

26 September 2022, Monday



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

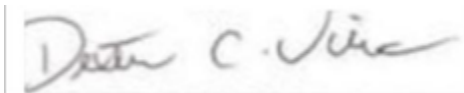
NEWS CLIPPINGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

<p>The Manila Times, p. A2 By Francis Earl Cueto</p>	<p>Probe illegal business in Masungi, PNP ordered</p>	
<p>The Manila Times, p. A9 by Roselle Aquino</p>	<p>Police visibility and patrol Masungi Georeserve intensified</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DILG Secretary Benhur Abalos, Jr. PNP Chief Gen. Rodolfo Azurin, Jr. and PRO 4-A Director BGen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. visited and conducted an inspection on September 23, 2022 at Masungi Georeserve, Tanay, Rizal • Azurin also ordered the probe into the alleged harassment and assault of one of Masungi Georeserve's caretakers.
<p>Daily Tribune, p. 8 By Paula Antolin</p>	<p>DENR turns over boats for cleanups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barangay representatives from the city governments of Caloocan, Las Piñas, Makati, Manila, Navotas, Parañaque, Pasig, Quezon, Taguig and Valenzuela have received paddle boats from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for use during cleanups and emergencies. • The boats were turned over by DENR National Capital Region in line with the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program. They are to be used primarily in cleaning creeks and rivers in the metro.
<p>Manila Bulletin, p. 6 Opinion By John Tria</p>	<p>Why responsible mining needed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First point is the economic benefit. 2021 data from the Mines and Geo-Sciences shows that the minerals sector employs 183,852 individuals (a number expected to

		<p>rise this year) , with total exports last year amounting to \$6.27 billion, or about 8.2 percent of total exports, remitting ₱39 billion in taxes and royalties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The second point is that the Constitution, particularly Article 12 on national economy and patrimony states that minerals are owned by the State and must be extracted under its supervision for our benefit.
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Submitted by:



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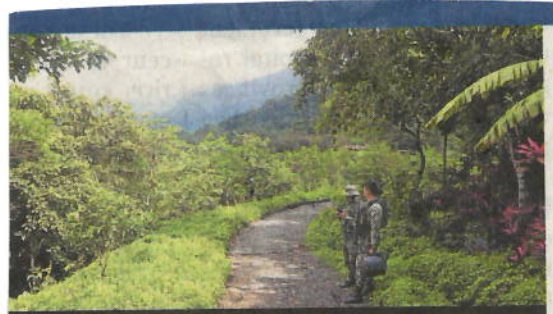
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NEWS

Terms on protected sites under review

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) plans to review all agreements on conservation areas nationwide, including one protecting the Masungi Georeserve. The agency will also check the finances of the foundation that is looking after the site. The foundation is wary of the review's timing but a DENR official said the initiative is not meant to single out anyone. —STORY BY DEMPSEY REYES

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DENR to review agreements on protected sites, Masungi 'income'

By Dempsey Reyes
@dempseyreyesINQ

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Saturday said it will review all agreements on conservation areas nationwide, including the agency's Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on the protection of the Masungi Georeserve.

Environment Undersecretary Jonas Leones said his agency will also look into the finances of the Masungi Georeserve Foundation, which is looking after the site.

But the lawyer clarified as well that the review was not meant to single out the foundation, which questioned its timing.

Leones is the DENR official tackling this matter as Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo Loyzaga is out of the country.

Last week she attended the four-day Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Brisbane, Australia, according to the DENR's website.

'Fees, financial support'

After the foundation reported last week the presence of armed men in the site, police confiscated their firearms but stopped short of arresting them.

This was followed by the visit last Friday of Interior Secretary Benhur Abalos and Phil-

ippine National Police chief Gen. Rodolfo Azurin Jr. to help secure Masungi.

Leones, who joined that visit together with other DENR officials, said his agency will also review all agreements on protected sites in connection with the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (Nipas) Act of 2018 (Republic Act No. 11038).

The foundation cited that law as well as a number of proclamations by the father and namesake of President Marcos as the basis for Masungi's designation as a conservation site titled to the Republic of the Philippines.

As it reviews the foundation's 2017 agreement with then Environment Secretary Gina Lopez, the DENR will also look into the foundation's "income" from "fees" collected from visits to the site and from the "financial support" of international groups, Leones said.

"We need to take into account those," he said, adding that the funding should be taxed "so our government can use [the taxes] for other public services."

"We are doing this not because we want to suppress or single out [the foundation]. This is for us to improve [the agreement] so they can better implement their duties," he said.

'No compensation'

But according to the agreement which Leones himself

provided, even as the DENR is the designated administrator of the site, it is the foundation that "shall plan, finance, implement and manage" that "project area"—Masungi's original area of 430 hectares plus the surrounding 2,700 ha of forestland.

The agreement provides further that the "project income shall be plowed back for the sustainable conservation of the project area"—adding that "There shall be no compensation for any of the work to be performed by [the foundation]."

"The project area shall be constituted as a perpetual land trust for conservation," the agreement states.

Foundation trustee Billie Dumaliang said, in response to Leones' remarks, that if transparency is the supposed concern prompting the planned inquiry, it is already addressed in the agreement itself.

"Transparency is already in the current MOA, but they [the DENR] never convened the oversight committee or assigned a dedicated project manager as provided in the terms," said Dumaliang, a witness signatory.

"That's what we have been asking them to do so that we can implement [the agreement] faithfully and resolve any concerns jointly," she added.

She said the DENR should instead review and cancel what she called the



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DENR TO REVIEW AGREEMENTS ON PROTECTED SITES

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the mineral production sharing agreements (MPSAs) which already encroach on more than 1,000 ha of Masungi's protected areas.

The agreement, in that re-

gard, stated that the "DENR shall be responsible for the immediate cancellation of tenurial instruments with violations or [which were] fraudulently issued, [in] coordination with the Office of the Solicitor General...[and] ejection of illegal occupants at the project site."

"These MPSAs are patently against the law and public welfare," Dumaliang said. "We believe the quarrying interest here is one of the key reasons some politicians want our MOA canceled and modified. Isn't it the height of irony?" —WITH A

REPORT FROM JULIE M. AURELIO INQ



Probe Masungi entries, Abalos directs PNP

So to all those who will try to build businesses and other illegal structures within Masungi, I am warning you. Stop it because our law forbids it

BY PAULA ANTOLIN
@tribunephil_phau

Interior Secretary Benhur Abalos Jr. on Sunday directed the Philippine National Police to investigate reports that illegal businesses owned by active and retired police officers and local government officials have encroached at the Masungi Georeserve Park.

Following his visit to the protected area in Tanay, Rizal, Abalos stressed that elected officials and members of the uniformed services should lead by example in protecting the environment.

Abalos' statement came as members of the Sinagtala Security Agency left Masungi after their presence became the subject of the Masungi

Georeserve Foundation or MGF.

"We will not allow a few people to steal it. So to all those who will try to build businesses and other illegal structures within Masungi, I am warning you. Stop it because our law forbids it," Abalos said.

The MGF has a memorandum of agreement with the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources for the former to help oversee that the area is preserved as a protected reservation.

Abalos made the statement over reports that said officials

have erected resorts and other commercial establishments at Masungi.

He said that the 2,700 hectares of forest land at Masungi should be safeguarded from land grabbers and those who establish businesses there.

Abalos added the area is protected by Proclamation 296-2011 which declared the Marikina Watershed Reservation, situated in Antipolo City, and the towns of Baras, Rodriguez, San Mateo and Tanay as "protected area."



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Probe ordered on illegal businesses at Masungi

By RALPH EDWIN VILLANUEVA

The Philippine National Police (PNP) has been ordered to investigate illegal business establishments at the Masungi Georeserve in Rizal province allegedly owned by active and retired police officers and local officials.

The order was issued by Interior and Local Government Secretary Benhur Abalos following an attempt last week by a group of armed men to invade Masungi, which has

been classified as a "protected area."

"Elected government officials and police officers are bound by their mandate to protect the environment. They should set a good example to our fellow citizens and be part of the solution, not the other way around. We should protect Masungi and not destroy it," Abalos said yesterday.

Administrators of the Masungi Georeserve said the armed men camped out for a week along the Marikina-Infanta Highway portion of the conservation site. They said the men left the area only on Friday.

"Those who are aiming to put up businesses and some illegal structures inside Masungi, I am warning you to stop it since this is not allowed under the law," Abalos said.

The PNP was also ordered to establish a permanent encampment in the area to prevent people claiming to have title to the property from entering Masungi.

"We have to protect Masungi and the people working and looking after it. They are doing their job and we have to do our part to ensure this," Abalos said.



Probe illegal businesses in Masungi, PNP ordered

FOLLOWING his visit to the Masungi Georeserve Protected Area in Baras, Rizal province, Interior and Local Government Secretary Benjamin "Benhur" Abalos Jr. on Sunday directed the Philippine National Police (PNP) to investigate illegal business enterprises within the conservation site allegedly owned by active and retired police officers and local officials.

"Elected officials of the government and police officers are bound by their mandate to protect the environment. They should lead a good example to our fellow citizens and be part of the solution, not the other way around. We should protect Masungi and not destroy it," Abalos said.

"We are here not to serve our interests and gain profits. We are here to serve the people," he added.

The directive came after receiving reports that active and retired officers of the PNP and local government officials had allegedly erected resorts and commercial establishments at the conservation site.

Abalos said he expects the PNP to dig deeper into these allegations and exercise due process in identifying the illegal business establishments built within the protected area.

"We will not allow this to be owned by a handful of people. So, everyone who would try to erect buildings or conduct business and illegal structures in Masungi, we are warning you: stop whatever it is you are doing because it is against the law," he said.

He added that the 2,700 hect-

ares of forest land should be safeguarded from claimants and illegal business people since the site is a protected area under Proclamation 296, s. 2011.

He also referred to Section 16 of the 1987 Constitution, declaring that "the State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature."

Abalos said all government entities must follow the directive of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to protect and preserve the environment against those who seek to exploit and destroy it, especially in the face of global climate change.

He vowed to maintain peace and order in the conservation site. He already sent a letter to the security agency and warned them of possible license revocation if they cross the bounds of law in the protected area.

Abalos directed the PNP to establish a permanent encampment in the protected area to prevent infiltration of so-called claimants and the protection of the people working in Masungi, who have reportedly received threats.

The Masungi Georeserve Foundation released a statement thanking the DILG Secretary and PNP chief Gen. Rodolfo Azurin Jr. for being "champions" who are "firmly on the side of environmental protection and the safety of its defenders."

"We will continue to advocate for peace and order and the utmost security of our citizenry," Abalos said.

FRANCIS EARL CUETO



Probe ordered on illegal resorts, businesses inside Masungi

BY VICTOR REYES

INTERIOR Secretary Benjamin "Benhur" Abalos Jr yesterday ordered the PNP to probe illegal business enterprises operating inside the Masungi Georeserve in Rizal, which he said are allegedly owned by local government officials and retired or active police officers.

Abalos issued the order two days after he and PNP chief Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Azurin Jr. visited the protected area to ensure peace and order

amid statements made by the management of Masungi that 30 armed security guards have been encamped outside the preservation site for weeks now.

Masungi have said that the men were supposedly preparing to take over portions of the area.

Abalos said he has gotten reports that the illegal businesses, such as resorts and other commercial establishments, operating inside

the Masungi are owned by retired and active police officers and local government officials.

"Elected officials of the government and police officers are bound by their mandate to protect the environment. They should lead a good example to our fellow citizens and be part of the solution, not the other way around. We should be the ones protecting Masungi and should not be the ones destroying it," said Abalos.

"We are here not to serve our interests and gain profits. We are here to serve the people," Abalos also said.

Abalos said he expects the PNP to dig deeper into the allegations against the active and retired policemen and local government officials and exercise due process in identifying the illegal establishments.

Abalos said the 2,700 hectares of forest land in Masugi should be safeguarded from land claimants and businessmen as the site is classified as a protected area under Proclamation 296 issued in 2011 by the late President Corazon Aquino.



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He also cited section 16 of the 1987 Constitution that says "the State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature."

Abalos also noted President Marcos Jr's statement urging all government entities to protect and preserve the environment against those who will exploit and destroy it.

Abalos had earlier ordered the PNP to establish a permanent encampment in the protected area to prevent infiltration by the so-called claimants.

"We have to protect Masungi and the people in charge of it. They are doing an absolutely good job, thus we will do everything to accomplish this," he said.

"That's why I am warning people planning to establish businesses and other structures inside Masungi: You should stop because that's against our law," he added.



Regions in briefs

POLICE VISIBILITY AND PATROL AT MASUNGI GEORESERVE INTENSIFIED

CALAMBA, Laguna: Interior and Local Government Secretary Benjamin "Benhur" Abalos Jr., PNP chief Gen. Rodolfo Azurin Jr., and PRO 4-A Regional Director BGen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. visited and conducted an inspection on Sept. 23, 2022, at the Masungi Georeserve in Tanay, Rizal. The brewing issue of the Masungi land dispute is creating conflict between the land caretakers and security agency personnel, which prompted the appropriate intervention of the PNP. Nartatez has previously released a statement to restore the sense of normalcy in Masungi Georeserve amid the reported presence of security armed personnel in the protected area. "Teams from Rizal Provincial Mobile Force Company, Baras and Tanay PNP were deployed to conduct 24-hour patrol and visibility to ensure peace and order in Masungi," Nartatez said. "An investigation is also underway to identify possible violations of the group responsible for the alleged deployment of the armed men. What we are advocating for is to avoid any tension or violence from arising," said Azurin. Azurin also ordered the probe into the alleged harassment and assault of one of Masungi Georeserve's caretakers. "Our security is tight. We are also constantly coordinating with the DENR and local government units. The PNP will continue to implement a sustained police presence at the Masungi Georeserve in Tanay, Rizal," he added. **ROSELLE AQUINO**



Azurin to Rizal police: Don't allow

any intrusion in Masungi

He added that the RCSU 4-A conducted the inspection under Republic Act 5487 or the Act to Regulate the Organization and Operation of Private Detectives, Watchmen or Security Guard Agencies.

Baccay said they found out that the confiscated firearms were found to be covered with papers which will expire on November 18, 2024, hence, no arrests were made since there was no violation of any penal law.

However, the RCSU 4-A discovered that the juridical license to own and possess firearms of the SSSI already expired last January 30. The unit also found out that the License to Exercise Security Profession (LESP) of one of the security guards questioned had already expired, nine has no records with the RCSU 4-A while one has identical name on the RCSU file.

The findings prompted the RCSU 4-A to conduct administrative proceedings against the SSSI to determine its liabilities under RA 5487 and other PNP rules and regulations.

"As to the possible crim-

inal aspect of the issue, this Office is continuously conducting an investigation to determine the possible liabilities of the owners, president, managers, directors or other responsible officers of Sinagtala being a juridical entity under Section 30 of Republic Act 10591 or the Comprehensive Firearms and Ammunition Regulations Act of 2013," Col. Baccay said.

Under the law, administrative sanctions may be imposed on licensed security guards who, during inspection will be found to be not having in their possession their License to Exercise Profession, their Duty Detail Order and/or Firearms License when carrying guns.

The offense carries a penalty of one-month and one-day to six-months suspension or a fine ranging from a minimum P500 to a maximum of P1,000.

Last September 21, a group of protesters rallied along the Marilique Highway in Barangay Pinugay in Baras municipality. The rallyists peacefully dispersed however.

Last Friday, Depart-

ment of Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Benjamin "Benhur" C. Abalos Jr., Gen. Azurin, Brig. Gen. Nartatez and Col. Baccay conducted an on-site inspection of the protected areas and assured local residents and officials of the Masungi Georeserve of their commitment to ensure the safety and security of all while going all-out to protect the environment.

Col. Baccay ordered the Rizal PMPC and the Baras and Tanay MPS to deploy four teams that will conduct round-the-clock patrol in the protected areas.

Officials of the Masungi Georeserve have lauded the move of Sec. Abalos and Gen. Azurin. They also said that "invaders left the area" after the top officials visited the vast forest reserve last Friday.

"Today, our forests won, like a long drought welcoming its first drops of rain. We found champions in DILG Sec. Benhur Abalos and PNP Chief Police General Rodolfo Azurin Jr. who have demonstrated that they are firmly on the side of environment protection and the safety of its defenders.

Majority of the invaders were no longer around before the Secretary/s party came on-site," the Masungi Georeserve said in a statement.

Prior to that, at least 14 security personnel from the SSSI voluntarily left their place before Sec. Abalos and Gen. Azurin and his men inspected the roadside area said to have been illegally occupied by armed men along Kilometer 48 of the Marikina-Infanta Highway in Rizal.

Sec. Abalos and the PNP team led by Gen. Azurin were also joined by officials from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources led by Undersecretary Jonas Leones during the site visit.

Gen. Azurin promptly ordered his men to keep all areas of Masungi free of illegal occupants and declared that unauthorized security forces won't be allowed to enter the place especially those being claimed by different parties, without permit from the PNP.

He said that violators of his order would lose their licenses.



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DENR turns over boats for cleanups

Barangay representatives from the city governments of Caloocan, Las Piñas, Makati, Manila, Navotas, Parañaque, Pasig, Quezon, Taguig and Valenzuela have received paddle boats from the Department of Environment

and Natural Resources for use during cleanups and emergencies.

The boats were turned over by DENR National Capital Region in line with the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program. They are to be used primarily in cleaning

creeks and rivers in the metro.

Jacqueline Caangan of the DENR led the transfer of the paddle boats at the BMB Amphitheater, Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center in Diliman, Quezon City.

A total of 20 barangays or

five barangays each for the four administrative areas under the DENR Metropolitan Environmental Offices will receive the boats. The initial turnover consisted of five boats.

PAULA ANTOLIN



Manila continues to implement measures for 'greener' city

The Manila city government is implementing measures to keep the city "green," Mayor Honey Lacuna said on Friday.

Lacuna said the local government has been rehabilitating parks and building new ones since the term of her predecessor, former mayor Isko Moreno.

"Mas greener ngayon ang Manila. Ang dami nang nilalagay na pockets of parks in the city," she said.

Lacuna cited Moreno's projects, including the rehabilitation of Arroceros Park and Mehan Garden.

Last June, the city government opened the new Yuchengco Park in Escolta, on the banks of the Pasig River and beside the Escolta station of the Pasig River ferry service.

Lacuna said the local government has installed a device to gauge air quality at the Mehan Garden.

She also said the Department of Public Services has formed three groups to clean the city's shores and waterways.

According to Lacuna, *estero* rangers will unclog silt from drainage and other waterways while the team "Mandaragat" will clean up Manila Bay. The "Baseco beach warriors" will collect garbage along Manila Bay.

The mayor has issued an executive order instructing city hall employees to clean up their offices every Friday.

— Ghio Ong



Gov't wants more stakeholders on global mining transparency

The government targets to boost stakeholders participation in the global initiative on extractives transparency as the administration ramps up the potential of the mining sector.

This comes after the Philippine Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (PH-EITI) convened its first multi-stakeholder group (MSG) meeting under the Marcos administration.

It was early this month when the government re-engaged with the EITI, which prescribes a standard for transparency and accountability in the mining, oil and gas industries.

The MSG – the body that governs EITI implementation in the country – is chaired by the Department of Finance (DOF) and composed of representatives from government, industry and civil society.

During the meeting, the MSG agreed to strengthen spaces for multi-stakeholder participation and advocate for more room along the extractive industry value chain to improve resource governance.

The group also agreed to include an MSG report on the status of civic engagement in the annual country report.

The MSG also agreed to plan the production of the 2021 PH-EITI country report, the 2022 national conference, and the visit of EITI chair and former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark to the Philippines in November.

The Philippines has been implementing the

EITI since 2013. In 2016, the EITI recognized the country for its impactful implementation.

Extractive companies in implementing-countries are engaged to publicly disclose data on taxes, royalties and other payments they make to the government and their host-communities.

Annual disclosure of contracts, financial, economic, social and environmental data is also mandatory for extractive industries.

To date, the PH-EITI has produced seven country reports, covering data from mining, oil, gas, and coal industries and reconciling over P362.5 billion in government revenues from extractive projects from 2012 to 2019.

In 2017, the Philippines was recognized by the EITI as the first among over 50 countries globally to have fully complied with the 2016 EITI standard.

The Marcos administration is moving to ramp up the mining industry in the Philippines as part of its plan to grow the economy amid the pandemic.

Mining has been contributing less than one percent to the country's gross domestic product. The Duterte administration has been generally cold to the sector.

It was only toward the end-2021 when former president Rodrigo Duterte gave a much needed boost in revenue generation for the industry with the lifting of a four-year old ban on open pit mining.

– Louise Maureen Simeon



Why responsible mining is needed

An old friend once said – for as long as we build concrete houses, there will always be mining. What he said is true. Imagine a world without mines. There would be no cement, no metal products, no cellphone or laptop, since all are made with raw materials such as iron and limestone taken from mines. Mining is thus a very old occupation, without which human progress would have been much weaker. Two important things are worth noting about mining.

First point is the economic benefit. I have written previously that the economic contribution of mining is nothing to sneeze at. 2021 data from the Mines and Geo-Sciences shows that the minerals sector employs 183,852

individuals (a number expected to rise this year), with total exports last year amounting to \$6.27 billion, or about 8.2 percent of total exports, remitting ₱39 billion in taxes and royalties.

This, however, only covers direct income and employment from mining companies. We can estimate much more from the indirect enterprises, and even more from the downstream industries making steel, roofing materials and other derivative products. Mines also provide resources for local companies such as cement, gravel and sand, for example, spurring local economic activity.

The second point is that the Constitution, particularly Article 12 on national economy and patrimony states that minerals are owned by

the State and must be extracted under its supervision for our benefit.

Furthermore, the constitution also says that the State is to promote competitive industries making use of our natural resources. With this, minerals are utilized under the State's full supervision through the Mines and Geo-Sciences Bureau and other agencies can engage contractors via a mineral agreement. Such agreements often come in the form of Mineral Production Sharing Agreements under Republic Act 7942 or the Mining Act of 1995, or a Small Scale Mining Permit under Republic Act 7076 or the



#MINDANAO

JOHN TRIAS

Peoples Small Scale Mining Act of 1991.

With these two points, the agreements made by the government with mining companies are contracts for projects which must be technically and financially feasible. This means being able to bring the necessary revenues to the government and social development benefits for local communities in accordance with Mining Laws, and being compliant with environmental laws. The mining project, with the business and tax revenues it generates and the local employment it engages spurs local economic growth and social development for many far flung communities.

Recognizing the State, or in our context as a democratic republic, our ownership of mineral resources, the concept of responsible mining is clearer, since it is not merely about being a socially responsible company for the sake of image, but because such resources need to be harnessed properly for the benefit

of all. This is enshrined in the constitution itself.

Such efforts, therefore, must be done with the right environmental and social safeguards for local communities during and after the productive life of the mine, in accordance with Mining Laws. You may want to read up on them to know more about these programs. The MGBs role is to audit the performance of these mines over time against such standards.

Minerals are thus, God's natural gifts for which we are meant to be responsible stewards. With the country needing to maximize exports, earn foreign exchange, and pay our debt in the post pandemic economy, the need for responsible mining which will bring in this income, is thus emphasized. Likewise, it's potential to create more opportunities through downstream industries, and creating locally- manufactured goods will enable us to be resilient in the new normal.



Countries trapped in climate crisis raise alarm at UN

UNITED NATIONS- Countries on the front lines of the climate crisis are fed up.

During the annual gathering of world leaders at the United Nations this week, low-lying island nation Vanuatu stepped up a fight to get the world to focus on combating global warming by calling for a fossil fuel nonproliferation treaty.

"The time is up - action is required now," Vanuatu's President Nikenike-Vurobaravu told the UN General Assembly on Friday.

The treaty would aim to scale down coal, oil and gas production to limit the rise in temperatures to the globally agreed 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit).

It would also "enable a global just transition for every worker, community and nation with fossil fuel dependence," said the leader of the carbon-negative country.

A UN climate science panel - the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) - has warned that global emissions are on track to blow

past the 1.5 degrees C warming limit and reach some 3.2 degrees C by the end of century.

Vanuatu has also asked the International Court of Justice to issue an opinion on the right to be protected from the adverse impacts of climate change, a move that Vurobaravu said "is not a silver bullet for increasing climate action, but only one tool to get us closer to the end goal of a safe planet for humanity."

In Pakistan, devastating floods this month engulfed large swaths of the country, killing more than 1,500 people and causing damage estimated at \$30 billion. Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif asked world leaders why his people were paying the price of global warming.

"Pakistan has never seen a more stark and devastating example of the impact of global warming. Life in Pakistan has changed forever," Sharif told the General Assembly. "Nature has unleashed her fury on Pakistan, without looking ... at our carbon footprint."

Around the world on Friday young

activists rallied for climate action, staging protests from New Zealand and Japan to Germany and the streets of New York to demand rich countries pay for global warming damage to the poor.

The protests take place six weeks before this year's UN climate summit, known as COP27, where vulnerable countries plan to push for compensation for climate-related destruction to homes, infrastructure and livelihoods.

"We renew our call to the world to declare total war on this century's greatest challenge: the climate change monster. And yet, after all these years, the world has failed to break our addiction to fossil fuels," Marshall Islands President David Kabua told the UN General Assembly on Tuesday.

Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said the least responsible for climate change are suffering the most.

"The Philippines is a net carbon sink, absorbing more carbon dioxide than we emit. And yet, we are the fourth most vulnerable country to climate change," he told the UN gathering. - Reuters



PBBM: US firms upbeat, eyeing investments in PHL

By SAMUEL P. MEDENILLA

[@sam_medenilla](#)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand "Bong-bong" R. Marcos, Jr. said several companies from the United States are now considering establishing a presence in the country due to their "optimism" on its economic growth.

Marcos made the announcements after arriving at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Sunday morning from his six-day trip in the US last week.

During the visit, he held four

roundtable discussions with American businesses in a bid to bring in more investments into the country, particularly in the sectors of information technology-business process management, digital infrastructure, garments and apparel, as well as industry and infrastructure.

"I was joined by the economic managers and other Cabinet members in brainstorming with these US companies, some already present and others intending to be in the Philippines," Marcos said in his arrival speech.

"We identified the opportunities and challenges to achieving our common objectives of growth and development in various areas," he added.

Investment footprint

AMONG the companies which met with Marcos are Boeing, NuScale Power, WasteFuel, Cargill, Procter & Gamble, and Sutherland Global Services.

The President also met with the US-Association of Southeast Asian Nation Business Council and the US Chamber of Commerce.

Some of the companies gave "candid and constructive comments," which Marcos said his administration will address and will hopefully translate to business agreements.

Among the issues raised by businesses are documentation, regulatory environment, and delays in the bureaucracy. "There will be, I believe, good news to share in the next few months, particularly in terms of their plans to expand and further broaden their investment footprint in our country," Marcos said.

SEE "PBBM," A2



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As of press time, Malacañang has yet to disclose the amount of new investments, which resulted for the President's trip to the US.

Stronger UN presence

ASIDE from business opportunities, Marcos also reported on diplomatic initiatives in the US, particularly his speech at the 77th session of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, during his visit in the US from September 18 to 24.

In his UN address, he raised "global issues that require a united global action," such as climate change, rising food prices, rapid technological change, the peaceful resolution of international disputes, the need to protect the vulnerable sectors of our society such as migrants, and ending all forms of prejudice.

He said he also met with UN Sec-

retary-General Antonio Guterres to express the country's intent of "strengthening" its role in the UN.

"I expressed interest in enhancing our role in UN peacekeeping operations, especially in the areas such as the Middle East where we have a large concentration of OFWs," Marcos said.

The President earlier disclosed the country's bid to secure a seat in the UN Security Council.

He said he also invited Guterres to personally visit the country in the near future.

International position

MARCOS also discussed his formal and informal bilateral meetings with the US and Japan and other key partners to tackle the country's priority issues on food and energy security, and climate change,

"Our discussions were very pro-

ductive, and the members of the Cabinet will now work to operationalize the many areas of cooperation that we identified," Marcos said.

Last Saturday, the President also spoke before the Asia Society Headquarters in New York, where he reiterated the country's position of treating the US as one of its closest allies particularly for its defense and armed forces modernization.

On the issue of the country's territorial dispute with China in the West Philippine Sea, he stressed it should be addressed through diplomacy.

He also pushed for the peaceful resolution of the tensions in the Taiwan Strait, Korean Peninsula as well as Ukraine.

The visit to the US was Marcos's third foreign trip after Indonesia and Singapore since assuming the Presidency.



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Climate change and the heart agenda



Atty. Jose Ferdinand M. Rojas II

RISING SUN

A FEW days ago, news about the fast rise—three times faster than the global average—of our sea level circulated around the media channels. Pagasa made this declaration, adding that coastal villages are at risk. Everyone has known for a long time that climate change is happening, and yet we are still somewhat shocked when faced with information like this. It is what we should expect, actually, based on data from scientific research and studies. And that is why the approach to climate change is two-pronged: adaptation and mitigation. We prepare for disasters as we continue our efforts to mitigate the destructive effects of climate change.

How many COPs (Conference of the Parties) have there been? What are the gains made by each country, and specifically, our very own Philippines? On the climate front, what were the accomplishments of the Duterte administration, and presently, what is President Marcos' plan as far as disaster preparedness and climate mitigation are concerned? I know that recently, there was a coastal cleanup held at Manila Bay in celebration of International Coastal Cleanup Day.

Shouldn't we be doing (a lot) more than cleaning up our coastlines? The next super typhoon may be around the corner, but are we—government and individuals—doing all that we can to protect lives in the face of impending climate-related disasters? If you visit the online spaces of climate agencies, you would notice that there are too many pictures of people posing at meetings and conferences and too few proofs of the actual action implementing the agreements in



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I was listening to a few talks at the Heart Mind Institute Summit held online very recently and one of the speakers, a young Filipina working in the climate change field, mentioned that human transformation is the lacking ingredient. There is really no shortage in strategies and policies—the problem, she said, is that these are not properly implemented mainly because of our limitations as human beings. The change needs to start from the heart. I believe that she is right.

those meetings and conferences. As citizens of the world, we should be alarmed at this picture.

I was listening to a few talks at the Heart Mind Institute Summit held online very recently and one of the speakers, a young Filipina working in the climate change field, mentioned that human transformation is the lacking ingredient. There is really no shortage in strategies and policies—the problem, she said, is that these are not properly implemented mainly because of our limitations as human beings. The change needs to start from the heart. I believe that she is right.

Based on Pagasa's projections, the Philippines' temperature will increase by 4 degrees by the end of the 21st century, while the intensity of typhoons hitting the country will likewise continue to increase. Rosalina de Guzman, chief of Pagasa's climate data section, said that climate change mitigation should be "fully integrated into the planning process" of the government, including earmarking adequate funds to be able to address the impact of climate change and to build resilience among communities in low-lying and coastal areas. On the other hand, the public's role includes undertaking more serious and more meaningful efforts to "practice energy efficiency" and recycling, conserving water, and using mass transport, among others.

Knowing people's all-too-human behavior, we will not act until we are already struggling and our lives are in immediate danger. Faced with facts and warnings from scientists and experts, we continue to live our lives as if everything is fine and will be fine in the years to come. It isn't an issue any more of causing unnecessary panic, it is all about looking at hard facts and really doing concrete action to save our planet and ourselves.



What I saw as the country's first national climate adviser

By GINA McCARTHY

The New York Times

Last week, as the world's leaders gathered in New York for the UN General Assembly, the United States will deliver a message many thought was not possible: We are going to cut greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030, and zero them out by 2050.

Over the past 20 months as America's first-ever national climate adviser, I have witnessed a paradigm shift: The private sector no longer sees climate action as a source of job losses, but rather as an opportunity for job creation and economic revitalization.

It's a striking shift after four years of the Trump administration, which threw science out the window and backed out of the Paris climate agreement. In 2020 the future seemed grim. But today, states and companies are running toward a clean energy future. How did what was once considered impossible become not just feasible, but at the core of America's manufacturing and economic resurgence?

In my early days as administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency under president Barack Obama, auto dealers were predicting that shifting to cleaner cars meant vehicle costs would skyrocket and sales would drop, while the autoworkers and steelworkers talked about plant closings and layoffs. Even very early on in the Biden administration, when labor was fully engaged and

squarely at the table, the old paradigm that cleaner standards meant job loss was hard to break. And unions worried that a big shift to electric vehicles could pose a fundamental threat to their workers.

But quickly the conversation shifted to one of long-term capital investments in EV technologies, expanding domestic manufacturing, adding more union jobs and building an EV market that would reach 50 percent of new US car sales by 2030. Just a short time ago this shift would have been dismissed as a fairy tale. Not anymore.

What helped change the conversation were the voices of young leaders as the effects of climate change worsened. Severe wildfires are burning down homes, floods are sweeping through wide areas and extreme heat is threatening lives and livelihoods, especially for low-income communities.

Public and private investments in research and development have also fueled the growth of clean technologies, driving down the costs and attracting industry. Since 2010, the cost of solar energy has decreased by 85 percent, wind energy by 59 percent onshore and 71 percent offshore, and lithium-ion batteries by 89 percent. It's projected that by 2030, over 120,000 wind turbines will provide clean energy to America's homes, businesses and communities and nearly a billion solar panels will be operating here.

(To be continued)



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THE EXPONENT OF THE PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
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Heed UN Secretary-General's call to address most urgent global concerns

“Our world is in peril and paralyzed. We are gridlocked in colossal global dysfunction. The United Nations charter and the ideals it represents are in jeopardy and we have a duty to act. We cannot go on like this.”

Thus spoke UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres as he addressed the opening of the 77th UN General Assembly that has adopted the theme — “A watershed moment: transformative solutions to interlocking challenges.”

The protracted Russia-Ukraine conflict has embroiled Europe with its first major military conflict since World War II, with far-reaching consequences to the rest of the world. Commodity prices continue to soar. Countries like the Philippines that are net importers of energy and food products are threatened by major supply disruptions.

Secretary-General Guterres has flagged the seriousness of the current global fertilizer market crunch that, if not stabilized immediately, could trigger an even larger and more serious global food supply crisis. He said it is essential to remove obstacles to the export of Russian fertilizers and their ingredients, including ammonia. High gas prices also affect the production of nitrogen fertilizers and must also be addressed immediately.

Climate change is another high-priority concern. According to the latest assessment made by the World Meteorological Organization, there's a 50:50 chance of global temperature temporarily reaching the 1.5 degree centigrade threshold that was set in the 2015 Paris Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Agreement on Climate Change in the next five years. The annual mean global near-surface temperature

for each year between 2022 and 2026 is predicted to be between 1.1 and 1.7 degrees centigrade higher than preindustrial levels.

Secretary-General Guterres has deplored that “climate action is being put on the back burner — despite overwhelming public support around the world.” Meantime, Pakistan was severely flooded; mega-drought was experienced in both the United States and China; famine stalked the Horn of Africa; and as the climate crisis worsens, women and children are the most affected.

The G20 countries that are economically more affluent emit about 80 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions; they also control the levers of decision-making in the United Nations. Hence gridlock or inaction, such as the situation being deplored by the UN Secretary General, worsens the extent of global warming and exacerbates climate injustice: “the poorest and most vulnerable — those who contributed least to this crisis — are bearing its most brutal impacts.”

Finally, Secretary-General Guterres called attention to a global cost-of-living crisis, “in which some 94 countries — home to 1.6 billion people — many in Africa — face a perfect storm: economic and social fallout from the pandemic, soaring food and energy prices, crushing debt burdens, spiraling inflation, and a lack of access to finance.” He warned: “These cascading crises are feeding on each other, compounding inequalities, creating devastating hardship, delaying the energy transition, and threatening global financial meltdown.”

It is hoped that the national leaders who have travelled to New York last week will instruct their delegates at the UN General Assembly to heed the Secretary General's call for unified action to address the world's most urgent concerns.



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EDITORIAL

Heed UN Secretary-General's call to address most urgent global concerns

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AYOS BA?

MARLO DALISAY

Marami ang mamumundok

Dati-rati ang pamumundok ay ginagamit lamang ng mga aktibistang tila nauubusan na ng pag-asang makamit ang ginugusto sa pamamagitan ng pag-sama-sama sa mga kilos-protesta at pagsisisigaw sa kalye laban sa mga ganap na kinaiinisan o talibas sa interes ng grupong kinaamiban.

Pero sa kasalukuyang panahon ay mukhang magkakaroon ito ng bagong kahulugan, katulad lamang ng ibang salitang ginagamit lamang dati sa mga talinghaga pero sa pag-usad ng panahon ay naging literal na ang kahulugan o kaya ay dating literal na ginagamit na sa talinghaga.

At sa pagkakataong ito, ang salitang mamumundok ay mukhang magiging literal na sa maraming Pinoy kung makakaring sa kanila ang hindi kagandahang nababanaagan ng Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) tungkol sa epekto ng climate change sa mga isla ng Pilipinas.

Nakuha ng usaping ito ang aking atensyon dahil tatlong beses daw na mas mabilis ang pagtaas ng tubig sa mga karagatan sa bansa ang naoobserbahan ng ahensya kumpara sa mga datos na inilalabas ng ibang bansa kaugnay sa epekto ng climate change.

Ako po ay nagmula sa MIMAROPA Region, partikular sa isla ng Tablas sa lalawigan ng Romblon kagaya rin po ni Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Secretary Renato Solidum at kababayan din po namin na si dating PCOO Undersecretary Re-

nato Marfil.

Ang Romblon, Romblon po na pinagmulan ni Usec. Marfil ay taunang mino-monitor dahil napapansin na nga ang halos pagpantay na ng pantalan nito sa tubig-dagat at habang lumalaon, ang mga lugar na hindi dating inaabot ng tubig-dagat ay naabot na kapag high-tide.

At sa obserbasyon ng Pagasa na tatlong beses nga mas mabilis ang pagtaas ng tubig sa mga karagatan ng bansa kumpara sa iba, malaking hamon ito para sa mga residente ng isla na paniguradong maaapektuhan.

Ayon kay Pagasa climate data section head Rosalina De Guzman, ang mas mabilis na pagtaas ng tubig sa bansa ay bunga ng mas mabilis ding pagkatunaw ng mga yelo sa mga malamig na parte ng mundo na dulot naman ng patuloy na pag-init ng temperatura.

Kaya nga habang umuusad ang panahon, ang tsansang mamundok ang mga taga-Romblon at iba pang mga naninirahan sa mga mababang lugar at dalampasigan ay pataas nang pataas.

Dahil sa climate change, magkakaroon na rin ng bagong kahulugan ang pamumundok, hindi na ito pang-insurhiya o aktibismo o pagpasyang maging rebelde, bagkus ay paghahangad na maghanap ng mas mataas na lugar na malilipatan upang hindi malubog at malunod sa pagtaas ng tubig.

Sana makahanap na ng lunas ang mga bansa upang maabatan ang malawakang pamumundok ng mga Pinoy.



Access road project in Ifugao seen benefiting farmers, forest stewards

THE Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (Jica-DENR) recently turned over new access roads in Banaue, Mayoyao, and Lagawe in Ifugao Province to upland farmers who also serve as stewards of vital forest resources.

The roads form part of the P1.8-billion Jica-DENR cooperation in the construction and rehabilitation of agroforestry support facilities under the Forestland Management Project (FMP), which began in 2012 in collaboration with Jica.

It is credited to boost conservation and rehabilitation efforts of over 70,000 hectares of forestlands covering a total of 24 sub-watersheds in the provinces of Ifugao, Quirino, Nueva Vizcaya, Nueva Ecija and Iloilo.

Jica and the DENR, the agency mandated to manage the country's natural resources, have partnered to save critical watershed systems in the Philippines as a move to address climate change and improve the livelihood of farmers and grass-roots communities dependent on forest resources.

The Philippines has more than 130 watersheds critical to supplying water for irrigation, domestic,

and industrial use.

Government data shows that watersheds account for an estimated 70 percent of the Philippines' land area.

This vital connection between forestland management and water resources was highlighted in the efforts of Jica and the DENR to conserve the critical river basins in Upper Magat and Cagayan, Upper Pampanga, and Jalaur in Panay Island.

"We join the Philippine government in their self-help efforts to sustainably manage the Philippines's natural resources for the greatest good of the greatest number of people in the long term," said Jica Philippines Chief Representative Sakamoto Takema in a statement.

"Conserving vital forest resources such as watersheds is critical to mitigating climate-change risks and giving Filipinos opportunities to improve their livelihood through sustainable forestland management."

Takema said access roads help upland communities implement sustainable community-based forest management activities, protect and maintain a total of nearly twenty thousand hectares of forest areas in the Province of Ifugao.

Recognizing the value of watersheds to future generation, it comes as no surprise that FMP also encouraged the Philippine government to launch a national "Save Our Watershed" campaign in 2021 calling for stakeholders' collaboration on watershed rehabilitation.

The DENR cited Jica's support to establish watershed management councils under FMP to also involve people's organizations, non-profit groups, and private sector in conserving this vital forest resource.

The FMP has two core components—comprehensive site development and technical assistance.

The comprehensive site development has several subprojects. These are mapping of watershed ecosystem, community organizing to strengthen partner people's organizations and boost enterprise development in forest communities, site development or the rehabilitation of denuded areas in the watersheds by establishing forest, agroforestry, and soil and water conservation plantations.

FMP also involves policy making and construction of agroforestry support facilities including access roads, irrigation pipelines, pathways and bridges. *Jonathan L. Mayuga*



editorial

Food

and

energy

WHILE they are neither mutually exclusive nor inseparable, the two serious threats currently facing the world are the prospects of energy and food shortages. Unfortunately, the old "Follow the Money" dictum shows how financial interests cloud thinking and possible solutions to mitigate the problems.

It is fair to say that those responsible for making critical decisions are completely insulated and protected from those negative situations, and have no skin in the game other than how much financial reward they can gain as quickly as possible.

The hypocrisy of the admonitory order "do as I say, not as I do" has gone far beyond ironic when every year there are headlines such as this. Forbes, November 5, 2021: "118 Private Jets Take Leaders To COP26 Climate Summit."

The argument that this involves only a few people and only a few events is not acceptable either. Per capita, the richest 80 million people in the world—1.1 percent of the total population—account for 15 percent of total global emissions, more than twice that of the poorest half of humanity, which produces 7 percent.

But people have to travel, and to eat and what the rich eat also flash insincerity. At the state dinner hosted by President Barack Obama in 2011 honoring South Korea President Lee Myung-bak, the menu included "Masago Rice Pearl Crispies." Masago Arare Rice Pearl sells for over \$30 (P1,700) per kilo.

As of January 2020, estimates are that globally, 10 percent of the world—700 million people—is living on less than \$2 a day. There is obviously nothing wrong with people who can afford to enjoy the finer things in life. Nonetheless, to be feasting while talking about food insecurity and widespread hunger is confusing.

The same contradictions happen with energy security and availability.

The greatest leap in human quality of life came in the 20th century with the availability of inexpensive energy through fossil fuels. In 1820, about 90 percent of the world lived in extreme poverty. That was reduced to 74 percent in 1910. But by 2015, only 10 percent live in extreme poverty globally and it is not a coincidence that this trend goes along with energy availability.

But since the mid-1950s fossil fuels have been increasingly demonized. The greatest fossil fuel "fraud" was in a 1956 paper by American geologist Marion King Hubbert—which has been treated as fact by many "ecologists"—predicting overall petroleum production would peak in the US between 1965 and 1970. In 1974, Hubbert projected that global oil production would peak in 1995. As of 2021, forecasts for the year of peak oil point to 2040.

Limited and finite resources are a fact. However, what the "peak oil" enthusiasts always forget to mention is that Hubbert wrote that nuclear energy would be able to sustain humanity for centuries. Earlier this month, US Treasury Secretary and former head of the Federal Reserve—and now energy expert—Janet Yellen spoke, "We will rid ourselves from our current dependence on fossil fuels. Instead, America would come to depend on the wind and the sun."

Initially, we cannot simply walk away from this essential determinant of our future in a few decades, never mind years. Moreover, nuclear plants remain the safest way to make electricity and are among the most benign of all human activities.

Underinvestment in hydrocarbons and associated infrastructure is driven by political pressure and it is the less-developed economies that suffer the most. But "climate-change" cry some environmentalists. Deaths from severe weather declined by over 90 percent since 1920 because wealthier societies with abundant access to energy have become safer places to live.

A large majority of deaths caused by severe weather are concentrated in poorer nations blighted by energy poverty. We need to change that, but it will not come from windmills and solar panels.



Waste management for renewable energy

As the Philippine economy was growing steadily over the past decade before the COVID-19 outbreak in early 2020, the demand for energy rose rapidly.

In 2018, the country's dependable energy supply was at 21,241 megawatts (MW), while total peak demand was 14,782 MW. From 2014 to 2018, the country's total energy consumption was growing at an average of 4.22 percent annually. Indeed, under a high economic growth scenario, the country's energy requirements were seen to increase fourfold by 2040, or by an average of 5.7 percent per annum.

Fortuitously, during the two-and-a-half pandemic years, available power capacity dipped sharply while demand hardly changed, given the abruptly slower population growth. The latest numbers are 17,753 MW for the former and 14,870 MW for the latter, implying a precarious operating margin of just 2,847 MW (National Grid Corp. of the Philippines, 9/13/2022).

Meanwhile, according to the National Solid Waste Management Division, the country generated over 21 million metric tons of waste every year. This translates to a weighted average waste generated per capita of 0.40 kilograms per day. Metro Manila alone generated over 9,000 tons (close to one-fourth) of daily waste in the same year. With the COVID-19 pandemic requiring so many personal protective equipment, including masks practically for all, besides consumables in plastic or styrofoam containers, one can just imagine the tons of waste escalating further.

While we must meet the power demand to sustain economic growth, we must also find a way to grow without compromising our environment and draining our natural resources. This is a delicate balancing act for a country with a potentially booming tourism industry, still fast-growing population, apart from facing not a few natural disasters every year. The devastation wrought by the string of strong typhoons, e.g., "Quinta," "Rolly," "Ulysses," and "Odette," is a vivid reminder of why we cannot, and must not, take nature and the environment for granted

COMMENTARY

ERNESTO M. PERNIA

ed (Pope Francis' encyclical "Laudato Si").

The Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022 distinctly recognizes this, and the ecosystem's role in supporting the growth of the economy, as well as the general well-being of the population. The government and concerned nongovernment organizations have been working earnestly to preserve the country's environment and natural resources, but much more unstinting effort is called for.

In terms of energy sources, renewable energy and natural gas accounted for an appreciable share of the country's primary energy supply mix at 39 percent in 2017. While this has been diminishing in the past five years, the government has institutionalized policies and programs that would help spur the utilization of renewable energy. The Renewable Energy Act of 2008 was supposed to vigorously support sustainable energy development measures to reduce the country's dependence on fossil fuels.

As regards solid waste management, the government has been expected to strongly enforce the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000. This promotes the establishment of material recovery and treatment facilities, the closure and rehabilitation of existing dump sites, and the formulation of local solid waste management plans.

In addition, the Public-Private Partnership Center (PPP Center, attached to the National Economic and Development Authority or Neda), together with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Environmental Management Bureau-Solid Waste Management Division, has provided a guide for local government units (LGUs) that covers all phases of the solid waste management project cycle and provides an overview of the national solid waste management strategy.



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Moreover, Neda has been working with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in formulating the country's Sustainable Consumption and Production Framework and Action Plan launched in September 2019. The plan was designed to be the backbone of green capitalism, whereby profit-maximization and environmental protection will go hand-in-hand and, in some cases, be complementary to each other. Sustainable consumption and production is one of the Sustainable Development Goals propounded by the United Nations.

This is where PPP projects can further expand their roles, particularly in developing innovative solutions for implementing and integrating renewable energy and waste-to-energy (WTE) components in infrastructure and other development projects. This is possible since the majority of the waste we produce is biodegradable at around 52 percent and recyclable at 28 percent.

There have been such PPP projects proposed in LGUs i.e. Quezon City assisted by the PPP Center, Davao assisted by Jica, Cebu assisted by ADB, and one more in Palawan. With strong moral support from the national leadership, and given a bigger share of the national budget already being allocated to LGUs, they should be encouraged to get involved in WTE projects, thereby helping the country to more effectively address the solid waste management issue to amplify our renewable energy sources.

It would be good for the public-cum-private sector to join hands toward motivating businessmen and the citizenry to invest in and promote waste-to-energy projects to expand our renewable energy space. This would capacitate our country to not only meet its power requirements but also potentially enable future generations to have a clean and healthy environment, and nature aptly protected.

Ernesto M. Pernia is professor emeritus of economics, University of the Philippines Diliman, and former secretary of socioeconomic planning, Neda.



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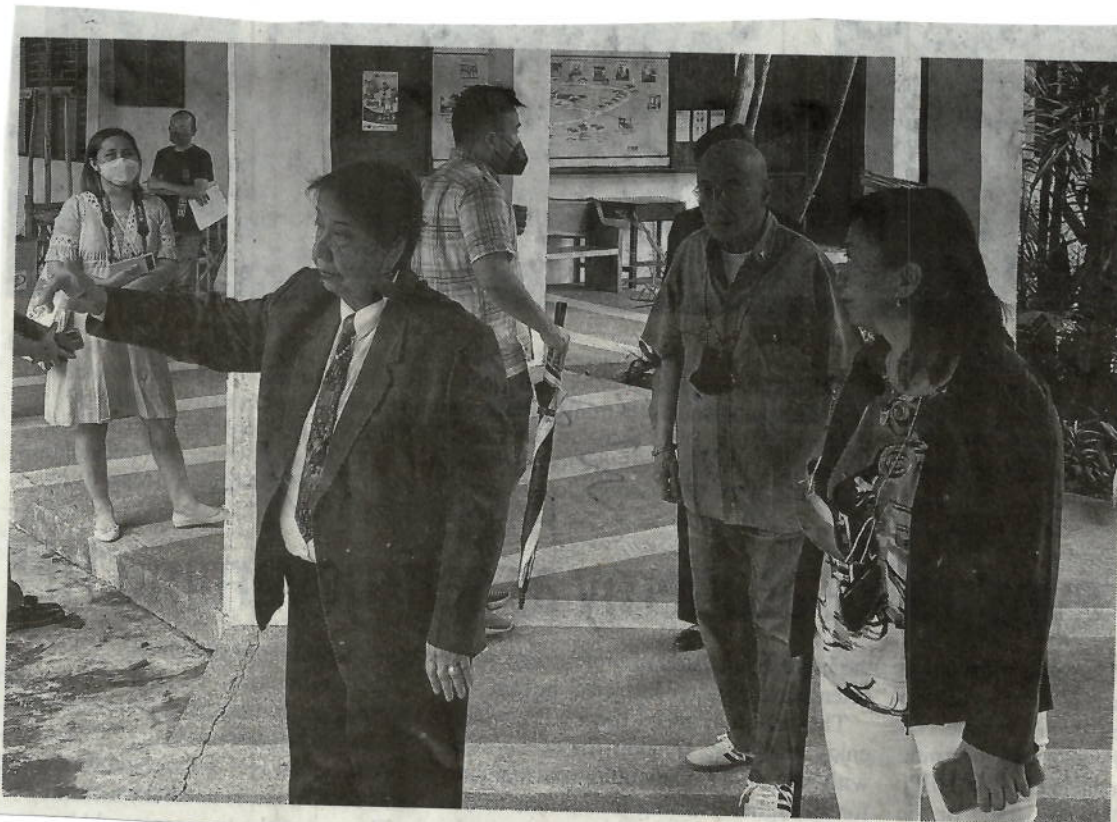
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ECOTOURISM OCULAR TOUR.

Mina Gabor, president of the International School of Sustainable Tourism (ISST), shows and defines ecotourism in her latest project during a recent ocular inspection of the ISST compound in Silang, Cavite with Dr. Theresa Lim executive director of the Asean Centre for Biodiversity and her group for the forthcoming International Eco-Tourism and Travel Mart on March 30 to April 2, 2023.