry are moved to extremes, all for the sake of profits. We should attend more to "protection from land grabbing, protection of seeds, regulation of food commodities, and debt cancelling," they said.

There is a growing interest in the establishment of more cooperatives as they have proven to be instruments that promote social justice aside from widening ownership and control of capital by a broader sector of society. Economic models like the Mondragon cooperative in Spain and others in several parts of the world continue to inspire those in search of institutions that would narrow gaps between the rich and the poor.

Others suggest a focus on human happiness, independence, the reclaiming of the economy from the capitalist market through reciprocity and use of indigenous knowledge.

A school for the future that would reskill our human resources to be able to meet the needs of the fourth industrial revolution. This "school" would focus on creativity, problem solving, collaborative learning, innovation and lifelong learning.

Our leaders may consider expanding the mandate of EDCOM II which is intended to initiate reforms in education to a multi-sectoral forum which will carry out consultation with a wide cross-section of society and involve them in the re-structuring of our social, economic and political institutions.

We may find ourselves "chasing the wind" at one time or another. It has been the story of the country's struggle towards becoming a democracy. We should continue reminding ourselves that the way forward is by listening, sharing, cooperating, collaborating, and creating avenues for dialogue between and among our constituencies.

My email, Florangel.braid@gmail.com



Gas pain

“
Proponents applied for conversion on 26 May 2022, but an inspection by the agency showed the development started even before the application was approved.

Environmental concern groups have succeeded in obtaining an injunction from the Department of Agrarian Reform against a costly integrated liquefied natural gas project that is expected to worsen the outlook for the debt-burdened San Miguel Corp. energy unit SMC Global Power.

Complaints were also filed against SMC subsidiary Excellent Energy Resources, Inc. and Linseed Field Corp, a local subsidiary of global builder Atlantic Gulf and Pacific Company, before the Environmental Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources over the companies' violation of environmental laws.

The project involved the setting up of SMC's new LNG-fueled power plant along with an import terminal of AG&P that SMC Global Power is relying on to supply the Ilijan gas plant.

Last June, Ilijan plant owner South Premiere Power Corp., a subsidiary of SMC Global Power, ended a supply deal with the Malampaya natural gas consortium.

It leaves the plant in Batangas without a source of energy despite being committed to supplying power to Meralco under a straight-price power supply agreement.

SMC Global Power is relying on tapping banked gas from Malampaya that it acquired for \$1.2 billion, and the LNG project going on stream to feed the requirements of Ilijan.

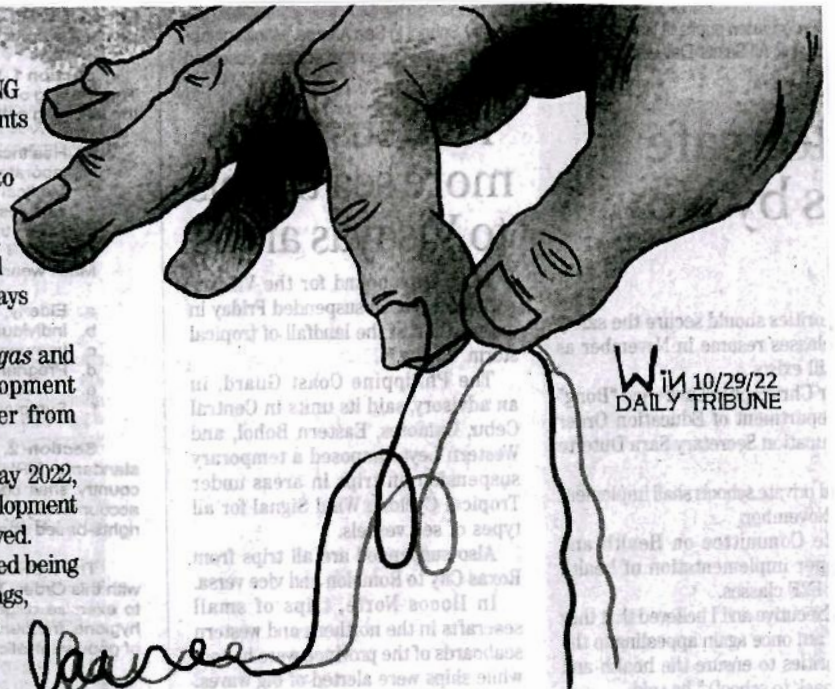
The LNG project was initially scheduled to start commercial operations last June.

DAR, however, ordered the project halted after the proponents skipped acquiring land conversion permits on landholdings in Barangays Ilijan and Dela Paz.

The *Bukluran ng Mangingisda ng Batangas* and the Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development sought and obtained a cease-and-desist order from DAR against the project.

Proponents applied for conversion on 26 May 2022, but an inspection by the agency showed the development started even before the application was approved.

“It is apparent that illegal conversion is indeed being undertaken currently in the subject landholdings, thus, there is an urgent need



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to stop the developments in the area, or else the construction will continue to the detriment of the complainants being affected in the area," the DAR said in its order.

“ Ecology organizations have also raised concerns over the gas project that is close to a biodiversity region known as the Verde Island Passage, which is the source of livelihood of Batangas’ fisherfolk.

Ecology organizations have also raised concerns over the gas project that is close to a biodiversity region known as the Verde Island Passage, which is the source of livelihood of Batangas’ fisherfolk.

AG&P-Linseed is building a liquefied natural gas import terminal facility in Batangas City, while SMC-EERI is constructing a 1.75 gigawatt LNG power plant in the same vicinity. Both projects threaten the biodiversity of the Verde Island Passage.

Another complaint before the DENR cited other violations such as the proponents’ failure to secure coconut tree-cutting permits from the Philippine Coconut Authority and DENR.

The groups said the violations warrant the cancelation of the project’s environmental compliance certificate.

SMC appeared to have acquired a penchant for muscling its way through and disregarding rules in its business dealings.



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

TITLE :

PAGE

DATE

NEW CONVENTION CENTER, SAFARI PARK PLANNED

PUERTO PRINCESA SETS GOAL: P300B IN NEW INVESTMENTS

By Alden M. Monzon
@AldenMonzonINQ

The local government of Puerto Princesa City is eyeing around P300 billion worth of new investments from its latest push to get investors to set up their businesses in the city, which include, among others, a new safari park estimated to start construction next year.

Puerto Princesa Mayor Lucilo Bayron told the Inquirer on the sidelines of the local government's investment briefing on Thursday that they have already made a rough estimate of investments that will come from local, as well as foreign investors based on initial discussions.

"The P200 billion investment, we see that coming from the environmental estate



Mayor Lucilo Bayron

alone," Bayron said, referring to the more than 1,000-hectare Sta. Lucia Environmental Estate which is being positioned to become an ecotourism park and a major environmental hub.

Planned fishport upgrade

Bayron said that there are

also plans now to upgrade the city's fishport by expanding its infrastructure, as well as the operations in the business center, which he said will result to thousands of new jobs for not just locals but people from other places in the country who wish to work there.

According to data from the local government, commercial fishery in the port contributed to 62 percent of the annual fish production of the city, reaching 19,246 metric tons of fish which is directly shipped to Metro Manila and other provinces.

"The city government of Puerto Princesa is inviting concessionaires related to fish processing, ice plant, refrigeration facilities, canneries, wholesale and retail stores as well as gear and commercial stops," the may-

or's office said in a statement.

Bayron said that the city government is currently focusing on developing the tourism and fishing sectors because of the job generation potential of these industries.

Meanwhile, Robert Yupangco, the chief executive officer of the Yupangco Holdings Corp., said that they have already made a commitment to put up a new safari park in the city.

"I was there when he first brought me to the location, and we liked it," Yupangco said, saying that the zoo-cum-theme park will be put up in Ihawig and will be called Zoo-wahig.

The executive of the investment holding company also said they intend to put up a wax museum, as well as a music camp in the city in the near future. INQ



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

Daily Tribune

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B16
PAGE

UPPER
 LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

29 OCT 2022

TITLE: _____

PAGE _____

DATE _____

Polluted creek sparks Tacloban cholera outbreak

Ecarma said bottled water in a water refilling station found inside the village was likewise tested positive of both total coliform and E.Coli

BY ELMER RECUERDO

PALO, Leyte — The Tacloban City Health Office has identified a polluted creek and a deep well that were made as the source of household water in at least three relocation sites for people displaced by typhoon Yolanda as the reason for the cholera outbreak in the city.

The outbreak has already killed four people, according to authorities.

TCHO chief Dr. Danilo Ecarma said that quality testing in Barangay 106 on raw water at the source, the processed water and on the pipes leading to households was found positive of total coliform and *Escherichia coli* or E. Coli, a bacteria found in the environment, foods and intestines of people and animals.

Ecarma said bottled water in a water refilling station found inside the village was likewise tested positive of

both total coliform and E.Coli.

“We have concluded that the problem started at the water processing plant,” Ecarma said.

The water in the village is provided by Cebu-based Mactan Rock Industries, Inc., which won in a competitive bidding last October 2018 to extend water distribution pipes to the city’s northern villages, develop new water sources, set up and repair old pumping stations, set up a new reservoir and rehabilitate the existing reservoir.

The company sources its water from the creek at the back of the housing village and a deep well in its compound to supply its water subscribers, but since it started supplying water to households in 2019, the company has been the subject of complaints by many residents due to oftentimes murky and smelly water that drops from the faucets and absence of water service during summer.

Ecarma said no sanitary permit has ever been issued to the company since it started its operation due to its failure to submit to a regular water quality testing. Despite the absence of a sanitary permit, the company continued with an unhampered operation.



No smoking in cemeteries, public reminded

BY ALVIN MURCIA
@tribunephil_alvi

Director Neomie Recio, Acting Head of MMDA Health, Public Safety and Environmental Protection Office urged the public to check other health regulations that would be in place.

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority and the Department of Health urged the public to refrain from smoking in public cemeteries and memorial parks during the All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day commemoration on 1 and 2 November.

This was announced yesterday by MMDA Acting Chairman Carlo Dimayuga III citing the existence of comprehensive smoke-free ordinances of all local government units in the National Capital Region. "All LGUs in NCR do not allow

smoking in specific public places including cemeteries, memorial parks, and columbaria," Dimayuga said.

Metro Manila LGUs have created their Smoke-Free Task Forces which ensure that smoke-free policies are followed. Violators may face a fine ranging from P500 to P5,000.

Dimayuga advised those who will visit the graves of their dearly departed loved ones to take extra precaution and observe Covid-19 minimum health protocols.

"People paying respect to their deceased loved ones may be exposed to tobacco smoke. Hence, anti-smoking policies will be strictly enforced for this year's *Undas*," he added.

Director Neomie Recio, Acting Head of MMDA Health, Public Safety and Environmental Protection Office urged the public to check other health regulations that would be in place.

"We encourage the public to comply with the guidelines on visiting cemeteries as the threat of the pandemic is still here," Recio stressed.

Health experts explained that vapes and e-cigarettes are also harmful as they contain highly toxic and addictive chemicals. Exposure to second-hand smoke as well as second-hand aerosol can harm the health of non-smokers.



UK PM demotes climate ministers, opts out of COP27 annual summit

UNITED KINGDOM Prime Minister Rishi Sunak demoted two climate ministers and decided not to attend the annual United Nations (UN) climate change summit next month, raising questions about his commitment to fight global warming.

Sunak, whose predecessor Liz Truss had planned to go to the so-called COP27 UN meeting in Egypt, won't attend "due to other pressing domestic commitments," including an economic statement planned for November 17, his office said Thursday in a statement.

Questions have been asked in the past about Sunak's commitment to tackling climate change, not least when he cut taxes on fuel and flying just days before the UK hosted last year's UN summit in Glasgow. Adding to the sense that he's downgrading the importance of climate in the government agenda, the premier also decided this week that COP26 President Alok Sharma and Climate Change Minister Graham Stuart will no longer attend Cabinet meetings. Both remain in post.

It's not unusual for a head of government to miss the UN summit. Though Truss had planned to attend COP, world leaders tend only to attend the UN conference every few years when bigger

agreements are being negotiated.

Last year's gathering in Glasgow was the biggest since one in Paris in 2015 that produced a global agreement to limit temperature rises. Truss's predecessor, Boris Johnson attended the Glasgow meeting, while then Prime Minister David Cameron went to the French capital.

Sunak's approach to climate issues has been mixed. He restored a ban on fracking this week, but told Conservative Party members over his summer leadership campaign that he'll halt efforts to bring back onshore wind.

His new Energy Secretary, Grant Shapps, previously called onshore wind turbines an "eyesore." Sunak also privately lobbied to impose a green levy on petrol and diesel when he was Chancellor, but it was rejected by then-leader Boris Johnson.

The opposition Labour Party's spokesman on climate, Ed Miliband, called Sunak's failure to attend COP27 a "massive failure of leadership," while Greenpeace UK's head of politics, Rebecca Newsom, said in a statement that Sunak's non-attendance suggests he "neither takes the climate crisis seriously enough, nor recognizes the opportunities for Britain to take a leadership role in helping to solve it." *Bloomberg News*



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

CHIT U. JUAN

Passing the baton

Recently we have been attending meetings with regional associations, particularly women entrepreneur groups and coffee sector groups. These are federations formed in ASEAN to better represent the special sectors, namely women entrepreneurs and coffee actors.



Over the last ten years, we see ourselves getting more mature and seasoned, making the entry of the second generation very vital. The older ones must give way to the younger set, ensuring sustainability of our initiatives introduced a few years ago and to be carried on by the next generation.

It is wonderful to note that in coffee, for example, we are seeing 25-year-olds stepping up to the plate to refresh and put a new spin to their parents' business. We met two young ladies, Chloe and Emily Metcalf from Melbourne, who have imbibed their father's passion for coffee and are now introducing plant-based milk alternatives that pair well with different coffee origins (source or provenance of the coffee bean). Yes, there is such a pairing suggestion, just like wine is paired with different food suggestions.

In ASEAN, we are building up the next generation of coffee players with children and relatives of the region's older coffee companies. Knowing when we should be passing the torch should be on everyone's agenda. The ASEAN region is the new frontier of coffee production as climate change has threatened the usual sources in Latin America and Africa, making ASEAN a source as a move to mitigate risk of declining coffee supply in the world.

The international coffee authorities also want to push local consumption in each ASEAN member-state, so if demand increases it may also drive local production. This is already happening in the Philippines as more new farmers take up coffee production.

The people who do not pass the baton, however, are our own farmers. The farmers of yore do not wish the same poverty and strife for their children that farming had them experience. So, early on, children of farmers are psyched out of farming and are encouraged to be OFWs, seafarers or any career, even being BPO agents, but not farming. This is why our average age of farmers remains high or old, and this is also why farms are sold to be used for purposes other than food production.

Though we have some young farmers who seem to like the romance of farming—especially in coffee—we still need to encourage more youth to get into food production. And the group we must encourage must NOT be children of farmers, but a new breed of producers, armed with technology and a mindset to save the world from hunger. What is their incentive? This is what our LGUs, NGOs and consumers must support. Or we would face food insecurity very soon.

In Vietnam, after the war, in the 70s they gave incentives for young people to go to the mountains and grow coffee. Today, 50 years after, Vietnam is the biggest Robusta coffee producer in the world. From riding bicycles, they upgraded to motorbikes and today they have many rich people who became the new rich because of coffee. One crop made all the difference.

What can we do to encourage our youth to get into farming?

Be part of the Slow Food Youth Network – it is a global group that gathers the 18-35-year-olds into productive meetings to avoid food waste, get into food production and even wise use of natural food by chefs and food activists.

The National Youth Commission and the Department of Agriculture must put their heads together for a program that would appeal to the K-12 graduates to get into agribusiness.

Every LGU must start food gardens, earth markets and bring back 4H clubs.

State universities and colleges (SUCs) can use their grounds for food production – from coffee to vegetables and fruits.

The forest reserves can be planted to coffee and cacao with the collaboration of the DENR and DA.

We must make children more conscious about food production and use their best skills in tech and digital to do something sustainable about the sector.

I salute young farmers like AGREA's Cherrie Atilano, Bohol's Dalareich Polot in cacao and in coffee we have young women farmers from Sultan Kudarat, Iloilo, Davao Sur and Benguet. Young is defined in ASEAN as 45 years and below, and a good 20 years in farming can be a good start to ensure our food security for the next generation.

When we were gathering coffee farmers for our webinar today, we found out all six of them are women! They all believe that there is a future in coffee. This is the start of hopefully a green revolution of sorts. We can start with coffee, which can be intercropped with vegetables, coconut and even cacao.

If you miss it today, the webinar will be on the FB page of the Philippine Coffee Board so other women and youth may be inspired to follow their examples. This caps our celebration of Coffee Month and hopefully more young people get into coffee farming.

Other than these women, we have also met a group in Mountain Province who have started reforestation through coffee. These are indigenous youth from the Lias tribe of Cordillera who call themselves the Barlig Youth Reforestation Project. They have also formed a Slow Food community of eco-warriors for the preservation of the forest.

I am thankful to meet these young ones who give us hope that maybe the future can be bright for coffee and food production.

Meanwhile, to whom shall we pass the baton in our own industry, in our own sector? It's time to look for these young ones who, after all, own the future.





TITLE:

PAGE

DATE

PITMASTERS FOUNDATION CONTINUES TREE PLANTING SPREE



Pitmasters Foundation Executive Director Atty. Caroline Cruz poses with members of the Bureau of Fire Protection and other volunteers before commencing with the mangrove planting activity dubbed "Unified action for a deeper engrossment of love for our natural habitat" at Barangay Cawit, Manito, Albay on 21 October 2022.

Pitmasters Foundation continues its mangrove and tree planting activities last October 21 and October 14 in Albay as part of its #PitmasterGoesGreen initiatives which aim to forward climate change mitigation efforts.

In partnership with 2D Albay and DENR Regional Office V, Pitmaster Foundation Executive Director Atty. Caroline Cruz led spearheaded a unified action for a mangrove outplanting at Barangay Cawit, Manito, Albay, last October 21.

Cruz said this set of actions aims to help "reduce shoreline erosion and preventive measure against coastal flooding, strong winds, and high waves during typhoons."

This is in addition to the 1,000 more trees planted in Legaspi City, Albay, as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility to give back to the community and take care of the environment last October 14.

The number of trees is in addition to the more than 7,000 trees that it planted across 250 hectares in Laguna last month.

"The tree planting activities are part of the foundation's efforts to extend its hand to different environmental conservation efforts to help eliminate carbon emissions. With this, we aim to help create an eco-friendly Philippines that use green technologies," Cruz said in a phone interview.

Cruz said that she hopes these kinds of activities

would mainstream climate change mitigation efforts.

"More activities like this could help raise awareness about conservation efforts which can be led by the foundation alongside partnerships with different organizations from different sectors of society," she added.

The foundation led different charity activities over the years including assisting dialysis patients and giving relief goods to calamity-stricken areas.

Last month, the foundation also organized a Climate Change forum dubbed "Disaster and Climate Emergency in the Philippines: Urgency of the 2023-2028 PBBM agenda and the Philippine contribution to achieving the global goal of net zero 2030 and 2050 targets," wherein different stakeholders from government and private entities mitigation efforts that could be implemented under the administration of President Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos, Jr.





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COMMUNICATION
AND
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SERVICE

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C23
PAGE

UPPER
 LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

29 OCT 2022

TITLE :

PAGE

DATE



BAY ISMOYO/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

ENVIRONMENTAL activists hold a rally in front of the Japanese embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia to protest against investment by G7 countries for new projects that threaten climate targets.



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
AND
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

Printed Class VIII

The Manila Times

33
PAGE

UPPER
 LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

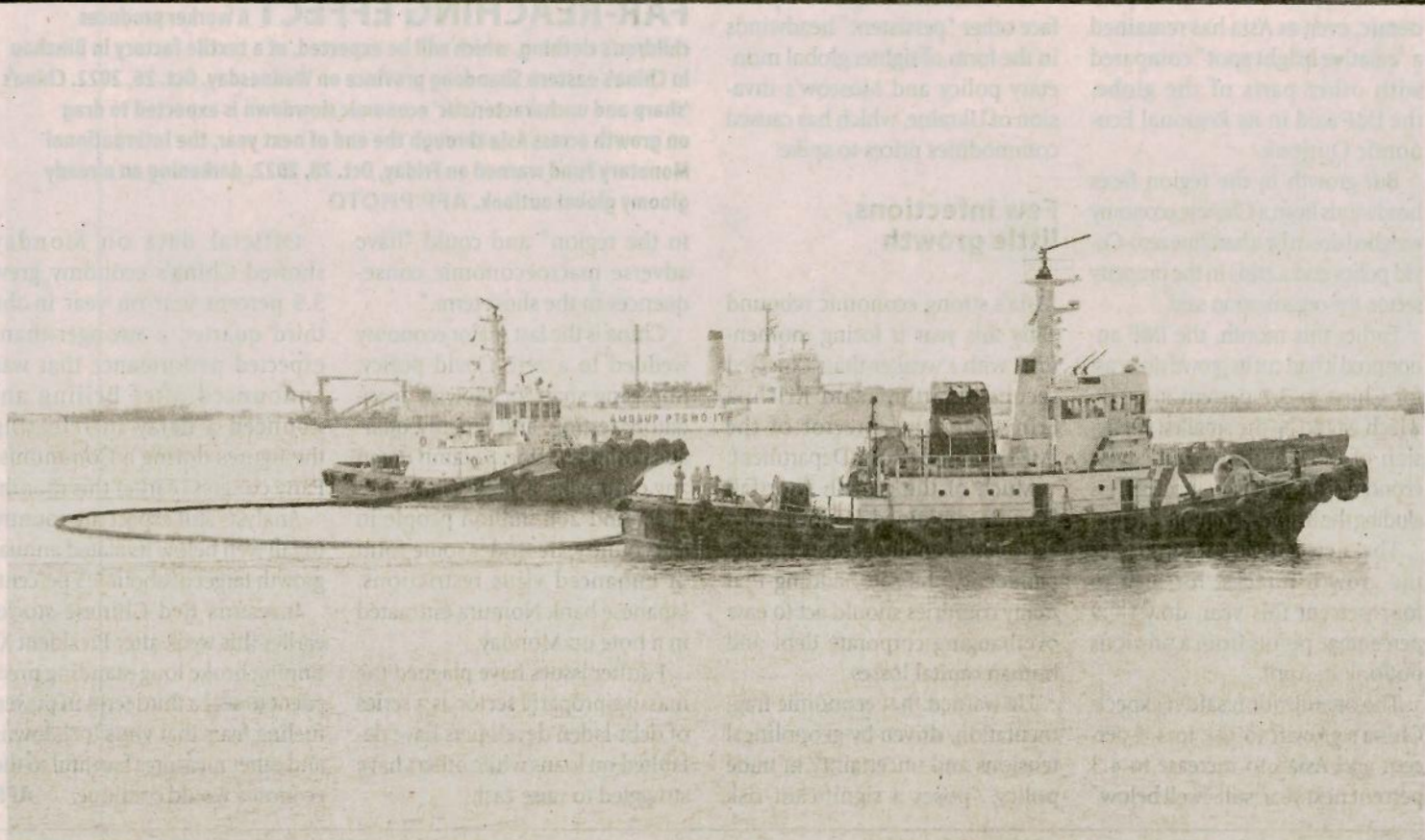
CARTOON

29 OCT 2022

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PAGE

DATE



GETTING READY Philippine Coast Guard units conduct an oil spill response off Manila Bay during the National Marine Pollution Exercises on Friday, Oct. 28, 2022, in Manila. The PCG units also conducted firefighting and search and rescue drills. PHOTO BY RENE H. DILAN