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**DENR**

**IN THE NEWS**

**Strategic Communication and Initiative Service**



## SC to convene Manila Bay rehab body

By **EDU PUNAY**

The Supreme Court (SC) is set to convene its committee tasked to monitor the implementation of its 2008 order to rehabilitate Manila Bay, an official said yesterday.

SC spokesman and court administrator Midas Marquez said the move is in line with the planned Manila Bay cleanup of the Duterte administration.

"The SC committee on the Manila Bay cleanup will convene in accordance with an earlier resolution to strengthen the resolve to clean up the bay," Marquez, vice chairman of the committee, said.

The high court is expected to name a new panel head after its former chairman, Associate Justice Presbitero Velasco Jr., retired from the judiciary in August last year.

Velasco penned the SC writ of mandamus issued in 2008, ordering 13 government agencies led by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to clean up Manila Bay.

"The government's rehabilitation plan is good news because it complements the continuing

mandamus issued by the SC in 2008. The Manila Bay cleanup should be a concerted effort by all concerned agencies in the three branches of government," Marquez said.

President Duterte has approved the seven-year plan of the DENR to rehabilitate Manila Bay.

He warned hotels along Roxas Boulevard that they would be shut down if they are found to be dumping waste in the bay.

The efforts to revive Manila Bay will cost the government around P47 billion, which the administration will reportedly get from road users' tax upon abolition of the Road Board.

The Manila Bay cleanup will be launched at the Manila Yacht Club on Jan. 27.

Aside from the DENR, other agencies tasked to rehabilitate Manila Bay are the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority; the Departments of Education, Health, Agriculture, Public Works and Highways, and Budget and Management as well as the Philippine Coast Guard, Philippine National Police Maritime Group and Department of the Interior and Local Government.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

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21 JAN 2013

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# SC panel convenes for Bay rehab

By Rey E. Requejo

**T**HE Supreme Court will convene its committee tasked to monitor the implementation of its 2008 order to rehabilitate and revive Manila Bay, an official said Sunday.

"The committee on the Manila Bay cleanup should convene soon in accordance with the earlier resolution to strengthen the resolve to clean Manila Bay," high-court spokesman and Court Administrator Midas Marquez said.

Marquez made the disclosure after the Duterte administration laid down the plan to clean up the waterway to comply with the high court's decision.

Marquez, who has been tapped as vice chairman of the committee, said the Court was expected to name a new head of the committee after its former chairman, Associate Justice Presbitero

Velasco Jr., retired from the judiciary in August last year. Velasco wrote the unanimous decision in the landmark writ of kalikasan case on Manila Bay.

Marquez also welcomed the Duterte administration's reported plan to pursue the Manila Bay cleanup and abide by the high court's continuing mandamus, which required 13 government agencies led by the Environment department to implement a rehabilitation plan.

"The seven-year rehabilitation plan is good news to the Court because it appears complementary to the continuing mandamus it issued in 2008," Marquez said.

"The Manila Bay cleanup must really be a concerted effort by all concerned agencies in the three branches of government."

Duterte had recently ordered the cleanup of Manila Bay and approved the Environment department's seven-year plan.

He warned the hotels along Roxas Boulevard they would be closed if the regulators found they were dumping waste into Manila Bay.

The latest effort to revive Manila Bay will cost the government about P47 billion, which the administration will reportedly get from the road user's tax upon the abolition of the Road Board.

The Environment department led the inter-agency task force assigned to oversee the cleanup in coming up with a plan that will be launched on Jan. 27 at the Manila Yacht Club.

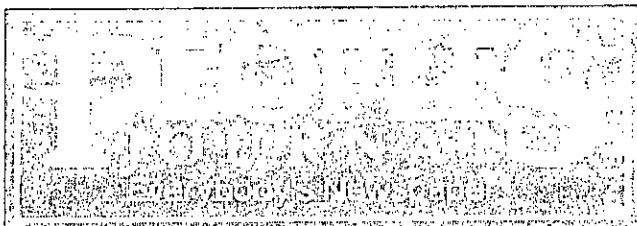
The plan to revive Manila Bay came after the successful six-month rehabilitation of the world-famous Boracay Island last year.

In its decision in Dec. 2008, the High

Court issued a continuing mandamus and ordered several government agencies to implement the rehabilitation of Manila Bay in the case filed by concerned citizens led by environmental lawyer and Ramon Magsaysay awardee Antonio Oposa Jr.

Apart from Environment department, the order was also directed at the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, Department of Education, Department of Health, Department of Agriculture, Department of Public Works and Highways, Department of Budget and Management, the Philippine Coast Guard, the Philippine National Police Maritime Group and the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

The 36-page decision described the Manila Bay as "a place with a proud historic past, once brimming with marine life and a spot for different recreation activities, but is now a dirty and slowly dying expanse because of the indifference of people and institutions."



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## SC to convene committee for Manila Bay cleanup

**By Hector Lawas**

**THE Supreme Court will convene its committee tasked to monitor the implementation of its 2008 order to rehabilitate and revive Manila Bay.**

High Tribunal spokesman and Court Administrator Midas Marquez yesterday said that this was in response to the plan of the present administration to clean Manila Bay.

"The SC committee on the Manila Bay Cleanup should convene soon in accordance with the earlier resolution to strengthen the order to clean Manila Bay," said Marquez, who has been tapped as vice chair of the committee.

He said the SC is expected to name a new head of the committee since its former chair Associate Justice Presbitero Velasco Jr., has retired from the judiciary. Velasco penned the unanimous decision in the landmark writ of kalikasan case on Manila Bay.

Marquez also welcomed the reported plan of the Duterte administration to pursue the Manila Bay cleanup and abide by the SC's continuing mandamus that required 13 government agencies led by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to implement a rehabilitation plan.

"The seven-year rehabilitation plan is good news to the Court because it appears complementary to the continuing mandamus it issued in 2008. The Manila Bay cleanup must really be a concerted effort by all concerned agencies in the three branches of government," Marquez said.

President Duterte recently ordered the cleanup of Manila Bay and approved the seven-year plan of the DENR. He warned hotels along Roxas Blvd. that they would be closed if the regulators found out that they were dumping their waste into Manila Bay.

# AS A MATTER OF FACT

SARA SOLIVEN DE GUZMAN

## Manila Bay Cleanup — a fallacy or an actuality?

Time and again, agencies concerned with the deteriorating state of the environment have rallied to find solutions to what is destroying our natural environment and ecosystems, adversely affecting lives, communities and biodiversity. Unfortunately, all these calls have fallen on deaf ears and so the saga of environmental destruction continues in the country and the citizens suffer the consequences.



But then again, we are Filipinos, known for our resilience, perseverance, hopefulness, and the capacity to rise above all forms of adversities. So, we continue the fight. Never mind if all the initiatives to clean-up the *esteros*, the rivers, the seas, the bays, endlessly fail and could not be sustained due to lack of political will in our leaders. We still carry on.

Take a look at Manila Bay. Cleanup activities spearheaded by different groups in society was only good for a day or two. Then everything is back to zero. Why is that? Are all these activities just meant to be for show to stop the clamor and the endless bickering of the people? Or is it for some sort of vested interest?

Last week, the Manila Yacht Club and the Rotary Club of Manila expressed support on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) 'Save Manila Bay' project. Manila Yatch Club a historical treasure right by Manila Bay where many expensive yachts are docked is very much affected by the bay's pollution. The question is, after the clean up, will they be able to sustain the project?

According to DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu, he will use all the agency's resources to clean up the bay once and for all. He will coordinate with all government agencies and task all stakeholders to be part of the solution. In a meeting with officials in Metro Manila and nearby provinces, plans were mapped out for the Manila Bay cleanup set to start on January 27, 2019. Members from the private sector (like Manila Water and Maynilad) and government agencies are expected to review the construction of sewerage treatment plants in order to prevent further pollution of the bay; they must make a survey and establish guidelines for buildings/commercial establishments and factories near the bay for the immediate compliance of sewerage treatment plant; come up with educational programs in collaboration with the private sector, academe, DepEd to help train barangay chairmen in Metro Manila for waste segregation; and do coordination work with Commission on Audit for Environmental Management Assessment, DILG, Ombudsman, etc. In doing so, it is hoped that within three years, all dwellers near waterways will be relocated and be given a priority by the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB) for the housing grants.

Some environmentalists believe that this clean up project cannot be accomplished in a year. They say that the rehabilitation of Manila Bay will take 5 to 10 years and a lifetime to do maintenance work just like Singapore in the late '70s and early '80s.

As for the cost, well, reports say that the cleanup of Singapore River and Kallang Basin cost \$300M, and that was 40 years ago. Some 4,000 squatters were relocated. River banks and the bottom of the river were dredged of foul smelling mud. The scope of the rehabilitation of Manila Bay is ten times more with four provinces and five cities of Metro Manila involved. Manila Bay has an area of 200,000 hectares that is three times the size of Singapore. The coastline is 200-kms. long compared to Singapore's 3 kms.

Here's hoping for the best in this endeavor. My only qualm: Why is this only happening now? We've had laws to protect the environment since time immemorial. Government in the past and the present has clearly taken all these laws for granted. *Sanamagan!*

In his article, "The Imperative of Environmental Protection," environmentalist and retired PNP Chief Superintendent Patrick Madayag said, "Ecological balance is one of the National Security Interests in the country's National Security Policy (NSP) of 2017-2027. The rapid economic growth and industrialization are transforming society and improving the lives of many Filipinos but it comes at a great cost to the environment. Protecting and preserving ecological balance is a complex challenge that interacts with many determinants of national security and people's well-being. The drivers for protecting and preserving the environment are inter-related with issues of poverty, governance, the pressures of rapid economic and population growth and the phenomena of climate change. Ecological balance is a National Security goal with its strategic objective to protect and preserve the country's ecosystems, biodiversity and genetic resources."

He cited Article II Section 16 of the Philippine Constitution as a State Policy on environmental protection for a "balanced and healthful ecology." Several environmental laws have been enacted notably RA 7586 or the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) of 1992 for biodiversity, RA 8749 or the Clean Air Act of 1999, RA 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 and RA 9275 or the Clean Water Act of 2004, among other significant laws for the protection of public health and the environment.

The list of environmental laws is endless. There is the Solid Waste Management Law (RA 6716 (1989) that would have prevented flooding and save water for the dry season and the Water Code that provides for the easement along water bodies, riverbanks and *esteros*. It should also be noted that Sec. 389, paragraph 9 puts the responsibility on barangay captains to implement environmental laws.

Madayag added, "The weak or inadequate to the extent that there is no enforcement and compliance to environmental laws and regulations is one of the main reasons on the degradation or the poor quality of the environment.

There are clear violations of even ordinary and simple environmental laws that are poorly enforced. Littering and dumping of garbage, human wastes and effluent into "esteros" or waterways are becoming more rampant and a normal practice which makes the environment unhealthy, dirty and unsightly."

In conclusion Madayag said, "Amidst the several challenges the country faces on poverty alleviation, the bloody campaign on the war on illegal drugs and the realization of the \$160 - 180 billion Build, Build, Build infrastructure program, let us pause and reflect on the song "Masdan mo ang Kapaligiran" on the intergenerational concern and our responsibility on the protection and care of the environment. A sustainable environment is one of our best investments toward the future for the well-being of the next generation of Filipinos." After all it is our moral responsibility to protect the environment.

Anyway, my *alika-bok* tells me that, a bill will soon be drafted to create the Manila Bay Authority (MBA) to handle rehabilitation and management. Will this be the long-term solution we have all been waiting for? *Abangan!*



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CARTOON

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## Manila Bay clean-up: Can we keep it clean?



FIRST  
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**FRANCISCO  
 S. TATAD**

► **TatadA5**

IN July 2018, President Rodrigo Duterte pronounced the nation's world-famous island resort Boracay a "cesspool," and closed it to tourism for the rest of the year.

This was not without its perils, but after six months of rushed rehabilitation, and an estimated cost of P80 billion to the economy, Boracay finally reopened to business. So far, tourist arrivals have failed to return to previous levels, but tourism authorities tell us this was a deliberate choice of giving up some of the "backpack crowd" in favor of "high value tourism." Is our Department of Tourism telling certain types of tourists to go to Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and elsewhere, rather than to Boracay? I hope not. The small operators who have been displaced from their businesses have a bone to pick with this thinking. But today, DU30 is set to replicate at Manila Bay what he did in Boracay, and on a much grander scale, at the initial cost of P42.9 billion. It promises to be the biggest environmental project in support of urban renewal and tourism. Manila Bay is bounded by Cavite and Metro Manila on the east, Bulacan and Pampanga on the north, and Bataan on the west and northwest. It measures 1,994 square kilometers.

The massive clean-up will affect all the cities surrounding the bay, namely, Manila, Quezon City, Pasay, Mandaluyong, San Juan, Pasig, Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas, Valenzuela, Makati, Parañaque, Taguig, Muntinglupa, Las Piñas, and Pateros. It should specifically include the Pasig River and Laguna de Bay, whose proposed renewal has stalled for years. Hundreds of business establishments, especially those that dump their wastes into the bay, could shut down for an extended period, as happened in Boracay, but the government and the private sector will have to bite this bullet as something that can no longer be stopped.

### Local support

This will need the support of an environmentally alert population and local government units

around the bay, notably in the major cities of Manila, Quezon and Pasay, but especially in the nation's capital and seat of government. Manila will have to play a central role, and will have to be ready for it. This is a big question for its leadership, which the May elections will decide.

Manila is an old city of young people, who don't seem to worry much about how the capital is run. In this election, their choice is limited to reelecting Mayor Joseph "Erap" Ejercito Estrada, the 81-year-old former president who has already served two terms, or bringing back Alfredo Siojo Lim, Erap's 89-year-old predecessor, who served as mayor from 1992 to 1998, and then from 2007 to 2013. There are five independent candidates, but the strongest rival of the two ageing politicians appears to be former vice mayor, social welfare undersecretary and movie actor Isko Moreno (Francisco Domagoso in real life), who is 44. The next mayor must be prepared to take on this mega project as his first priority.

Although Manila Bay appears to be far from the concerns of the average citizen, some environmental experts have been sounding the alarm about its critical state for years. A recent article on Rappler by lawyer-environmentalist and Ramon Magsaysay awardee for environmental activism, Jose Oposa Jr., describes in some detail the legal battle he and his group have been waging for the past 20 years.

### A 20-year battle

According to Oposa, he and a group of UP law students filed a lawsuit in January 1999 to compel the government to clean up Manila Bay. After 10 years, the petitioners finally won: 13 government agencies were ordered by a "continuing mandamus" to report on the progress of the government clean-up once every three months.

These agencies include the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Health (DOH), Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Department of Education (DepEd), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Agriculture (Fisheries), Maritime Police, Ports Authority, Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage Authority (MWSS), Local Water Utilities Administration (LUWA) and Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA).

In 2018, the DILG directed an environmental compliance audit of all the LGUs surrounding the bay, said the article. But in 2019, to Oposa's surprise, the level of fecal bacteria in the bay rose from one million units per cubic meter in 1999, to 330 million units per cubic meter. In some parts of the bay, it rose to one billion units per cubic meter. For water to be swimmable, said the article, its fecal bacteria content must not exceed 100 units per cubic meter.

### Unswimmable

This means the Manila bay is no swimmable at all. Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu has been quoted as saying some firms dump their untreated waste into the bay while Al Jazeera has quoted some unnamed fishermen as saying they had been hired to dump bodies of killed drug suspects into the bay. Some fish still swim there, but does it mean it isn't safe anymore to consume whatever is caught there?

The same question applies to the fish—mostly *tilapia* (St. Peter's fish if you are in the Holy Land)—caught in Laguna de Bay. Whenever I buy this fish in Mendez, Cavite, and I ask the fishmonger why it is so expensive, I always get an education in the quality of the water where the fish is caught. "This is from Taal Lake, not from Laguna de Bay."

Despite the massive incor

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## Manila Bay clean-up: Can we keep it clean?

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venience the project will cause the public, I can predict popular support for its ultimate objectives. Especially since its initial funding will come from the P45 billion "off-budget" funds of the highly corrupt Road Board, which DU30 has decided to abolish. Even the European Union is reported to have expressed full support for the project. Obviously they find it infinitely superior to the extrajudicial killing of drug suspects, which they denounced. I hope countries like Canada and South Korea would also express their support by recalling as soon as possible the hazardous wastes they had erroneously shipped to the Philippines.

### Preventing corruption

But given the ingenuity of our practitioners, how do we make sure that the billions appropriated for this project do not simply end up inside the pockets of thieving contractors and politicians? I listened to DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management, Benny Antiporda, at the Kapihan at Anabel's in Quezon City on Saturday, and I found him rather upbeat. But the task of preventing corruption in a project as massive as this is never a walk in the park.

The cleanup would entail a lot of "dredging", and this is the Achilles' heel of all public works activities. Dredging is "the operation of removing material from one part of the water environment and relocating it to another." (Wikipedia). Here, the data is easy to falsify or fudge. After the 1991 Mount Pinatubo eruption, we had to move mountains of lahar from one place to another. Just by parking some earth-moving equipment in a designated area, a crooked contractor could claim so much work has been done without having "dredged" a cubic inch of soil.

### The Sorsogon experience

All he needed to say was that the

last rain had washed away all the work that had been done before. Billions of pesos were lost to corruption in that manner, and some of those who made a killing there are still very much around. The *modus operandi* continues in many crooked operations. And the citizens are powerless to do anything about it.

For instance, on the controversial flood control projects in Sorsogon, we continue to hear House Majority Leader Rolando Andaya Jr.'s attack on Budget Secretary Benjamin Diokno for being the father of Charlotte Justine, who married Romeo Sicat Jr., whose mother, Vice Gov. Ester Sicat, became the wife of contractor-Mayor Edwin Hamor of Casiguran upon the death of her husband; Hamor reportedly recently made P81 million in commissions on so many projects.

But we have not heard Andaya or anyone else say that the funds intended for the Sorsogon sea wall and other flood control projects have simply disappeared without any project being worked on. That, I think, is the heart of the matter: has the money been spent as intended, or has it been stolen? More on this later.

### The *sahod* system

Because of DU30's Build, Build, Build program, under which the Manila Bay cleanup is likely to fall, DU30 must now dismantle the syndicated public bidding system that has thoroughly corrupted the government's public works program. This is well-known and highly talked about in the industry as the "*sahod* system."

Under this system, according to authoritative informants, the contractors who bid on a project collude on the terms of their respective bids and agree on the contractor who will win; everybody else participates as a "losing bidder." The losing bidders then receive a share of 4 percent of the

value of the contract from the winning bidder. Thus, even if Hamor's Aremar Construction Co. does not win any contract, it will still get its share as a losing bidder.

My sources in Sorsogon who claim to be familiar with the situation there cannot seem to understand why Andaya is so focused on Diokno's so-called "relationship" with Hamor when this is not *the only—or the most important—*political relationship Hamor has with any powerful national official. They say Hamor likes to drop the name of Diokno in conversation, but that is not conclusive proof that he intervenes to favor Hamor with public works allocations.

### The more relevant link

They point out that Vice Gov. Ester Hamor, who is running for city mayor of Sorsogon against the multi-awarded incumbent Mayor Sally Lee, was Sen. Chiz Escudero's "*ninang*" (principal sponsor) when he married the actress Heart Evangelista on Balesin island, after his first failed marriage. And that this may be the more important relationship Andaya should be looking at when talking of Hamor's access to large projects, these sources said.

In fact, some people in Sorsogon seem to believe Chiz and Hamor are actual partners. Chiz, according to them, works on the funding, without putting his name on it, and Hamor handles the rest. Hamor himself likes to talk about this among his friends, according to these sources. Public Works Secretary Mark Villar has denied knowledge of these projects, but the same sources insist he is fully complicit. I tend to agree with this assessment. They said a DPWH high official from Region V, whose identity is still being withheld, is the main facilitator of the Sorsogon transactions.



## No bane to Mla Bay: DOF touts modern sewage treatment facility

By REA CU  
@ReaCuBM

THE ongoing refurbishment of the Department of Finance's six-story central office along Roxas Boulevard in Manila includes a state-of-the-art sewage treatment facility that is now operational, way ahead of the Duterte administration's program to rehabilitate the heavily polluted Manila Bay, the DOF reported.

In line with the President's directive to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) to rehabilitate Manila Bay, establishments surrounding the sea, including the DOF, were instructed to put in place their respective sewage treatment plants (STPs) within three months or face sanctions.

Director Alvin P. Diaz, who heads the DOF's Central Administration Office, explained that the DOF was way ahead of the curve" in relation

to the ongoing rehabilitation efforts because its building now has its own STP that became operational in November 2018 using the latest technology in treating sewage water effluent discharged into Manila Bay.

According to Diaz, Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III approved in 2017 the recommendation of the project design and management team in charge of the DOF Building refurbishment to include an STP isolated from the adjoining Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) compound, using the latest sewage treatment technologies.

"The DOF Building's sewage treatment facility discharges effluent into the Manila Bay that is classified as Class C, which is fit for fishing and the propagation and growth of fish and other aquatic resources. This is the minimum standard of the DENR for water being discharged into the bay. We are now conducting tests to check what

still needs to be done so that our STP can meet the Class B requirement, which is fit for bathing and swimming," Diaz said.

He said the STP and other environment-friendly features incorporated in the ongoing renovation could be considered a model for other government structures up for refurbishment.

"In fact, we are currently working for the DENR's issuance of a discharge permit that will validate DOF's compliance with existing rules and regulations," he added.

On top of the STP, the DOF also uses LED lighting systems to minimize power consumption, and a building management system to monitor and control the building facilities such as its centralized air-conditioning and other equipment and utilities.

"Even the impressive glass envelope in front of the building serves a purpose, other than to be aesthetically pleasing. The glass cladding cuts the noise entering the building and

also reduces the heat, which makes it energy-efficient," he said.

The STP which costs P2.8 million, is self-maintaining, thus incurring no maintenance costs for the DOF.

"Among the government agencies with their STPs are the CI Hall of Caloocan, the Casimiro Henares Hospital in Rizal, Antipolo Hospital, Langhari Public Market in Malabon, and the Molino Public Market in Bacoor, Cavite, to name a few," he added.

Last week the DENR held a stakeholders' meeting in preparation for the rehabilitation of Manila Bay. Some 200 representatives from national government agencies and local government units, including barangay units, attended it.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said the Duterte administration is determined to rehabilitate Manila Bay and will sue violators of environmental laws.





## #bworldfeed



**Interaksyon** @interaksyon

DENR is starting to investigate establishments near Manila Bay that violate the policy on water pollution.





## JUAN DE SABOG

ni JOHNNY MAGALONA

HINDI lingid sa lahat ang walang tigil na rehabilitasyon ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources sa Isla ng Boracay at ngayon naman ay nakatutok sila sa napakaruming Manila Bay.

Ang Manila Bay sa tuling magkakaroon ng sama ng panahon ay nagtambak ang mga makakapal na basura sa baybayin nito. Sumasampá pa sa Roxas Blvd at US Embassy ang bunton ng mga basura na hindi malaman kung saan at anong lugar galing.

Alam ng mga taga-Obando kung saan nangagaling ang bunton ng mga basura na tinatangay ng alon sa baybayin ng buong Manila Bay.

Galing daw sa dumpsite sa dulo ng Navotas City. Para sa kaalaman ng DENR, araw-araw na hinahakot ng barge ang sangkaterbang basura mula sa Pier 18 papuntang dumpsite sa Navotas at sa paghakot pa lang sa pagsakay sa barge, maraming basura ang nahuhulog mula sa karagatan ng Manila Bay.

## BASURA SA MANILA BAY GALING SA NAVOTAS DUMPSITE

na pabalik-balik lang dito.

Mas lalong kumakalat sa karagatan ang bunton na mga basura kapag may masamang panahon dahil sa hindi naman tama ang pagkakaayos sa bunton ng basura.

Sa kaunting hangin at alon lang ay bumabalik sa karagatan at sa mga kalsada ang mga basura.

Kung matatandaan ninyo, noong nakaraang taon, libo-libong laman ng palaisdaan ng mga bangu at alimango ang nangamatay at hindi na napakinabangan.

Itinuturong sanhi ng mga may-ari ng palaisdaan ang katas ng basura galing sa dumpsite.

Walang magawa ang mga taga-Obando, Bulacan dahil sa wala silang masumbungan dahil sa malakas at maraming koneksyon ang may-ari ng dumpsite na si Navotas Cong. Toby Tiangco.

Pilit na sinasabi ni Tiangco na ligal at compliant ang dumpsite niya.

Aminin man natin o hindi, si Toby ay isang maimpluwensyang politiko kaya napakadaling makumpleto niya ang mga papeles para maging legitimo ang dumpsite.

Kung ikaw ay gaya ni Toby na nakapuwesto, 'di ba madali sa iyo?

Alam naman siguro ng mga Navoteno kung si-

no ang mga Tiangco.

Ilang dekada nang pabalik-balik ang magkapatid sa kanilang mga puwesto at ito rin ang panahon ng kanilang pamamayagpag sa lungsod.

Kahit ilang beses nang magreklamo sa kanilang sariling alkalde ang taga-Navotas, wala ring mangyayari dahil walang taong matapang na gumawa ng aksyon dito.

Tanging pag-asa na lamang nila ang DENR at ang pamunuan ng Manila Bay Development Authority (MBDA) na siyang aksyon sa matagal nang karaingan ng mga taga-Navotas, Malabon at Obando.



# Bill filed in Senate barring solid waste imports

SENATOR Aquilino Martin L. Pimentel III has filed a bill seeking to ban imports of solid waste.

Senate Bill No. 2144, filed on Jan. 14, provides a penalty of 12 to 20 years of imprisonment for importing any solid waste, as defined under the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act or Republic Act No. 9003, into Philippine territory, including special economic zones.

Under the law, solid waste refers to the "discarded house-

hold and commercial waste, non-hazardous institutional and industrial waste, street sweepings, construction debris, agricultural waste, and other non-hazardous/non-toxic solid waste."

The person or the firm responsible for the importation will also be obligated to send back the solid waste to the port of origin. If the importer cannot be identified, the carrier will be responsible for returning the solid waste to the

port of origin or pay P500,000 in exemplary damages.

Foreigners involved in the importation of solid waste will face deportation and will be barred from entry to the Philippines. If corporations, associations or other entities are involved, a penalty of P500,000 will be imposed on the managing partner, president or chief executive officer.

Automatic dismissal from office and permanent disqualification will be among the penalties of govern-

ment officials or employees involved in the importation of solid waste.

In his explanatory note, Mr. Pimentel cited the imported garbage that was shipped from Canada in 2013 and from South Korea last year. He also raised concerns that more foreign waste may arrive in the Philippines after China, Thailand, and Vietnam enforced policies against the entry of solid waste into their countries.

In June 2013, a shipment of 50 container vans – 18 of which con-

tained waste, including household garbage and plastic bags – began arriving in the Philippines from Canada.

Meanwhile, some 5,100 tons of garbage containing dextrose tubes, batteries, and electronic equipment arrived at a Misamis Oriental port in July 2018 from South Korea, which its government promised to take back.

"Pursuant to our Constitutional duty and intergenerational responsibility to protect and ad-

vance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology, and considering our own trash woes, this bill proposes to ban the importation of trash even by recyclers of trash located in Special Economic Zones," Mr. Pimentel said.

"By banning the importation of imported solid waste, we prevent the country from being a dumping site of more advanced economies," he added. — **Camille A. Aguinaldo**



## Our world of waste

**T**HE never-ending cycle of production, consumption and disposal is what keeps our—the world's—economic system going. Jobs are created, income and profit to be taxed are generated—and so is waste. Lots of it.

Despite technological and organizational innovations, finding an environmentally sustainable solution to the ubiquitous plastic remains elusive. This became very apparent when China decided to close its borders, effective this year, to the millions of tons of waste that it used to welcome with open arms from all corners of the world.

The plastic recycling market all but collapsed; in the past, plastic collected for recycling was mostly simply shipped to China where it was recycled. With the Chinese buyers gone, the price of plastic waste plunged as there suddenly was an oversupply of recyclable plastic waste. This also happened in South Korea where plastic waste was left uncollected until the government intervened.

This crisis is the likely cause of the 6,500 tons of mixed garbage finding its way from South Korea to the Phividec Industrial Estate in the town of Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, last year. Verde Soko Phil. Industrial Corp.—whose owner reportedly a Korean who resides in Cebu City—had declared the importation to be composed of raw and sheared plastic to be used in the production of pellets and briquettes. The company, which operated inside the Phividec estate, had secured an environmental compliance certificate (ECC) from the Environmental Management Bureau for such production in July 2018, an ECC that also covered a “300 kilowatt thermal power supply project” (Philippine News Agency, Nov. 15, 2018). I wonder if this “thermal power supply project” is a waste incinerator in disguise.

The container vans were filled with garbage of the smelly sort. The stench prompted the neighbors to complain to their local government. Officials of the EMB and the Bureau of Customs



### RESURGENCE

**MARIT  
STINUS-  
CABUGON**

Vice Governor Yevgeny Emano suggested that rather than ship the garbage back to South Korea it could be recycled into plastic chairs to be given to elementary schools (*Sun Star Cagayan de Oro*, Jan. 11, 2019).

Fortunately, Mr. John Simon of the Bureau of Customs was quick to remind the public that the waste entered the Philippines unlawfully, its importation, transportation and storage violating a long list of laws. Besides, mixed plastic is close to impossible to recycle. As explained by Laura Parker in one of the excellent articles in *National Geographic's* “Planet or Plastic” series: “Each variety of plastic requires a different recycling process, and plastics are made from thousands of different formulas.”

In Cebu, too, garbage made headlines when medical waste was seen floating in the Mactan Channel and even further south. Davao City Environmental Care Inc., which had been contracted by three Mandaue City-based hospitals to collect and treat their waste, has been issued a cease-and-desist order by the Mandaue City government while the EMB continues its investigation.

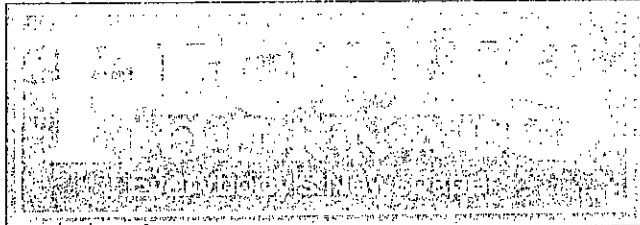
Then there is liquid waste. The Metro Cebu Metropolitan District (MCWD) is all set to commence construction of its second septage treatment facility. It already operates a 150 cubic meter capacity facility in Mactan that caters to Lapu Lapu City and Cordova. The second septage treatment facility will be able to treat up to 500 cubic meters of septage a day. It will treat septage from residences and commercial and industrial establishments in the cities of Talisay, Cebu and Mandaue and the towns of Consolacion, Liloan and Compostela. The project is funded by a P1 billion grant from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and includes the formula-

tion of a comprehensive septage management program. A survey has determined the number of households and establishments, and septic tanks and volume of septage generated. As of now, the “septage collection rate is only 4 percent,” according to the survey. The goal of the MCWD-JICA project is to reach a 50 percent collection rate by 2030. By then, however, the collected septage will exceed the capacity of the treatment facility, thus the need for the comprehensive septage management program. Failure to manage septage can result in contamination of the aquifer. This would be detrimental to the already tight water supply situation in Metro Cebu.

The septage treatment facility is expected to be completed by September 2020.

have identified several violations committed by Verde Soko; 1,400 of the 6,500 metric tons of waste left Tagoloan for South Korea on January 13 with the South Korean government shouldering all the expenses.

Phividec has been defending Verde Soko and has been uncooperative in the investigation, snubbing invitations from the Misamis Oriental provincial board, among others, wrote Bencyrus Ellorin on December 5 in the *Mindanao Gold Star Daily*. Another Northern Mindanao-based journalist told me that Verde Soko treated local media to dinner and karaoke—aside from giving “gifts.” However, the stench from the thousands of tons of garbage stored in the company's compound at the Phividec Industrial Estate was by just too much to kill the story.



21 JAN 2013

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## Olivarez pursues composting in Parañaque

"LET's continue composting, and really focus on the households who will do it themselves or with the help of the barangay." Thus said Mayor Edwin L. Olivarez as he lauded the efforts of Parañaque residents already into the practice.

"Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, is a good law and we will abide by it to continuously reduce our waste, ecologically, especially through composting. Our motto says 'Parañaque City, Dedicated to God'. We should live up to that," Mayor Olivarez said.

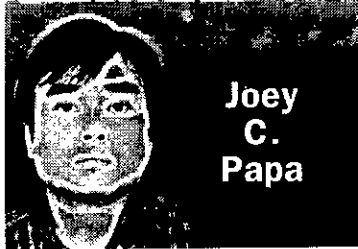
The late Dr. Rosario De Leon Olivarez, the mayor's mother, was among the early group of women who introduced composting in Parañaque.

Notable among those segregating their waste at source, composting the biodegradable waste from their kitchens and yards, and recycling or donating their non-biodegradable waste to the collector/recycler, are from UPS 5, Area 7, Barangay San Isidro. The neighborhood eco-waste management practice is led by couple Evangeline (Tata) and Paul Domine, Willy Malabago, Gecel and Carlos Malabago and Dave Lacson. "Let's walk the talk," Tata said.

"Please help your barangay chairman (Noel Japlos) so that he can help you, in turn, propagate your best practice among the rest of San Isidro," Mr. Bernardo N. Amurao, head of the City Environment and Natural Resources Office, requested Tata and company when he personally visited their Ecology Center the other week.

When Mayor Olivarez visited Tata's area earlier, he told the residents, "tuloy-tuloy lang po natin ang makakalikasang pamamahala ng ating ba-

### BANGON KALIKASAN



Joey C. Papa

sura."

Data from UPS 5-Area 7 show that about 80% of the households no longer give their biodegradable waste to the centralized collection, with 47 households composting at home and 32 households giving their biodegradable waste, segregated from non-biodegradable wastes, to the area collector for the composting shed. For the non-biodegradable wastes, most of these are also given to the same area collector for sale or recycling.

If biowaste makes up about 50%-60% of waste generated, and recyclable non-biowaste makes up about 30%, that would roughly mean some 80%-90% waste reduction if the biodegradable waste is composted. No expensive inputs—only the soil, heat of the sun, wind, and water (lupa, araw, hangin, at tubig or LAHAT formula) is needed; no complicated method must be followed (only using soil, biodegradable waste, soil alternately, mixing these for aeration and moistening the mixture with some water). The willingness to do so and to sustain it is most important. The remaining 10% would be the residual wastes, which CENRO collects for

recycling.

For Fourth Estate-Area 3 and Banana Site, in Barangay San Antonio, activation of the Ecology Center System with a composting shed is more recent. However, there is increasing proof of waste reduced from the households that have responded to the waste reduction survey with the initial monitoring of the ecological solid waste practice of the residents. Of those who responded, only two are not composting. Very little is left after segregation, composting, and setting aside the recyclables for selling. Tita Rose Laman, in her early 30s, is largely responsible for getting the community together to activate the system, with the help of the president of Banana Site, Nelson Tibes and officer, Evelyn Tadea.

Achieving the objective for the other communities not only in the two barangays but in the rest of the City of Parañaque would greatly depend on the leadership of the City Government, many of the residents said.

In response to that, Mayor Edwin Olivarez reiterated the need for continuing education in line with the City Government's intent to harness the cooperation of the residents in complying with the law, basically; and in promoting and instilling an ecological orientation for the city in the long run.

Leadership, passion, sincere intentions, and sustained involvement of even just a few individuals, as demonstrated in UPS 5-Area 7 and Fourth Estate -Area 3 and Banana Site has made the difference in galvanizing action and earning the cooperation of the rest of the residents (bangonkalikasan@yahoo.com).



# PH at center of world pollution problem

**A**N international alliance formed to fight plastic waste around the world came out this week with a statement that should cause a great deal of concern among us Filipinos.

The Alliance to End Plastic Waste (AEPW) said about 90 percent of global marine litter comes from just ten rivers and over half the land-based plastic litter leaking into oceans originates from five Asian countries – China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam.

The alliance was formed by 28 founding companies last Wednesday – among them Procter & Gamble, Kraft, Nestlé, Unilever, and Henkel – which pledged to spend \$1.5 billion over the next five years on waste collection infrastructure, developing technology for recycling and re-use of waste, educating governments and local communities, and cleaning up highly polluted areas.

The news of the organization of the alliance was followed the next day, Thursday, by another report which also reflected the growing world concern over the environment – the publication of a landmark study in *The Lancet* of London, one of the world's oldest, most prestigious, and best known general medical journals.

The *Lancet* carried a 50-page study that said nearly a billion people today are hungry and another two billion are eating too much of the wrong foods – too much red meat and too much sugar – that are causing epidemics of obesity, heart disease, and diabetes.

This is the food produced by the world's agriculture which, at the same time, is the single largest emitter of greenhouse gases, the biggest single

cause of biodiversity loss, and the main cause of algae blooms along coasts and inland waterways around the world. Cattle produce massive quantities of the greenhouse gas methane, while forests which help to absorb carbon and produce oxygen, are cut down to make room for cattle ranches.

“We can no longer feed our population a healthy diet while balancing planetary resources,” said *The Lancet* editor-in-chief Richard Horton. “For the first time in 200,000 years of human history, we are severely out of sync with the planet.”

This same week in the United States, the US journal science published findings that the world's oceans are warming more rapidly than earlier thought. It said excess heat from the burning of fossil fuels – coal, natural gas, oil and its derivatives gasoline and diesel – surrounds the planet Earth and about 93 percent of the heat accumulates in the world's oceans, causing water to expand and sea levels to rise. The hotter oceans are also blamed for the increasingly violent typhoons and hurricanes now hitting many countries, including ours.

We in the Philippines are becoming more and more aware of our environment, especially with regards to the pollution that is destroying our natural resources and the beauty of our islands. After we cleaned up Boracay, we are now moving to clean up Manila Bay after a century of neglect.

We should now begin looking into other areas other than pollution through sewage. Certainly, we must start to do something about the finding that the Philippines is the world's third biggest source of plastic wastes that are steadily filling the world's oceans, threatening ocean wildlife and ultimately human life.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
Strategic Communication Initiatives Service

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS  
SINCE 1900

# MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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## EDITORIAL

# Pilipinas, sentro ng problema ng polusyon sa mundo

**I**NILABAS ngayong linggo ng isang pandaigdigang samahan, na binuo para sa layuning labanan ang plastic na basura sa buong mundo, ang isang pahayag na dapat ikapangamba nating mga Pilipino.

Sinabi ng Alliance to End Plastic Waste (AEPW) na mahigit 90 porsiyento ng basura sa katubigan ng mundo ay mula sa sampung ilog at higit kalahati ng mga plastic mula sa kalupaan na napupunta sa mga karagatan ay nanggagaling sa limang bansa sa Asya — China, Indonesia, Pilipinas, Thailand, at Vietnam.

Ang alyansa ay binuo ng 28 kumpanya nitong Miyerkules — kabilang ang Proctor & Gamble, Kraft, Nestle, Unilever, at Henkel — na nangakong gugugol ng \$1.5 billion sa susunod na limang taon para sa pagbuo ng waste collection infrastructure, pag-develop ng mga teknolohiya para sa recycling at muling paggamit ng mga basura, pagbibigay impormasyon sa pamahalaan at lokal na mga komunidad, at paglilinis ng mga pinakamaruruming lugar.

Ang balita ng organisasyon ng alyansa ay sinundan nang sumunod na araw, Huwebes, ng panibagong ulat na nagpapakita rin sa lumalalang problema ng mundo sa kapaligiran ang publikasyon ng isang pag-aaral sa The Lancet of London, isa sa pinakamatanda, pinakaprestihyoso, at pinakakilalang general medical journal.

Inilimbag ng The Lancet ang 50 pahinang pag-aaral na nagsasabing halos isang bilyon tao sa kasalukuyan ang nagugutom habang ang dalawang bilyon ang labis ang pagkain ng mga maling pagkain — labis na pulang karne at labis na asukal — na nagdudulot ng epidemya ng obesity, heart disease, at diabetes.

Ito ang pagkaing inilalabas ng agrikultura ng mundo, na nag-iisa ring pinakamalaking naglalabas ng mga greenhouse gases, ang pinakamalaking nag-iisang sanhi ng pagkawala ng biodiversity, at pangunahing nagdudulot ng pagdami ng mga algae na tumutubo sa mahahabang baybayin at sa mga daanan ng tubig sa buong mundo. Malaking bahagdan ng greenhouse gas methane ang inilalabas ng mga baka, habang ang mga kagubatan na nakatutulong sa pagsipsip ng mga carbon at paglabas ng oxygen, ay pinuputol naman at kinakalbo upang tayuan ng mga raniso.

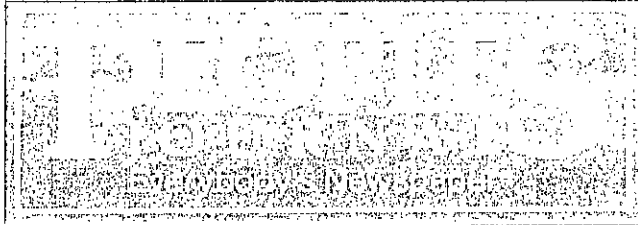
"We can no longer feed our population a healthy diet while balancing planetary resources," pahayag ni The Lancet editor in chief Richard Horton. "For the first time in 200,000 years of human history, we are severely out of sync with the planet."

Sa kaparehong linggo sa Amerika, inilabas ng US journal science ang resulta na nagpapakitang ang mga karagatan ng mundo ay mas mabilis na umiinit kumpara sa unang inasahan. Sinabi rito na ang labis na init mula sa mga sinusunog na mga pangatong (fossil fuels) — uling, natural gas, langis at uri nitong gasolina at diesel — na pumapalibot sa mundo at nasa 93% ng init na naiipon sa mga karagatan ay nagdudulot ng pagtaas ng tubig at pag-akyat ng lebel ng karagatan. Isinisisi rin sa mainit na karagatan ang dumadulas na matitinding bagyo na nananalasa sa maraming bansa, kabilang tayo.

Tayo sa Pilipinas ay unti-unting nagiging mas malay sa ating kapaligiran, lalo na sa polusyon na sumisira sa ating mga natural na yaman at sa kagandahan ng ating mga isla. Matapos nating linisin ang Boracay, isinusunod na natin ang paglilinis ng Manila Bay makalipas ang isang siglong pagbabalewala.

Kailangan na nating simulang tingnan ang iba pang bahagi bukod sa polusyon dulot ng mga imburnal. Tiyak, kinakailangang may gawin tayo tungkol sa natuklasan na ang Pilipinas ang ikatlong pinakamalaking pinanggagalingan ng mga plastic na basura na patuloy na natatambak sa mga karagatan ng mundo, na nagbibigay panganib sa mga yamang dagat at sa buhay ng sangkatauhan.





21 JAN 2010

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## Maynilad spends P23.3B for wastewater projects since 2007

WEST Zone concessionaire Maynilad Water Services, Inc. (Maynilad) had invested about P23.3 billion to improve wastewater infrastructure and expand sewerage coverage in the West Zone since the company's re-privatization in 2007.

This investment—which went into the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities and rehabilitation of existing ones, acquisition of new vacuum trucks for septic tank cleaning, and installation of new sewer lines, among others—enabled the company to increase sewerage coverage from only six percent in 2007 to 20 percent by end of 2018.

"Increasing sewerage coverage by just one percent requires an average investment of about P1.6 billion, so the level of investment to enhance the wastewater infrastructure is huge. Nevertheless, this is something we have to do to ensure environmental sustainability," said Maynilad President and CEO Ramoncito S. Fernandez.

With its recent completion of new sewage treatment plants in Pasay and Parañaque, Maynilad now operates 19 sewage treatment plants, two sewage and septage treatment plants, and one septage treatment plant with a combined treatment capacity of an estimated 662,000 cubic meters of wastewater per day.

Maynilad is also currently constructing additional wastewater treatment facilities in Valenzuela, Cavite City, and Tunasan and Cupang in Muntinupa.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE



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## Batangas farm owners warned vs waste in rivers

BATANGAS CITY—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Calabarzon has warned livestock farm owners in the province against dumping wastes into rivers.

Lawyer Maria Paz G. Luna, DENR Calabarzon Executive Director, said the agency stands by its mandate to file charges against erring farm owners and impose daily fines on violators upon receipt of the violation notice.

She also underscored that business compliance is not merely securing their discharge permits but more importantly on establishing their farms with “real, existing and functioning waste water treatment facilities.”

Luna said this is to ensure their farms would not pollute any stream, river or body of water.

She said the DENR-Calabarzon is also conducting technical conferences in other provinces in the region in compliance with Secretary Roy Cimatu’s directive to revive, protect and conserve bodies of water like the waters off Boracay and now the Manila Bay.

Ann Hazel D. Javier, DENR Calabarzon Regional Public Affairs Office chief, said the DENR has been pushing for environmental protection and conservation priorities amid violations by establishments and dumpsites that have breached solid waste management and clean water acts.

“The DENR Calabarzon has called for a meeting for livestock farm owners in Batangas province who were served notices of violation,” Javier told reporters.

She said the gathering of livestock farm owners and administrators at the Batangas Convention Center aims to address the wanton disposal of solid wastes and effluents into rivers and streams.



## Erring livestock raisers face charges

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-Calabarzon over the weekend reiterated its order to livestock farm owners in Batangas to refrain from dumping their wastes into the rivers or risk being fined or closed.

**The office has given owners of livestock farms 30 days to comply with the provisions of Republic Act 9275 or Clean Water Act.**

DENR-Calabarzon executive director Maria Paz G. Luna said the agency will implement its mandate and is poised to file appropriate charges against erring farm owners.

Luna explained that business compliance is not merely securing their discharge permits, but more importantly equipping their farms with "real, existing and functioning wastewater treatment facilities."

"This is to ensure their farms would not pollute any stream, river or body of water," Luna said.

Earlier, the DENR-Calabarzon had called for a meeting with livestock farm owners in the province who were served with notices of violation for improper disposal of solid wastes and effluents into rivers and streams.

The office has given owners of livestock farms 30 days to comply with the provisions of Republic Act 9275 or Clean Water Act.

Meanwhile, DENR-Calabarzon has already started conducting technical conferences in compliance with Secretary Roy A. Cimatu's directive to revive, protect and conserve bodies of water in the whole region.

**Kuhlin Ceslie Gacula**



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# MGA MAGSASAKA SA BATANGAS BINALAAN NA HUWAG MAGTAPON NG DUMI SA MGA ILOG

INALAAN ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal at Que-

zon) kamakailan ang livestock farm owners sa Batangas laban sa pagtatambak ng mga dumi sa mga ilog.

Sinabi ni Atty. Ma-

ria Paz G. Luna, DENR Calabarzon Executive Director, na naninindigan sa kanilang mandato na magpapataw sila ng kaso laban sa mga hindi sumusunod na mga magsasaka at magpapataw ng kaukulang multa sa mga susuwag kapag nakatanggap na ng resibo ng violation notice.

Sinabi niya na ang business compliance ay hindi lamang para siguruhin ang kanilang discharge permits pero mas importante sa pagtatayo ng kanilang sakahan ng "real, existing and functioning waste water treatment facilities."

Sinabi ni Luna na ito ay para siguruhin na hindi madudumihan ang kahit anong batis, ilog, o dagat.

Sinabi niya na ang DENR-Calabarzon ay

nagsasagawa rin ng technical conferences sa ibang probinsiya sa rehiyon bilang pagtalima sa direktiba ni Secretary Roy A. Cimatu na buhayin, protektahan, at panatilihin ang bodies of water tulad ng dagat sa Boracay at ngayon sa Manila Bay.

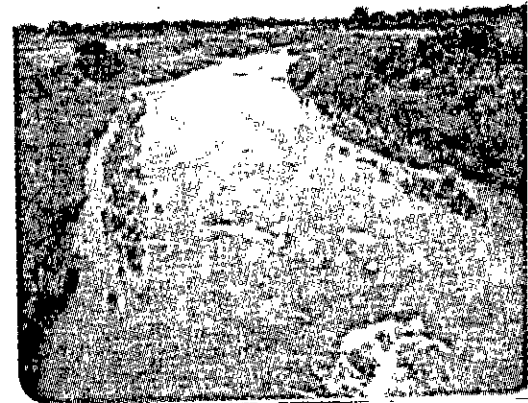
Sinabi naman ni Ann Hazel D. Javier, hepe ng DENR Calabarzon Regional Public Affairs Office, na ang DENR ay matagal nang nagtutulak para sa environmental protection at conservation priorities sa gitna ng mga paglabag ng mga establisimiyento at dumpsites na hindi na tumupad sa solid waste management at clean water acts.

"Nagpatawag ng pagpupulong ngayong araw ang DENR Calabarzon para sa mga nabigyan ng notices of violation na

livestock farms sa probinsiya ng Batangas," sabi ni Javier sa isang panayam.

Sinabi pa niya na ang pagtitipon ng livestock farm owners at administrators sa Batangas Convention Center ay naglalayon na matugunan ang walang habas na pagtatapon ng solid wastes sa mga ilog at batis.

Sinabi niya na ang mga may-ari ng livestock farms ay binigyan ng 30 araw para sumunod sa probisyon ng Republic Act 9275 o "Clean Water Act" na nagbibigay ng comprehensive water quality management at ibang layon ng Republic Act 9003 o ang "Ecological Solid Waste Management Act." **PNA**





# Efforts to conserve 'pawikan' in Davao intensifies

By MANUEL T. CAYON | Mindanao Bureau Chief  
@awimailbox

**D**AVAO CITY—Conservation efforts for *pawikan* (marine turtle) continue to intensify as the city government, the environment department and Aboitiz Group renewed their commitments for the preservation and protection of the turtle, particularly the critically endangered hawksbill turtle in Davao City.

Davao City Mayor Sara Duterte-Carpio, the Aboitiz Group, through its social-development arm Aboitiz Foundation and Aboitiz Power business unit Davao Light and Power Co., and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) last week to establish the Pawikan Center inside the Aboitiz-owned Cleanergy Park in Punta Dumalag, part of which was declared a protected area.

Officials from the three agencies released that day an Oliver Ridley species of sea turtle back to sea. It was rescued in 2017 and turned over for caretaking at the Crocodile Park. The released turtle was named "Crocy," to recognize the care of the Crocodile Park on the turtle.

Duterte-Carpio, a daughter of President Duterte, said she would like the rescue center for sea turtle to take shape soon to follow through the consistency of the Aboitiz-owned conservation coastal park as a nesting ground among the endangered sea turtles.

The center has a temporary shelter, clinic, laboratory, observation deck, boardwalks, and other facilities for the rescue, rehabilitation, conservation, protection and care of marine turtles in Punta Dumalag. This supports the multisectoral effort of "pursuing sustainable development

within the context of a balanced ecology."

The center would serve as the rescue and hatchery center—the first for the city to engage in the protection of the nesting ground of sea turtles, one of the most endangered marine species.

Duterte-Carpio said she would assign City Hall personnel to help the center as she also disclosed she would coordinate with the DENR to provide the technical support to ensure that "what we do here is correct and appropriate."

She would let the Aboitiz group develop the center though, saying, "it owned the place."

"Davao is truly blessed to be a nesting site of marine turtles, a keystone specie in maintaining the balance in our ecosystem. It is clear that the government and the private sector must work together to protect these endangered animals before it becomes too late," Duterte-Carpio said.

"We commend the Aboitiz Group, Davao Light and Power Co., and the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park," she added.

"We look forward to the creation of the Pawikan Rescue Center in Punta Dumalag, which will aim to protect the plant and animal life thriving in the marine eco-park," Duterte-Carpio said.

Ruth Tawantawan, DENR

assistant secretary for Eastern Mindanao, said: "Thank you to Aboitiz. The DENR is very blessed to have you. Truly, DENR Sec. Roy Cimato will be grateful."

Jaime Jose Y. Aboitiz, Aboitiz Power executive vice president and COO for Distribution Group, said: "Today, after more than 13,000 mangrove seedlings planted and more than 3,000 [*pawikan*] hatchlings released, we renew our commitment." Aboitiz led the con-

glomerate's delegation to the MOA signing.

"All over the country, the Aboitiz Group's response to the DENR's lead in environmental preservation demonstrates our sustainability mindset. Through the projects we implement together, we ensure that we head full speed toward our promise of advancing business and communities," he added.

Besides protecting the nesting areas at the park, the Pawikan

Center aims to identify, document and address threats to marine turtles and their habitats in Punta Dumalag; promote research, monitoring and information exchange; enhance public awareness on the conservation initiatives in the area; and fortify the collaboration between the public and private sectors for the long-term recovery of *pawikan* population in the area.

Mayor Duterte-Carpio said the rescue center would elevate the conservation effort of sea turtles, of which four of the seven known species are found in the Davao Gulf.

The Punta Dumalag area is a land projection into the Davao Gulf of which 37 hectares were declared as marine protected area. The Punta Dumalag waters covers 520 kilometers of coastline of four provinces, five cities and 18 municipalities.

A big portion of Punta Dumalag has been occupied by informal settlers. However, Duterte said their local leaders have been



## P1 Efforts to conserve 'pawikan' in Davao intensifies



GOVERNMENT and industry leaders lead efforts to conserve the *pawikan* by signing a memorandum of agreement to establish a Pawikan Center. Jaime Jose Y. Aboitiz (center, kneeling) AboitizPower executive vice president and chief operating officer (COO) for Distribution Group, leads the recent release of a hawkbill turtle (*pawikan*) on the grounds of the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park in Punta Dumalag, Davao City, where a Pawikan Center is set to rise. He is joined by DENR Assistant Secretary Ruth Tawantawan (left, kneeling) and Davao Light COO Rodger Velasco (right, kneeling). Aboitiz Equity Ventures Adviser for Mindanao Art Milan (Second from left, standing) and Davao Light Community Relations Manager Fermin Edillon (second from right, standing) look on.

“Davao is truly blessed to be a nesting site of marine turtles, a keystone specie in maintaining the balance in our ecosystem. It is clear that the government and the private sector must work together to protect these endangered animals before it becomes too late.” —DUTERTE-CARPIO

designated to ensure that residents would participate in the regular conservation work in the locality, such as a weekly coastal cleanup and observance of proper waste disposal. Their involvement would help support the protection of Punta Dumalag.

The Aboitiz group said its 8-hectare Cleanergy Park inside the protected Punta Dumalag has noted its consistency as a nesting ground of sea turtles even before it was established in 2015. To date, the park has seen 4,370 eggs laid and hatched and was the place where 3,482 hatchlings were rescued and released.

Aboitiz said its conservation effort at the Cleanergy Park was part of the conglomerate's bigger environmental participation, including in the government's National Greening Program and in the recent environmental rehabilitation work in Boracay.

He said the Aboitiz group was poised to plant as many as 9 million trees in Boracay and would make it as another model of restoring the environment in the world-renown beach resort.

The DENR will provide technical assistance, facilitate information and education campaign on marine turtle conservation and establish Punta Dumalag as critical habitat for marine turtles, among others.

Meanwhile, the Davao City government, through local ordinance, will strengthen the enforcement of existing laws on conservation efforts, assist the DENR in the establishment of Punta Dumalag as a critical habitat for the marine turtles, provide manpower support for the project, and furnish the DENR with monitoring reports.

In 2007 the Sangguniang Panglungsod of Davao City declared the shoreline extending 300 meters seaward in Punta Dumalag as a Marine Protected Area. In 2015 Aboitiz inaugurated the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park to serve as an example of an urban-based habitat conservation initiative in the area.



# Gov't gears up for El Niño

A Task Force on El Niño was already organized as early as last year when the first reports of a probable drought were released by the PAGASA

By Kuhlín Ceslle Gacula

The government on Sunday assured the public it has been preparing for the El Niño weather phenomenon that may affect the country in the first quarter of 2019.

This, as the Department of Agriculture (DA) said it has been preparing for the possible effects El Niño in the agriculture sector for quite some time now, along with the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI).

El Niño refers to the cycle of warm and cold temperatures, as measured by sea surface temperature of the tropical central and eastern Pacific Ocean.

It is usually responsible for long dry spell that could have adverse effects on the country's agriculture.

Earlier, the IIRI had called on the government to be prepared for the possible effects of drought because of the phenomenon.

A task force on El Niño was already organized as early as last year when the first reports of a probable drought were released by the PAGASA.

Among the interventions being readied are water pumps to be used during drought and seeds for farmers which they can plant after the dry spell.

The DA has also prepositioned emergency rice supplies for those that will be adversely affected.

Likewise, the DA also disclosed the availability of the survival and recovery loans, amounting to P25,000 with no-collateral and no-interest loan payable in three years.

PAGASA earlier had announced that the country might experience a short-term or weak El Niño starting late January or early February onwards.



**Parched** A farmer checks his visibly dry farm after being affected by El Niño weather phenomenon.

FILE PHOTO



## Climate change-induced salinity affecting soil in coastal Bangladesh

**D**HAKA, Bangladesh—As a country with a large coastline, the adverse impacts of saltwater intrusion are significant in Bangladesh. Salinity affects land and water in the coastal areas.

With the consequence of climate change, it gradually extends toward inland water and soil. This scenario is very threatening to the primary production system, coastal biodiversity and human health, said researchers in Bangladesh.

The total amount of salinity-affected land in Bangladesh was 83.3 million hectares in 1973, which had been increased up to 102 million hectares in 2000 and the amount has risen to 105.6 million hectares in 2009 and continuing to increase, according to the country's Soil Resources Development Institute (SRDI).

In the last 35 years, salinity increased around 6 percent in the country, spreading into non-coastal areas, as well.

"Salinity, which is rising in the coastal areas of Bagerhat, a southwestern district, is casting a huge impact on the environment. Production of various crops has declined due to excessive salinity in soil," Advocate Mohiuddin Sheikh, president of Rampal-Mongla Embankment Implementation Committee, told United News of Bangladesh.

Once huge coconut and betel trees were there in the area, but has decreased dramatically, he said, adding, "The production of seasonal vegetables has also declined. Since the late 1980s, the effects of salinity in Rampal and Mongla areas have been hampering the local ecology."

The locals, however, blame unplanned shrimp cultivation as the main cause of salinity, Mohiuddin

said, adding, "Due to decrease in sweet water and fall in saline water flow from the ocean, the salinity has increased in the region."

Studies conducted by the World Bank, Institute of Water Modeling and World Fish, Bangladesh between 2012 and 2016 have quantified the effects of increasing salinity in river waters in coastal Bangladesh, including the areas in and around the Sundarbans—the world's largest mangrove forest that straddles the coast of Bangladesh and India.

The broad categories of climate change effects that hit the coastal areas of Bangladesh are changes in temperature and rainfall pattern, sea-level rise, change in frequency and intensity of cyclones, storm surge, change in river and soil salinity. More alarmingly, researchers from the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research Bangladesh (ICDDR) have noticed an unexpectedly high rate of miscarriage in a small village of Chakaria, near Cox's Bazaar, on the east coast of Bangladesh.

After investigation, scientists concluded that climate change might to be blamed.

Khulna region member of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa) MA Savur Rana, a resident of Singarbunia village in Rampal Upazila, said, "Farmers used to harvest Aman [a paddy season] paddy in vast croplands of their areas. But due to excess salinity, Aman paddy has become extinct."

This has caused a huge impact on the lifestyle of the local people, he mentioned.

Between 2012 and 2017, the ICDDR scientists registered 12,867 pregnancies in the area they have been monitoring for last 30 years. They followed the pregnant women through until the

end of the pregnancy and found that women in the coastal plains, living within 20 kilometers of the coastline and 7 meters above sea level, were 1.3 times more likely to miscarry than women who live inland.

This difference, the scientists believe, is the amount of salt in the water the women drink—the increase of which is caused by climate change.

Another recent study conducted by the World Bank indicates that climate change will cause significant changes in river salinity in the southwest coastal region during the dry season (October to May) by 2050, will likely lead to shortages of drinking and irrigation water and cause changes in aquatic ecosystems.

Changes in river salinity and the availability of freshwater will affect the productivity of fisheries. It will adversely affect the wild habitats of freshwater fish and giant prawn.

In addition, the salinity increase may induce a shift in the Sundarbans mangrove forest from Sundari (the single most dominant and important species, with the highest market value) to Gewa and Guran.

Estimates from the research indicate that Bagerhat, Barguna, Barisal, Bhola, Khulna, Jhalakati, Pirojpur and Satkhira districts will be affected most adversely. The study also identifies soil salinization in coastal Bangladesh as a major risk from climate change.

In the coming decades, soil salinity will significantly increase in many areas of Barisal, Chittogram and Khulna districts. It projects a median increase of 26 percent in salinity by 2050, with increases over 55 percent in the most affected areas.

Due to the rise in soil salinity, Chittagong and Khulna districts are likely to witness the highest within-district additional migration, estimated between 15,000 and 30,000 migrants per year, said another study, titled "Coastal Climate Change, Soil Salinity and Human Migration in Bangladesh," jointly conducted in 2018 by International Food Policy Research Institute and the Ohio State University.

"These two districts also contain the second- and third-largest cities in the country. Districts without large cities like Bagerhat, Bhola and Fenil will generally expect smaller within-district flows, between 5,000 and 15,000, but larger out-of-district flows, particularly to districts with large cities," said Ohio State University's Joyce Chen, the coauthor of the study.

Meanwhile, after two weeks of bruising negotiations, officials from almost 200 countries on December 15 agreed on universal, transparent rules that will govern efforts to cut emissions and curb global warming.

The deal agreed upon at United Nations climate talks in Poland enables countries to put into action the principles in the 2015 Paris climate accord.

But to the frustration of environmental activists and some countries who were urging more ambitious climate goals, negotiators delayed decisions on two key issues until next year in an effort to get a deal on them.

The talks in Poland took place against a backdrop of growing concern among scientists that global warming on Earth is proceeding faster than governments are responding to it. **United News of Bangladesh and Inter Press Service**





A FARMER holds dead grass at a farm in Wandandian, New South Wales, Australia. BLOOMBERG NEWS

## Climate, cyber risks top concerns in 2019

**T**HE failure to tackle climate change and extreme weather events are the most threatening global risks this year, according to the World Economic Forum (WEF).

Inability to mitigate or adapt to climate change leapfrogged several places on the list as the second-most likely risk facing the world in 2019 after extreme weather events, the WEF said in a report published last week.

What's more, worsening international relations mean the capacity to deal with those major problems has plummeted.

Devastating wildfires, tsunamis and other natural disasters killed

over 10,000 people in 2018. The catastrophes fueled above-average economic losses of \$160 billion, according to insurer Munich Re AG. Those from wildfires, in particular, have risen as summers become hotter and drier, with the Camp Fire in California proving last year's most expensive natural catastrophe.

In fourth and fifth place are massive incidents of data fraud or theft, and large-scale cyber attacks. That's likely a reflection of widespread hacking by Russia and other cyber invaders, and increasing concerns over the ability of companies like Facebook Inc., to keep users' personal information safe. *Bloomberg News*



# PHL's top tourist destination seen having its 'best year' in 2019

BY MA. STELLA F. ARNALDO  
*Special to the BUSINESSMIRROR*

**B**OOM-boom-boom!  
boom! Prat-prat-prat!  
prat! Pit Senyor!  
Pit Senyor!

With every strike of the drum and rhythmic tinkling of xylophones, dancers in colorful costumes and elaborate headdresses sewn by hand, put their hearts and hips into every sway and shake to celebrate the Santo Niño over the weekend.

The constant downpour on Sunday did very little to dampen the fervor and excitement of the participants in Sinulog 2019, as well as the estimated 230,000 foreign tourists and over 1 million domestic travelers, who descended on Cebu to watch the annual festivities celebrating the gifting of the image of the child Jesus to Hara Amihan by Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan in 1521. The image, now housed in Basilica Minore de Santo Niño in downtown Cebu, is credited with a number of miracles, thus the increasing number of thankful devotees.

The Sinulog is just one of the many attractions that have made Cebu the Philippines' top tourist destination, according to Regional Director Shalimar Hofer Tamano of the Department of Tourism's (DOT's) Eastern Visayas region. "I think this year will be the best for tourism in Cebu," he enthused, as he expressed optimism the province will see at least a 10-percent increase in tourist arrivals for 2019, or at least 6.5 million from last year's estimated 6 million.

In March, Cebu will host Routes Asia 2019, the region's air service development community, which attracts senior decision makers in the aviation industry, tourism authorities and stakeholders, and industry influencers. Tourism



Secretary Bernadette Romulo Puyat recently said about 800 delegates, and representatives from 100 airlines and 200 airports, as well as 30 tourism authorities, along with the 20 featured speakers, are expected at the three-day event.

Another travel-related event the province will be hosting, said Tamano, is the Center for Asia-Pacific Aviation conference in June 24-25. With low-cost carriers (LCCs) in North Asia accounting for total traffic to the region, the conference will discuss challenges these carriers are facing and opportunities for growth.

The annual Ironman triathlon challenge, to be held in the province on August 11, will also be a source of thousands of tourists.

He added the newly-opened Cebu Safari and Adventure Park in the municipality of Carmen, just 2-3 hours away from the city, will be a key attraction, with tourists flocking to try "Asia's longest zipline," at 1.2 kilometers (km). "Tourists can go there to stay overnight," said Tamano, as a hotel is being built, or make a stopover there before heading to Sta. Fe, in Bantayan Island, another major



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PHL's top tourist destination seen having its 'best year' in 2019



tourism destination in the province.

"This year, we are promoting Northern Cebu," he averred, but acknowledged that one of the major challenges for these destinations is the long travel time going there. From Cebu City to the jetty port gateway to Bantayan is about 5 hours in all. "That's why I have been proposing a water taxi at least from Cebu to Carmen, patterned after Venice, to make the Cebu Safari more accessible."

He said the opening of Terminal 2 of Mactan International Airport will likely draw

more direct flights to Cebu as well as charter flights from Southeast Asia and other regions. "Some are working on flights from Qatar to Cebu," he revealed.

Close to 7 million tourists visited Eastern Visayas in 2017, some 80 percent or 5.6 million of whom made their way to Cebu City, according to data from the DOT. Of the total visitors to the region in 2017, some 3 million were foreigners, while the rest were local travelers, said Tamano.

Despite the huge numbers, the DOT regional executive said the agency has been

"working closely" with his counterparts from the Departments of Environment and Natural Resources and Interior and Local Government to ensure the environment of major tourism destinations continue to be protected. "We have the same kind of setup like the BIATF (Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force), except for the region," he noted.

Tamano said DOT has also been working with the "local government and the fishermen in Oslob, for instance, to cut in half the visitors there, to reduce the stress on the whale sharks." At the same time, he said, proposals have been made to raise the environmental fees for tourists to be able visit with the sharks. (A shark visit/tour costs about P1,000 per person.)

Environment Undersecretary Sherwin S. Rigor, who has spearheaded the rehabilitation of Boracay and Manila Bay for the DENR, said the waters of Cebu, including its beach destinations, are regularly being sampled and tested. "It's part of periodic monitoring of the Environment and Management Bureau," he stressed. For now, he said, no environmental issues have come up regarding Cebu.

Tamano noted the recent problem about hospital waste being found floating in waters off Lapu-Lapu were traced to a private home, and not to the city hospital which was earlier blamed for the refuse.

"We are implementing the sustainable tourism action program announced by Secretary Puyat," he underscored, ensuring that Cebu will not go the way of Boracay Island, the country's second top tourist destination.

Boracay was closed for six months in 2018 to give way to the government's rehabilitation effort. President Duterte dubbed the island a cesspool after seeing footage of sewerage pouring straight into Bulabog beach, the kite-surfing area. After Boracay, government has trained its sights on cleaning up and protecting other island destinations like Panglao in Bohol, El Nido and Coron in Palawan, and Siargao in Surigao del Norte.

# Gov't pushes greater access to green financing

By MARY GRACE PADIN

The government is keen on strengthening its policies to improve the access of both the public and private sectors to green financing, according to the Department of Finance (DOF).

Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez said the government is pushing to expand the coverage of the ASEAN Framework for Green Bonds to cover other sectors, including transportation, infrastructure and commercial banking.

Green financing is a form of investment specifically dedicated to sustainable projects that could help mitigate the effects of climate change.

"We hope to mainstream access to green financing through banks and microfinance institutions," Dominguez said during the "Green Finance Toward a Sustainable Philippines" Forum in Manila.

The finance chief said the government is also exploring the possibility of funding various public-private partnerships through green financing.

With climate change emerging as the most pressing global problem, Dominguez said green financing has turned into an effective instrument for countries, especially the highly vulnerable ones like the Philippines, to mobilize investments aimed at improving the resilience of communities.

Among these is the ASEAN Green Bonds, which refer to bonds and sukuk (Islamic bonds) that comply with the ASEAN Green Bond Standards (GBS); developed through consultations with the International Capital Market Association (ICMA), capital regulators and industry players in



the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Proceeds from the issuance of ASEAN Green Bonds will be exclusively applied to finance or refinance, in part or in full, new or existing eligible green projects.

However, the finance chief said there is still a need to refine instruments for green financing to make them more attractive to investors given the huge investments needed for climate change mitigation measures.

"The Philippines is among the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. We have seen how increasingly severe weather conditions inflict a growing cost on our economy, increase the vulnerability of our communities and threaten our food security. We need to put in our best efforts to turn back climate change and improve resilience to minimize economic dislocation," Dominguez said.

The government and the

financial sector, in partnership with multilateral institutions, have been carrying out initiatives in line with the strategies outlined in the Philippine Development Plan and National Climate Change Action Plan.

These include the launch of the People's Survival Fund in 2016, which has an annual rolling budget allocation of P1 billion to finance climate change projects proposed by local government units.

In October last year, the Department of Budget and Management also launched its Green Green program to assist 145 cities in making life more livable for residents through the development of public open spaces.

The Asian Development Bank in 2016 issued its landmark \$225-million climate bond through the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI), while the International Finance Corp. last year issued its triple A rated peso-denom-

inated Mabuhay bonds.

China Banking Corp. also issued its first green bond in 2018, while the Development Bank of the Philippines launched its Green Financing Program.

Meanwhile, Budget Secretary Benjamin Diokno said the government's budget for climate change initiatives exceed P200 billion annually, both for adaptation and mitigation measures.

He said the Duterte administration's climate change-related expenditures already reached six to seven percent of the total national budget.

"Most of these funds are allocated in the Department of Agriculture for climate resilience crops and food security programs. In the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, for research and implementation of climate change laws and policies and in the DPWH, for flood control and seawall projects," Diokno said.



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# 'COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR REGULATION ACT,' PASADO NA SA KAMARA

SA BILANG na 206 boto ng lahat na mambabatas na dumalo sa sesyon kamakailan, ipinasa na ng House of Representatives ang panukalang "Comprehensive Nuclear Regulation Act" (House Bill 8733) sa pangatlo at panghuling pagbasa nito. Layunin ng panukala ang pagtatatag at patatalaga ng komprehensibo at legal na balangkas nang wasto at ligtas na paggamit ng nuclear sa bansa at lumikha ng Philippine Nuclear Regulatory Commission (PNRC).

Binalangkas ni Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, at walo pang ibang mambabatas, layunin nitong tiyakin ang ligtas na paggamit ng nuclear sa kalusugan, medisina, enerhiya, sa kapaligiran sa bansa, lalo na sa 'ionizing radiation' nito, at kasangkapanin ito sa makabuluhang pagsulong ng teknolohiya at paglago ng industriya. Dalawa sa mga pangunahing may-akda nito ay sina dating Pangulo at ngayong House Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo at Majority Deputy Leader Ron Salo ng Kabayan partylist.

Kasama sa mga tungkulin ng PNRC ang pagbalangkas ng mga alituntunin, pamanatayan sa kakayanan ng mga

kompanyang lalahok sa mga programa nito; regular na inspeksiyon at pagpapangagot sa mga lalabag sa naturang mga alituntunin at sa mga kasiraang lilikhain nila; pakikipag-ugnayan sa ibang ahensiya sa kalusugan, kaligtasan, kapaligiran; pagtiyak sa mabisang pangangasiwa sa mga 'nuclear materials' at basurang nuclear; at iba pa na naaayon sa mga alituntunin ng International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Binigyang diin ni Salceda na may akdamang mga kaparusahan ang mga lalabag sa bagong batas kasama ang pagkabilanggo ng hindi hihigit sa limang taon at/o multang P1 milyon hanggang P5 milyon. May mandato rin ang PNRC na sumingil ng makatotohanang bayad para sa mga serbisyo nito na ilalagak naman sa Bureau of Treasury ng pamahalaan. Magtatatag din ito ng Nuclear Waste Management Fund mula sa benta ng lilikhaing koryente na gagamitin sa wasto at ligtas na pangangasiwa sa basurang 'nuclear.'

Pamumunuan ang PNRC ng isang Commissioner na hihirangin ng Pangulo. Aagapayan siya ng apat pang Deputy Commissioners at isang

Executive Director na mangangasiwa sa mga tungkuling ehekutibo, administratibo at pagpapalano. Magkakaroon din ng Advisory Board ang PNRC na pamamatnugutan ng DOST Secretary bilang chairman, at Health Secretary bilang vice chairman. Kasama nila sa naturang Board ang mga Kalihim ng Departments of Energy, National Defense, Environment and Natural Resources, Agriculture, Trade and Industry, at mga limang iba pa mula sa akademya at mga pribadong organisasyon.

Sa ilalim ng panukala, ililipat sa PNRC ng kasalukuyang Philippine Nuclear Research Institute (PNRI) ang lahat ng mga tungkulin, kapangyarihan, rekord, ari-arian at iba pa. Ganoon din ang Center for Device Regulation, Radiation, Health and Research ng Department of Health.

Kasama rin sa mga pangunahing may-akda ng Comprehensive Nuclear Regulation Act ay sina Rep. Francis Gerald Abaya (Cavite), Maximo Rodriguez Jr. (Cagayan de Oro City), Gary Alejano, Divina Grace Yu (Zamboanga del Sur), Erico Aristotle Aumentado (Bohol), at Seth Frederick Jalosjos (Zamboanga del Norte).



**BUKOD** sa Solar Para Sa Bayan Corporation na nag-apply ng super-franchise sa Kongreso na tinitingnan ng mga industry player na magresulta sa monopolya sa industriya ng solar, mayroon din umanong mining business si Sen. Loren Legarda sa Antique.

Abal Nakababahalang ito at hindi malayong maisip ng makaalam nito na maaaring ito ang naging

motibasyon ng senadora na tumakbo sa Antique bagama't dayuhan siya roon. Ang opisyal na address kasi ni Sen. Legarda ay sa Malabon.

Ayon sa ating informant, hindi malayong monopolya rin ni Sen. Legarda ang mining sa Antique. Sandali, akala ko ba environmentalist si Sen. Legarda!

Maaatalang sinampahan kamakailan ng ka-

song administratibo at graft si Sen. Legarda ukol sa pakikialam umano niya sa Mababang Kapulungan para rito sa Solar Para sa Bayan Corp. na pagmamay-ari ng kanyang 25-anyos na anak na si Leandro Leviste.

Inaakusahan din ng Philippine Rural Electric Cooperatives (PHILRECA) at ng National Association of General Managers of Electric Cooperatives (NAGMEC) na wala namang kakayahan ang kompanya ng anakni Sen.

Legarda para mag-service sa mga unserved communities sa bansa.

Ang hinihiling kasi ng anak ni Sen. Loren sa Kongreso ay isang "blanket legislative franchise to operate all throughout the country." Aba nakatatakot ito, amoy monopolya, mukhang monopolya, at lasang monopolya.

Nakasama sa kasong isinampa kay Sen. Legarda ang panghihimasok din umano ng senadora sa Department of Public Works and Highways

para maiupo sa District Engineering Office ng Antique ang isang inhinyero na nauna nang sinibak at dinismis ng Office of the Ombudsman dahil sa kasong katiwalian. Ano ba 'yan?

Ngayon talagang nakapaninindig ng balahebo itong sinasabi sa atin ng mga Antikenyo na may mining business pala si Sen. Legarda sa Antique.

Pambihira, pa-environmentalist ka pa e mining business din pala ang target mo?



### **BINABALI NG MGA KANDIDATO ANG BATAS**

MGA ka-idol, magsisimula na ang campaign period sa Pebrero 12, 2019 para sa mga kandidato sa pambansang puwesto katulad ng mga senador at mga partylist representative.

Ang panahon naman ng kampanya para sa mga lokal na kandidato katulad ng gobernador, bise gobernador, alkalde, bise alkalde, konsehal at kongresista ay magsisimula sa Marso 29.

Pero sa totoo lang, maraming kandidato ang matagal nang nangangampanya na isang pagbalewala sa mga itinakdang panahon ng Commission on Election.

Kitang-kita naman natin na naglipana na sa mga lansa-

ngan ang mga poster at tarpaulin ng mga kandidato na may lamang mensahe ng mga pagbati.

Pagbati sa kapistahan ng bayan, nitong nagdaang holiday seasons at ngayong malapit na ang graduation sa mga paaralan ay nagkukumahog sila sa pagbati ng 'Happy Graduation'.

Paulit-ulit nang pinaaalalahanan ng Comelec ang mga kandidato na hindi pa nagsisimula ang panahon ng kampanya.

Subalit tila, walang pakialam ang mga kandidato sa kautusan o paalala ng Comelec sapagkat sige pa rin sila sa pagkakabit ng mga poster at tarpaulin.



Kahit ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ay nagbigay ng babala laban sa paglalagay ng poster sa mga puno dahil paglabag ito sa environmental laws.

Pero may mga kandidato pa rin na sadyang makukulit at binabalewala ang babala ng DENR sapagkat makikita pa rin nating may mga poster at tarpaulin na ipinapako sa mga puno.

Kailangan na talagang bigyan ng linaw at ayusin ang lahat ng batas at panuntunan na magbibigay ng ka-

ayusan sa halalan.

Dapat ay magkaroon ng matalas na ngipin upang ipagbawal ang maagang pangangampanya para sa gayon ay maging patas ang laban ng mga kandidato.

Tunay na kailangan nang irebisa ang kasalukuyang batas at pagtibaying muli ang batas laban sa maagang pangangampanya.

Sa isang simpleng batas, ang lahat ng mga bawal sa panahong itinakda sa halalan ay maaaring malinaw na isaad para sa kaalaman ng mga kandidato.



**HABANG** nagbugbugban sina Senador Manny Pacquiao at Adrien Broner sa Las Vegas sa Amerika, pumasok narían sa mahal kong Pinas ang bagyong Amang para bugbugin ang mga Pinoy.

Kung malalakas sumuntok sina Pacquiao at Broner, malakas naman ang ulan ni Amang.

Kung wala pang isang oras na magbugbugan ang mga nabanggit na boxer, anak ng tokwa, tatlong araw na mambubugbog si Amang.

'Yun bang === mula kahapon hanggang bukas ang pananalasa ng nasabing bagyo at lilikha ng malalaking baha.

### **MALAKAS NA ULAN, SAKOP MALAWAK**

Sinasabi ng Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration na katamtaman hanggang malakas na ulan ang dala ni Amang.

Bagama't nasa signal number 1 lang ang lakas ng hangin ni Amang, itong sinasabi ng PAGASA na malakas na ulan ang dapat nating harapin.

Kahapon ng hapon naglandfall si Amang sa Caraga Region na binubuo ng mga lalawigan ng Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Dinagat Islands at Surigao del Sur.

Pero damay na rin ang mga lalawigan ng Northern Mindanao, Compostela Valley, Davao Oriental, Eastern Visayas, Central Visayas, Bicol Region, Southern Quezon, Marinduque and Romblon.

Ngayong araw, pasok na rin ang mga lugar na Visayas, Bicol Region, Southern Quezon, Marinduque and Romblon.

Bukas naman, daraanan ni Amang ang Albay, Sorsogon, Catanduanes, Masbate, Eastern Visayas at Central Visayas.

Nagbabala rin ang PAGASA sa lahat ng mga mangingisda na delikado ang pagpalaot sa lahat ng karagatan na sakop ng bagyo at kasama na rin ang silangan ng kahit Northern Luzon.

### **WALANG PATAY**

Sana hindi na maulit ang naganap sa nakaraang mga bagyo na laging may patay.



## **AMANG, 3 ARAW MAMBABAHA, MANINIRA**

Nitong huling bagyo lamang na si Usman, nag-iwan ito ng nasa 25 patay, lalo na sa Kabikulan.

Hindi dapat na kalimutan na ang Mindanao, Visayas at Kabikulan ay libo-libo na ang namamatay sa nakaraang mga bagyo lamang at pinakamatindi ang naganap sa Eastern at Central Visayas nang manalasa si Yolanda.

Masira man ang ating mga tanim, palaisdaan, negosyo, bangka, tahanan at iba pa, pinakamahalaga pa rin sa lahat ang ating buhay at sana makamit natin ang zero casualty.

### **MGA IMPO, MAPA PAHALAGAHAN**

Bawat munisipyo, lungsod, lalawigan at rehiyon sa ating bansa ay may mga impormasyon at mapa ukol sa mga delikadong lugar.

Nakarating din ang mga impormasyon at mapa sa mga barangay.

Galing ang mga impormasyon at mapa sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources sa pamamagitan ng Mines and Sciences Bureau.

Ang totoo, may mga impormasyon na nanggagaling mismo sa mga barangay dahil mga taga-barangay ang tala-ga namang unang apektado at marami rin silang nadidikubreng delikadong lugar gaya ng mga nasa kabundukan, kabukiran at tabing ilog.

Kapag may impormasyon, halimbawa, mula sa mga taga-barangay na nangangahoy, nag-uuling at nagkakaingin, naghahanting at naghahanap-buhay ukol sa mga bitak sa mga bundok, agad na pumupunta ang mga taga-DENR para pag-aralan ang mga ito.

Ganito rin ang nagaganap sa mga kabukiran at tabing ilog.

Matapos ang pag-aaral, ibinabahagi sa mga barangay na apektado, munisipyo, lungsod at lalawigan ang mga impormasyon para magamit laban sa mga darating na kalamidad.

At makapagtanda ang mga mamamayan laban sa

masamang pangyayari para sila maligtas sa anomang uri ng pinsala sa buhay at ari-arian.

### **MAKIPAG-TULUNGAN**

Kapag may mga darating na sakuna na alam ng lahat na darating gaya ng mga bagyo, dapat na makipagtulungan ang mga mamamayan sa mga awtoridad.

Hindi dapat na pairalin ang tigas ng ulo at pakikipagsapalaran.

Kapag nag-utos ng pagbabakwit ang mga awtoridad, dapat na sumunod ang mga mamamayan.

Basta dalhin na lang ang mga pinakamahalagang bagay sa mga evacuation center.

Maaaring dalhin maging ang mga alagang hayop at iba pa at hindi lang mga pera, gamit ng mga maysakit, buntis at matatanda.

Hayaang lamunin ng mga baha at kamatayan ang mga pirata at iba pang mag-nanakaw na nagsasamantala sa kawalan ng mga mamamayan sa kanilang mga tahanan at lugar.

Magtiwala sa mga awtoridad na kahit papaano ay hindi naman nagpapabaya sa suplay ng pagkain, tubig, at iba pa para maging maayos ang kalagayan ng mga evacuee.

Magandang halimbawa ang ginawa ng mga taga-Bicol na kamakailan lang ay sinalanta sa buhay at ari-arian ni bagyong Usman.

Sa unang araw pa lang, umabot na sa mahigit 3,000 ang pumunta sa mga evacuation center.