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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



'Battle of Manila Bay' to be won in 7 years - DENR

By ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ

The rehabilitation of Manila Bay will be in three phases in the next seven years, which means this will go beyond the term of President Duterte who vowed to make the bay as clean

as the world-famous Boracay island.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said the Manila Bay rehab will involve cleanup and water quality improvement, rehabilitation. ▶ 3

'Battle of Manila... ◀ 1

tion and resettlement, and education and sustainment.

Under Phase 1, the concerned agencies will clean up designated waterways (esteros), reduce fecal coliform level and toxic charges from houses and establishments, and require sewage treatment plants for government, commercial, industrial, and educational establishments; inspect and repair leaks in old sewer lines; provide temporary sanitation facilities to informal settlers residing along esteros and shorelines pending relocation; implement solid waste management; and plan the relocation of informal settlers.

Phase 2 of the program will involve the rehabilitation of old sewer lines in the National Capital Region, continuing relocation of informal settlers, and ensuring completion of 340 million liters per day (MLD) of Maynilad and Manila Water by 2022.

The final phase will be the continuing education and information campaign,

sustained law enforcement and monitoring, and fast-tracking or earlier completion of the sewerage system in Metro Manila from 2026 to 2037.

DENR said only 15 percent or 2.4 million out of 16.3 million of the water-served population in Metro Manila are connected to a sewerage system and about 3.84 percent or 187,000 out of 4,863,938 of water-served population outside Metro Manila are provided with sanitation services.

Meanwhile, almost 233,000 informal settler families are residing along the waterways of Manila Bay, directly discharging their wastes to the water.

"The 'battle for Manila Bay' is one battle that will be won not with force or arms but with the firm resolve to bring Manila Bay back to life," Cimatu said.

"With the commitment and determination of every Filipino to do his share in this rehabilitation effort, we have already won the battle for Manila Bay," he added.



Septic tanks, sewage plants eyed for Manila Bay slums

While the government is planning the relocation of informal settlers from Manila Bay, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said yesterday it plans to provide the informal settlers temporary sanitation facilities.

As part of phase one of the Manila Bay rehabilitation program, Secretary Roy Cimatu said the DENR will enforce a sanitation system apart from engaging in the cleanup of designated waterways, reducing discharges from houses and establishments and repairing leaks in old sewer lines.

Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said they are consider-

ing building communal septic tanks and temporary sewage treatment plants for the informal settlers.

Figures provided by the DENR showed that almost 233,000 informal settler families reside along waterways leading to the bay and directly discharge their waste into the water.

Last Sunday, Cimatu officially declared the start of the Manila Bay rehabilitation. The DENR's Laguna Lake Development Authority ordered two restaurants and a water treatment facility of a real estate developer in Pasay shut down for being sources of "pollutive wastewater" in the bay.

- Rhodina Villanueva



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Manila Bay CL cleanup yields 5 tons of garbage

By RAMON EFREN LAZARO

MALOLOS— The simultaneous cleanup of Manila Bay in Bulacan, Pampanga and Bataan on Sunday yielded more than five tons of garbage.

Paquito Moreno Jr., Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-Central Luzon director, said at least 3,000 mangrove saplings were also planted along the rivers in Barangay Tawiran, Obando, Bulacan; Sto. Filomena, Guagua, Pampanga, and Lucanin, Mariveles, Bataan.

The first phase of the rehabilitation of Manila Bay in Central Luzon involves cleanup of waterways to reduce fecal coliform level and toxic discharge from establishments as well as the implementation of solid waste management.

"Notices of violation will be issued to non-compliant establishments," Moreno said.

The DENR said there are around 23,000 informal settlers in Bulacan and 9,363 in Pampanga. At least 10,166 people live in coastal areas and river systems in Bulacan, Bataan and Pampanga, it added.

Lormely Claudio, Environmental Management Bureau-Central Luzon director, told **The STAR** that 47 establishments in Bulacan and Bataan were served notices of violations and issued cease and desist orders as part of the rehabilitation of Manila Bay.

Sixteen of these erring establishments are in Meycauayan, 24 in Obando and three in Marilao, all in Bulacan, and four in Mariveles, Bataan.

Claudio said leather and jewelry industries in Marilao, fishpens in Obando and beach resorts, hotels and manufacturing firms in Mariveles, Bataan are being monitored for compliance with DENR requirements.



→ NEVER TOO LATE TO SAVE MANILA BAY

ENVIRONMENTAL lawyer Antonio Oposa Jr. lauded the Duterte administration for stepping up the effort to rehabilitate Manila Bay.

According to Oposa, it is never too late to save Manila Bay as he joined more than 5,000 who took part in the Solidarity Walk along Roxas Boulevard on Sunday for the "Battle for Manila Bay" launch.

"There is no limit to what we can achieve if we do not care who gets the credit. Emperors come and go, empires rise and fall, but a story lives forever. Let the story be about all of us Filipinos—waking together, walking together and working together—for a purpose that is greater than ourselves. Let that story be heard around the world," Oposa said. *Jonathan L. Mayuga*



Massive support for Manila Bay cleanup lauded

Senator Cynthia Villar on Monday lauded the influx of volunteers who are taking part in the inter-agency campaign to clean up Manila Bay.

Villar, chair of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, said the government's so-called "Battle for Manila Bay" campaign has provided the needed boost to volunteers who have committed to help in rehabilitating the famous landmark.

More than 5,000 participants, mostly personnel from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and other government agencies, reportedly joined the launch of the Manila Bay rehabilitation project on Sunday.

Some 45.59 tons or 11 truckloads of garbage were collected by participants during the clean-up drive.

"Nakakatuwa na mas marami na ngayon ang involved sa paglilinis ng Manila Bay. Dati pareparehong mukha ang nandiyan. Nagpapasalamat ako dahil sa

inter-agency effort na ito, mas marami ang nakaalam kung gaano kagrabe ang sitwasyon ng Manila Bay ngayon at mas marami ang na-engganyo na tumulong," Villar said in a statement on Monday.

She likewise commended the DENR for issuing cease and desist orders against establishments found to be violating environment laws.

The senator, who was recently awarded by the DENR for "championing the Manila Bay Rehabilitation cause," recalled that the Supreme Court (SC) in 2008 had mandated several agencies, led by the DENR, to clean up and rehabilitate Manila Bay.

With the campaign, Villar said "the government is bent on improving the quality of water" in the bay which now has a coliform level of 330 million MPN.

Meanwhile, Villar also called on water concessionaires to speed up the construction of sewerage treatment plants for the proper disposal of wastewater in Metro Manila. **(Vanne Terrazola)**

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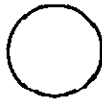
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Manila Bay rehabilitation in 3 phases

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources will rehabilitate the Manila Bay in three phases in the next seven years, amid the firm resolve of the government to bring the bay back to life.

According to DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu, the Manila Bay's rehabilitation will involve three phases — cleanup and water quality improvement; rehabilitation and resettlement; and education and sustainment.

Under Phase 1, the concerned agencies will cleanup designated waterways (esteros), reduce fecal coliform level and toxic charges from houses and establishments, and requiring sewage treatment plants for government, commercial, industrial, and educational establishments; inspect and repair leaks in old sewer lines; provide temporary sanitation facilities to informal settlers residing along esteros and shorelines pending relocation; implement solid waste management; and start planning for the relocation of informal settlers. (Ellalyn V. Ruiz)



Manila Bay rehab, may 3 bahagi

Dadaan sa tatlong bahagi ang rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay, bilang bahagi ng dedikasyon ng pamahalaan na maibalik ang dati nitong ganda.

Ayon kay Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu, saklaw ng Manila Bay rehabilitation ang tatlong phase — ang cleanup at pagsasaayos sa kalidad ng tubig; rehabilitasyon at resettlement; at edukasyon sa pagmamalasakit sa lawa at pagpapanatili sa kalinisan nito.

Sa ilalim ng Phase 1, kakailanganing linisin ng mga ahensiyang bahagi ng programa ang mga estero, mabawasan ang fecal coliform level at mga lason na inilalabas mula sa mga bahay at establisimyento, at pagtatayo ng mga sewage treatment plants para sa gobyerno, komersyal, industriyal, at mga pang-edukasyon na establisyameto.

Magsasagawa rin ng pagsusuri at pagsasaayos ng mga tagas ng lumang mga sewer lines, pagbibigay ng pansamantalang sanitation facilities sa mga informal settlers sa mga gilid ng estero at baybayin, pagpapatupad ng

solid waste management, at pagsisimula ng plano para sa reloksyon ng mga informal settlers.

Bahagi naman ng Phase 2 ng programa ang rehabilitasyon ng mga lumang sewer lines sa Metro Manila, patuloy na reloksyon ng mga informal settlers, at pagsisiguro na makumpleto ang 340 milyon litro kada araw (MLD) ng Maynilad at Manila Water pagpatak ng 2022.

Sa huling bahagi ng rehabilitasyon, magpapatuloy ang education at information campaign, pagpapanatili ng law enforcement at monitoring, at fast tracking o maagang pagtapos sa mga sewerage system sa Metro Manila mula 2037 hanggang 2026.

Ayon sa DENR, tanging 15 porsiyento o 2.4 milyon ng 16.5 milyon ng pinagsisilbihan ng tubig sa Metro Manila ang konektado sa isang sewerage system habang nasa 3.84% o 187,000 ng 4,863,938 populasyong pinagsisilbihan sa labas ng Metro Manila ang bibigyan ng sanitation services.

Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz



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The Manila Times

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DENR closes 47 firms in Central Luzon

BY FREDERICK SILVERIO

A TOTAL of 47 establishments has been closed down in Bulacan and Bataan since Friday for non-compliance with environmental laws and polluting the river system leading to the Manila Bay.

Lormelyn Claudio, Region 3 Environmental Management Bureau chief of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), said the establishments were found violating environmen-

tal laws and most have no environmental clearance certificates.

Sixteen of the establishments are located in the City of Meycauayan, 24 in Obando town and three in Marilao, all in Bulacan,

while four are in Mariveles, Bataan.

Claudio said 15 establishments were served with notices of violations and cease-and-desist orders on Friday, while 32 were served with notices on Sunday.

The businesses found with violations in Meycauayan include those engaged in leather and jewelry production, fishpond operators in Obando, and a beach resort, hotel and manufacturing plants in Mariveles, Bataan.

These establishments would be monitored closely and would remain closed until they comply with necessary requirements,

Claudio added.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu in a media briefing earlier, said that aside from closing the establishments, the violators have to pay a fine from P20,000 to P200,000 per day until they have fully complied with the measures against polluting the environment.

On Sunday, various government agencies and other sectoral groups joined the simultaneous massive cleanup and rehabilitation efforts to Save Manila Bay that was held in Barangay Tawiran in Obando, Bulacan.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
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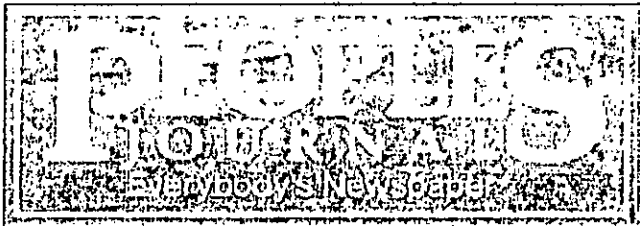
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47 establisimyento sa Bulacan, Bataan ipinasara

AABOT sa 47 establishment ang ipinasara ng Bulacan at Bataan simula noong Biyernes dahil sa pagdudumi ng mga river system na dumadaloy patungong Manila Bay. (DENR) kaugnay ng ginanap na simultaneous massive cleanup at rehabilitation efforts sa Manila Bay sa bahagi ng Brgy. Tawiran noong Linggo.

Ang mga ipinasarang establishment ay napatunayang luma bag sa mga environmental law bukod pa sa walang mga environmental clearance certificate.

Ito ang sinabi ni Lormelyn Claudio, Region 3 Environmental Management Bureau chief ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources



Improper dumping of human waste triggers filing of mandamus petition

By Cory Martinez

CURIOSITY about where a well-known siphoning services company was dumping the human waste they siphoned from the septic tanks of households in Metro Manila led to the filing before the Supreme Court of a petition for mandamus seeking the clean-up and rehabilitation of Manila Bay 20 years ago.

In an interview, the petitioner, multi-awarded environmental lawyer and activist Attorney Antonio Oposa, Jr. said his curiosity decided him to require his students from the Ateneo de Manila University to find out as part of their final requirement, where this siphoning company was dumping the human waste they siphoned. He requested not to mention the name of the company.

"I told my students, hanapin niyo kung saan tinatapon ng company na ito yung sewage na sinisipsip nila sa poso negro. As their final exam, sinundan nila nang sinundan yung trak, nakita nila tumigil, alas dos ng madaling araw, sa Greenhills, tapos binaba yung hose, ayun tinapon ang dumi, noong 1991 yun," Oposa disclosed.

Because of what he and his students discovered,

Oposa made some research on what case can be filed against concerned agencies that would make them liable for degradation of the environment, particularly the Manila Bay. He found a law, Presidential Decree 1152 or the Philippine Environment Code, which was signed into law by former strongman President Ferdinand Marcos.

Under Section 17 and 18 of PD1152, Oposa said, that if the body of water is polluted, it is the duty of government agency concerned to clean it up.

"Walang nakakaalam ng batas na iyun, kaya nung nag-hearing kami, yung nga abogado ng katingali ko, nagkatawanan lang kami. Dalawa lang kami nakakaalam ng batas na iyan, si Marcos ang sumulat niyan," Oposa said in jest.

Oposa was among those who joined the launching of the "Battle for Manila Bay".

Armed with a law that concerns environment, Oposa filed the petition for Mandamus before the High Tribunal on Jan. 29, 1999, exactly 20 years today, against 13 government agencies including the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

In 2008 or after nine years of hearing on the case, the SC issued a mandamus directing the DENR and 12 other government agencies to clean up, rehabilitate and preserve Manila Bay and to restore and maintain its water quality to a level fit for swimming and other contact recreation.

"You imagine after 10 years, sana sana nag-improve man lang, then another 10 years after 2008, halos mahulog ako sa upuan ko nang malaman ko na coliform level sa bay ay umabot na ng 330-million (MPN)," Oposa stressed.

"For 10 years, they failed to comply. Meron nga datapat na sanctions, but then ordinaryong tao lang ako. Yung panahon ni P. Noy (former President Noynoy Aquino), walang nangyari noon. To be fair with Secretary Singson (DPWH), siya lang ang may ginawa noon, konti pero hindi ng massive. Yung DENR naman, mawalangalang sa ating mga kaibigan sa DENR, pati sila nawalan na ng gana," Oposa added.

"It's never too late even if the mandamus was finally implemented after 10 years, never too late because, the sea is still there," Oposa added.



MANILA BAY POLLUTION

SM GROUP ACTING ON WASTEWATER ISSUE

The SM Group on Monday said it had addressed the reported dumping of wastewater into Manila Bay by one of its establishments, which prompted the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) to issue a cease-and-desist order on one of the group's buildings.

In a statement, the group said the findings from the joint inspection with the LLDA on Jan. 16 was an "isolated case" that involved one of the tenants in The Esplanade (San Miguel by the Bay) in Pasay City.

"The matter was immediately corrected and we are now compliant," SM Group said. "We will immediately meet with the LLDA and discuss the corrective

measures already implemented."

The LLDA, along with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, closed the water sources and wastewater discharging facilities of The Esplanade, after authorities discovered that wastewater had bypassed the building's sewerage treatment plant and was dumped untreated into the nearby bay.

Authorities issued the order on Sunday during the kickoff of "Battle for Manila Bay," the government's massive rehabilitation program for the heavily polluted body of water.

Other than SM's The Esplanade, similar orders were

given to Gloria Maris Shark's Fin Restaurant and Aristocrat Restaurant's flagship branch on Roxas Boulevard, both in Manila.

Their water sources have been cut off to prevent them from further dumping untreated wastewater into the bay, according to LLDA General Manager Jaime Medina.

Authorities also issued notices of violation to four other establishments under the SM Group.

The group said it would comply with the five-day grace period for it to respond, noting the "corrective actions" it had undertaken.

—JHESSET O.

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Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

Manila Standard

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DICT to provide cameras for Manila Bay rehab

THE Department of Information and Communications Technology will provide closed circuit television cameras and monitoring sensors for the rehabilitation of the Manila Bay.

DICT Acting Secretary Eliseo Rio Jr. said that sensors would be used for monitoring the water pollution level in the bay.

"The coliform content of the Manila Bay is around 300 million [MPN] per 100 mL and it should be reduced to 100 MPN only.

What can the DICT do about this? We will be putting up sensors here so that the coliform level can be monitored by the Office of Secretary Cimatu," Rio said in his speech during the launching of the Manila Bay rehabilitation program on Sunday.

CCTV cameras may be used by the Department of the Interior and Local Government for the apprehension of people dumping wastes into the Manila Bay.

"In coordination with DILG, we will put up CCTV cameras to help the DILG Secretary catch litterers. The important thing here that DICT can provide is connectivity, so that this information would reach the command and control systems of the DILG, Philippine National Police," Rio said.

Around 5,000 volunteers participated in a solidarity walk from Quirino Grandstand to Rajah Sulayman Park to start the Manila Bay rehabilitation program on Sunday. PNA



MWSS exec lauds P1.7-B Jica-funded water reclamation facility

METROPOLITAN Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) Administrator Reynaldo V. Velasco recently led the inauguration of a P1.7-billion Jica-funded Parañaque Water Reclamation Facility.

The facility is the largest sewage treatment plant of Maynilad Water Services Inc. (Maynilad) in terms of processing capacity.

With the facility's operation in full swing, the city government is assured of sufficient capacity for a 92-percent compliance rate in terms of its sewer connection.

Lauding the project's completion Velasco said the Jica-funded project is a big boost to the ongoing Manila Bay cleanup effort of the government.

"We are happy with the completion of this modern water-reclamation facility three years after it was started. I commend both Maynilad and Parañaque City for remaining steadfast in pushing for this flagship project, despite protestations and brickbats from motorists, as this project is not only a means to comply with the Supreme Court mandamus to clean Manila Bay, but more so, for the overall benefit of the people," Velasco said in a statement.

Velasco was guest of honor during the formal opening of the new STP facility in San Dionisio, Parañaque City, the other day with MWSS Chairman Franklin Demonteverde, MWSS RO Chief Patrick Ty, Parañaque City

Mayor Edwin L. Olivarez, Maynilad President and CEO Ramoncito S. Fernandez, Jica official Yoshio Wada, Development Bank of the Philippines President and CEO Cecilia Borromeo, and other members of the MWSS Board of Trustees.

"The success story of the Maynilad Water Reclamation Facility completion and the 92-percent compliance rate of Parañaque City to sewer connectivity including its firm resolve to clear more than 5,000 out of the 8,000 informal settlers living along esteros and rivers in the city should now become the template for all other local government units covered by our concessionaires," Velasco said. Parañaque City Mayor Olivarez said, "This is a very important step in our collective efforts to help you protect our environment, which is one of the pillars of governance agenda in the city to be business-friendly, and at the same time environment-friendly."

Olivarez added the start of operations of the Parañaque Water Reclamation Facility is "timely" because of the renewed drive to fast-track the rehabilitation and cleanup of Manila Bay led by Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu. "With this water facility, we will now be able to remove pollutants from the wastewater being collected from Maynilad costumers in Parañaque before these are discharged to the waterways that eventually end up in Manila Bay," Olivarez said.

Meanwhile, Maynilad recently

announced the company would invest P26.4 billion in the next five years to build new sewage treatment plants (STPs) and lay sewer lines in Caloocan, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa and Kawit, Cavite.

The new facilities, which will have a combined treatment capacity of 320 million liters per day (MLD), will remove harmful substances from the wastewater generated by more than 2 million Maynilad customers, thus helping to reduce pollution loading into water bodies.

Of the P26.4-billion budget allocation, about P16.3 billion will be spent for laying some 241 kilometers of new sewer lines, which will convey wastewater from households to Maynilad's new STPs for treatment.

Once completed in 2021, these new facilities will expand Maynilad's sewerage coverage to 47 percent up from only 6 percent in 2006 before Maynilad was re-privatized. The company aims to attain 100-percent sewer coverage by the end of the concession period in 2037.

"So far, we have invested P23.3 billion to improve the wastewater infrastructure and expand coverage in the West Zone since 2007. By sustaining investments in wastewater projects, we do our part in the cleanup and rehabilitation of Manila Bay, per the Supreme Court mandamus," Fernandez said.

The company is investing P11.4 billion for wastewater projects this year. *Jonathan L. Mayuga*



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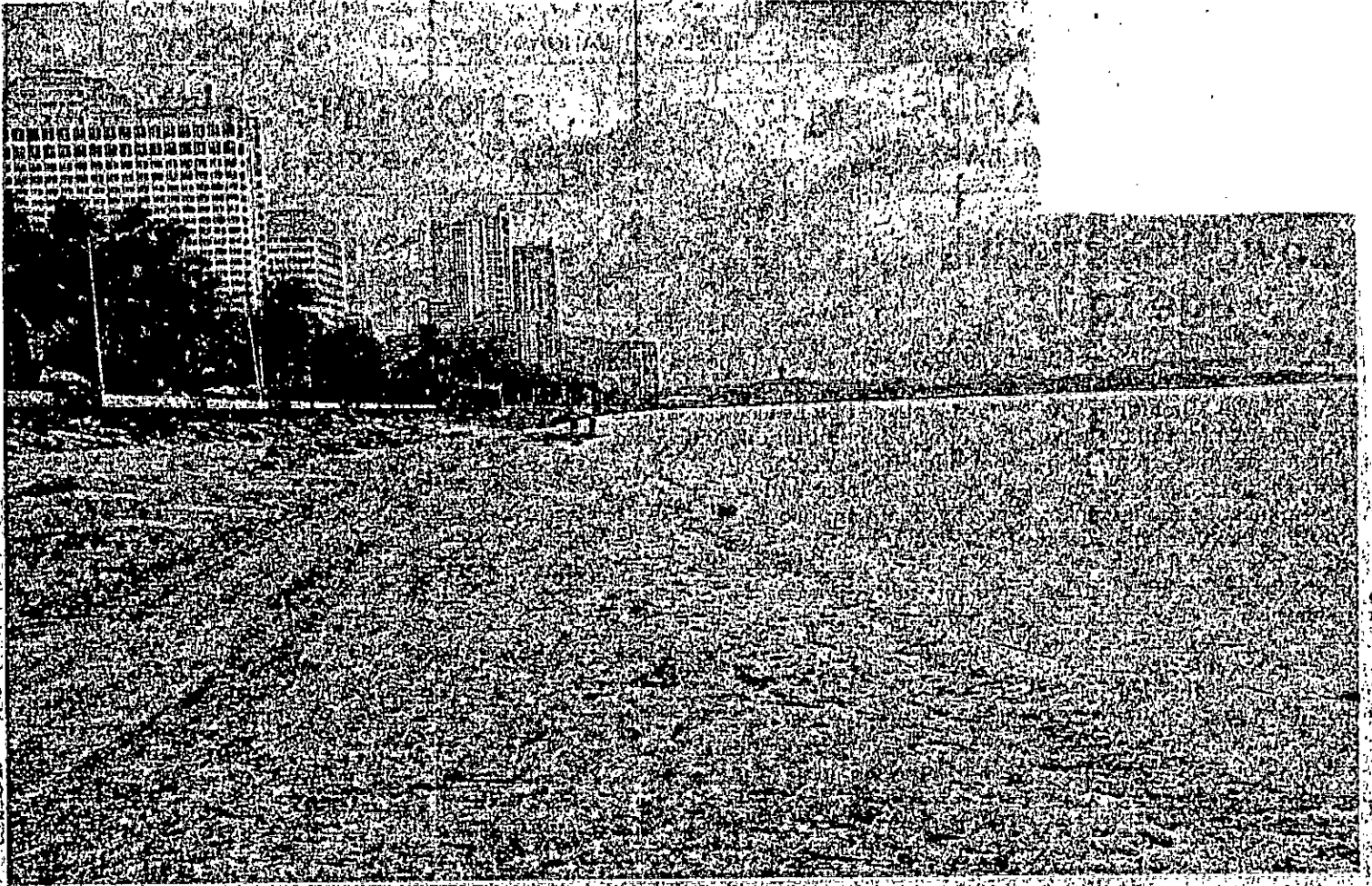
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Children play and migratory birds search for food along the shoreline of Manila Bay near the United States embassy yesterday, a day after the government held a massive cleanup to kick off a program to rehabilitate the bay.

EDD GUMBAN



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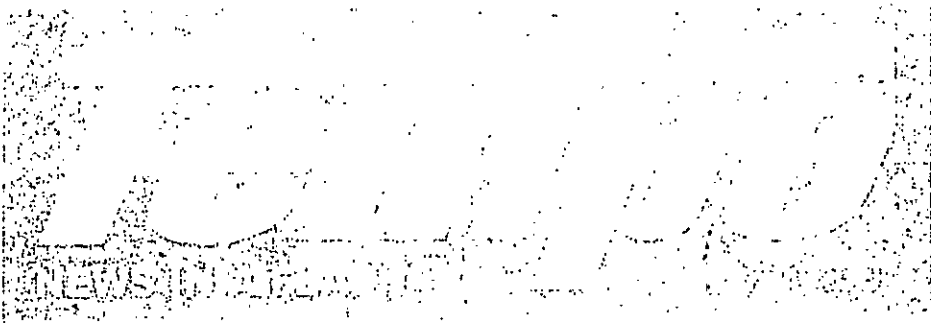
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A CHILD enjoys playing with his cat on clean shoreline of Manila Bay, a day after the government led an inter-agency cleanup campaign marking the start of the bay rehabilitation project on Sunday. (Czar Dancel)



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THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900

MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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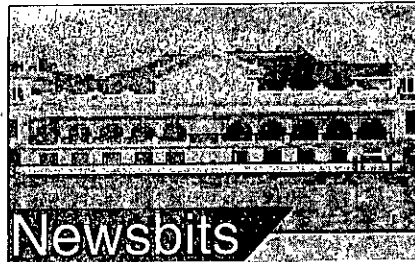
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• Wood Industry summit

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is holding the first Forestry and Wood Industry Summit that aims to come up with a comprehensive strategy to revitalize the forestry and wood products sector and transform it into a growth industry. With the theme "Sustainable Forest Management: The Role of Wood Industry in Nation Building," the summit will be held on Tuesday. DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu is expected to keynote the event. DENR Forestry Management Bureau Director Nonito Tamayo said the event is pursuant to the 2017-2022 Philippine Development Plan, which highlights the need to strengthen the wood industry through improved funding schemes to support growth, increased promotional and marketing efforts, and expanded research on key issues. High on the agenda is the declining contribution of the wood industry to the country's gross domestic product despite the constantly increasing demand for wood and wood-based products, Tamayo said. (Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz)



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DENR holds first-ever wood summit

The DENR's combined interest of revitalizing wood industry and improving the country's forest health

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is hosting the first-ever Forestry and Wood Industry Summit to try to revitalize the moribund forestry and wood products sector and transform it into a growth industry.

With the theme "Sustainable Forest Management: The Role of Wood Industry in Nation Building," the summit will highlight the need to strengthen the wood industry through improved funding schemes to support growth, increased promotional and marketing efforts, and expanded research on key issues consistent with the goals of the 2017-2022 Philippine Development Plan.

High on the agenda is the declining contribution of the wood industry to the country's gross domestic product despite the constantly increasing demand for wood and wood-based

products, Director Nonito Tamayo of the DENR's Forest Management Bureau (FMB) said.

According to the FMB chief, the DENR's combined interest of revitalizing wood industry and improving the country's forest health through the implementation of the Expanded National Greening Program or ENGP "has led to this groundbreaking event."

"The summit will gather different industry players to present and discuss the current policy environment, business trends, and ways forward for

the sector in order to develop and implement an effective regulatory and investor-friendly regime that ensures the sustainability of the wood industry in the Philippines," Tamayo said.

The summit participants are the heads of the Community-Based Forest Management People Organizations, Philippine Wood Producers Association, Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines Inc. and the Industrial Forest Managers of the Philippines Corp.

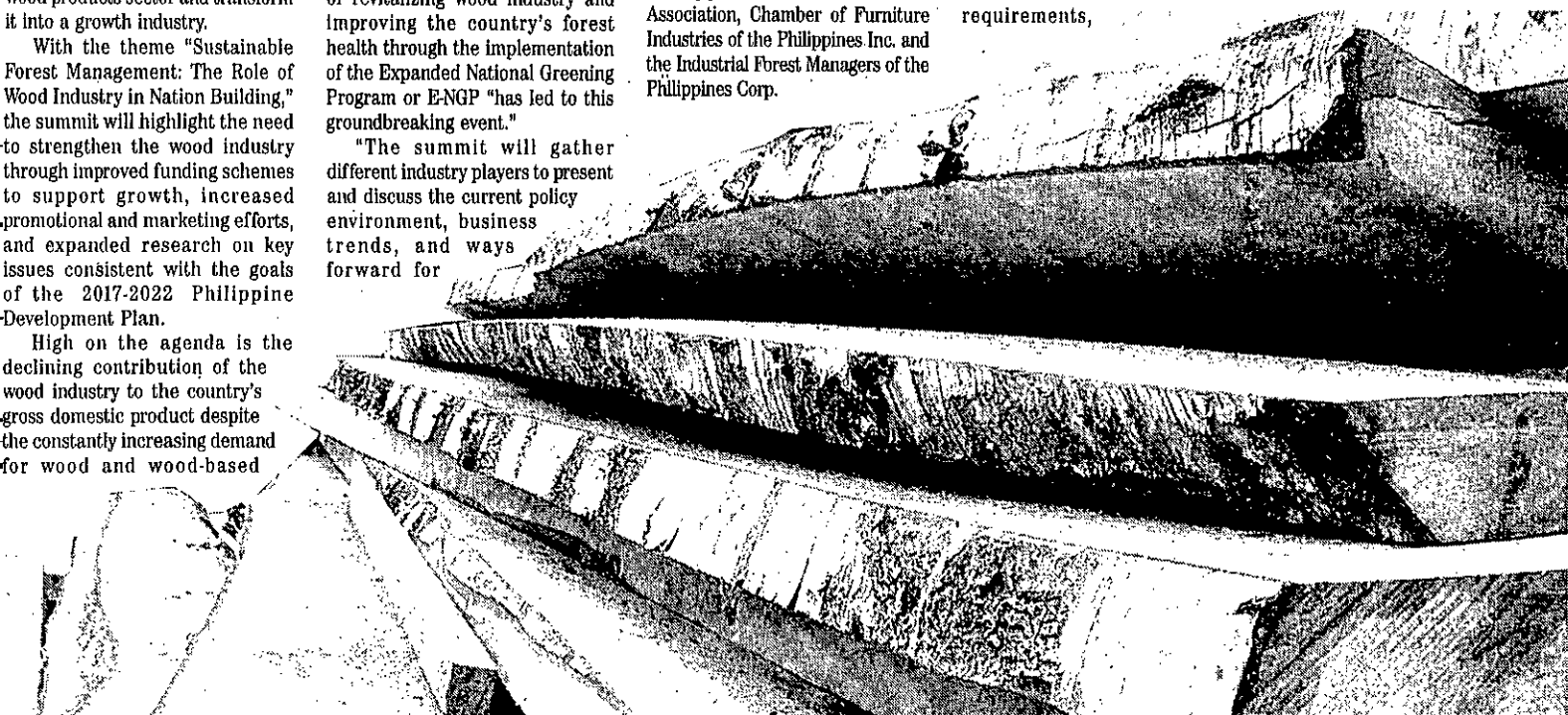
Representatives from government agencies, such as the National Economic and Development Authority, Philippine Statistics Authority and Department of Trade and Industry, are also attending the summit.

Over the years, the Philippines has been dependent on imported wood to meet its domestic wood requirements,

causing a huge drain in the country's dollar reserves.

During the period 2006-2016, locally-sourced wood accounted for only 25 percent, or 1.5 million cubic meters, while 75 percent or 4.5 million cubic meters are imported.

Kuhlin Ceslie Gacula



THE bulk or 75 percent of the country's wood requirement is sourced overseas, which overwhelms the country's foreign-currency reserves.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

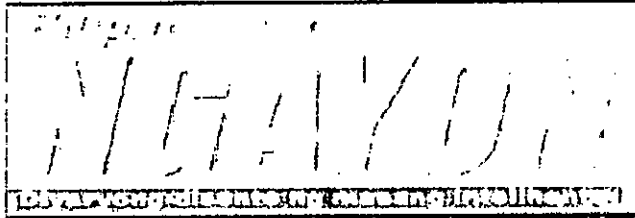


→ SUMMIT TO BOOST FORESTRY SECTOR

TO revitalize the forestry and wood products sector and transform the country's wood industry into a growth industry, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources will hold the first-ever Forestry and Wood Industry Summit.

Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu is expected to deliver the keynote address during the kick-off ceremonies to be held today, Tuesday, at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City.

The summit carries the theme "Sustainable Forest Management: The Role of Wood Industry in Nation Building." The summit will be held tomorrow, a news statement said. *Jonathan L. Mayuga*



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Editorial

Sec. Cimatu, kailan mo lilinis ang hangin sa Metro

NAKAPANGANGAMBA ang inihayag ng World Health Organization (WHO) na 1.7 milyong kabataan sa buong mundo ang namamatay dahil sa air pollution. Ang karanilwang mga sakit na nakuha sa hangin na may lason ay pulmonya, bronchitis, asthma, istrok at atake sa puso.

Ang Metro Manila ay isa sa mga siyudad sa mundo na masyado nang malubha ang air pollution. Ilang taon na ang nakararaan, nagkaroon ng pag-aaral sa UP-Dillman na darating daw ang panahon na hindi na maaaring tirahan ang Metro Manila dahil polluted na ang hangin. Noong nakaraang taon, isang doktor ang nagpayo na dapat nang mag-face masks ang mga taga-Metro Manila para makaligtas sa pagkalamang.

Ilang malalaking kalsada sa Metro ang tinukoy na grabe ang pollution at ito ay ang EDSA, Taft Avenue, Quezon Avenue at C5. Mga bulok na bus at jeepney ang itinuturong pollutants sa mga nasabing kalsada. Marami pa ring bulok na jeepney ang patuloy na bumibyahe kahit ipinatutupad ang modernisasyon.

Noong nakaraang taon, nagkaroon ng ranking sa 230 siyudad sa buong mundo na gustong puntahan ng mga dayuhan. Nasa ika-136 na puwesto ang Metro Manila. Isa sa mga dahilan kung bakit malayo ang puwesto ng Metro Manila ay dahil sa air pollution. Mas gusto ng mga dayuhan na puntahan ang mga lugar na malinis ang hangin. Pinakamarami ang gustong manirahan sa Vienna, Austria at sa Singapore.

Nararapat kumilos ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa problema ng air pollution. Hindi dapat maging ningas-kugon sa pagsasagawa ng anti-smoke belching campaign. Suportahan ang pag-phase out sa mga lumang sasakyan na sapagkat ang mga ito ang nagbubuga ng 80 porsiyento ng nakalalasang usok. Ipatupad ang nakasaad sa Clean Air Act of 1999 na bawal ang paggamit ng incinerators.

Ngayong nakatuon ang DENR sa paglilinis sa Manila Bay, dapat magkaroon na rin ng plano kung paano lilinis ang hangin sa Metro Manila. Kaya mo rin ito DENR Sec. Roy Cimatu.



EDC's Boracay wetland rehab to cost P10 M

By DANESSA RIVERA

BORACAY, Aklan — Lopez-led Energy Development Corp. (EDC) is investing P10 million to rehabilitate its adopted wetland in the world-famous Boracay as part of the island's restoration efforts to become a sustainable tourism destination.

EDC adopted the 7.79-hectare Wetland No. 2, which is one of the nine wetlands in the island identified by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) where environmental rehabilitation is needed.

In support of the government's continuous rehabilitation efforts as well as to further stimulate eco-tourism, the Lopez-led firm entered into a partnership with the DENR.

EDC is developing Wetland No. 2 into the Boracay Wetland Conservation Park (BWCP) to serve as an arboretum for threatened native tree species under its BINHI reforestation and greening initiative.

The BINHI program is the company's forest restoration project that prioritizes the propagation of 96 identified rare and threatened native tree species.

"Under our memorandum of agreement with the DENR, the BWCP is a three-year project," EDC Corporate Social Responsibility head Allan Barcena said.

"We plan to invest P10 million during this period. Aside from the walkway and view deck, a visitor information center and other visitor amenities will be built here in the future," he said.

Under the wetland rehabilitation project, EDC has conducted thorough

assessment of endemic flora and fauna in the location.

So far, it has planted the appropriate native tree species that will thrive in a wetland environment and that can support marine and land animals already existing in the area.

BWCP is rich in rare plants, including threatened species like Sander's *Alocasia*, *Narra*, *Ipil*, *Kubi*, *Antipolo*, *Isis*, *Sakat*, *Balakat*, and *Bakauan Dagat*.

EDC's partnership with DENR is a continuing initiative that goes beyond just rehabilitating the wetland and planting more trees in the area. At present, visitors can also commune with nature from the scenic view deck and delight in observing local and migratory birds.

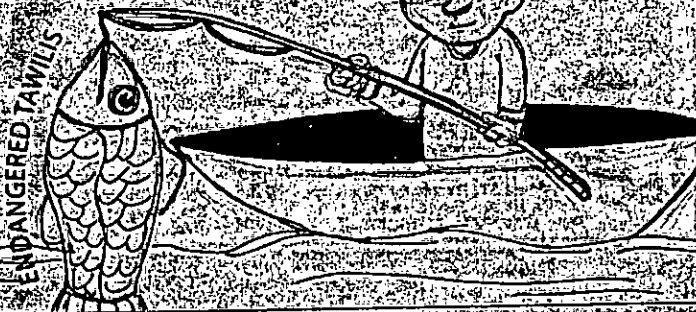
With BWCP and BINHI, EDC said Boracay island can look forward to a future where not only its clean waters and white sands showcase environmental sustainability, but also its very own native tree arboretum which can be part of the island's sustainable eco-tourism campaign.

BWCP, as part of EDC's BINHI program, expands EDC's advocacy and mission to restore denuded forests, preserve and propagate threatened native tree species, and protect biodiversity to leave a legacy of a verdant Philippines for the next generation.

Now on its 10th year, the BINHI program has reforested 9,196 hectares across EDC's geothermal sites located in Leyte, Bicol, Negros Oriental and North Cotabato. Additionally, to help further propagate these native tree species, BINHI now has 162 partners across 16 regions in the country.



CONSERVE TAWILIS



EDITORIAL

Work harder

PRESIDENT Duterte completes the first 31 months of his six-year presidency Thursday, January 31, with Malacanang vowing to work harder to make life comfortable for Filipinos.

And it is heartening to note that many visions of the Duterte administration, which ends at 12 noon on June 30, 2022, have taken shape, drawing cheers from various sectors of society.

Of course, complacency has no room in the remaining three and a half years of the government of President Duterte, the first Mindanaoan to hold the highest political post of the land.

Cabinet officials are expected to marshal all their energies and talents in assisting the Chief Executive give fruition to his single-minded goal of bringing about the desired changes in society.

And Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo was quick to underscore the importance of setting aside our political, religious and other differences and unite for the country's progress.

The highly articulate Panelo, a lawyer, called on the Filipino people to create a chain of harmony and peace that will propel this impoverished nation to development and progress.

"Let us be each brother's keeper and let love reign amongst us," said Panelo after a Social Weather Station (SWS) survey showed a "good" satisfaction rating of the Cabinet of President Duterte.

The SWS survey showed 52 percent of Filipinos were satisfied, while 17 percent were dissatisfied, yielding a net rating of +35, the highest score for Duterte's official family for 2018.

The satisfactory rating "is a source of inspiration" for Cabinet members to work harder to give full realization to DU30's commitment of providing a comfortable life to the Filipino people.

Duterte and his Cabinet officials deserve the people's support as they try to spread the benefits of economic development right down to far-flung areas across the Philippines.



DENR walang atrasan sa Taal Lake fishing ban

NANINDIGAN ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na walang ibang paraan para isalba at mapadami pa ang isdang tawilis maliban sa pagpatupad ng fishing ban kaya sa kabila ng pagtutol ng sektor ng mangigisda ay kailangan itong ipatupad.

Ayon kay Environment Secretary Benny Antiporda magkakaroon ng close season ang Taal Lake para magkaroon ng breeding time ang tawilis.

"Hindi po natin papayagan na tuluyang maglaho ang lahang tawilis na isda so magkakaroon po ng close season ang atin

pong lake para masiguro lang natin na magkaroon ng breeding time 'yung mga tawilis," pahayag ni Antiporda.

Una nang sinabi ng Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) na buwan ng Marso planong simulan ang 3 buwang fishing ban.

Ilang mga negosyante at mga mangingisda ang umaalma sa fishing ban sa katwirang hindi umano ito ang solusyon sa problema kundi ang tamang regulasyon lamang sa pagtatayo ng mga fish pen.

"Instead of comprehensively and holistically addressing the shortage of tawilis, BFAR is resorting to a futile so-

lution that will obviously put the livelihood of small fisherfolk at stake," pahayag ni Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) National Chairperson Fernando Hicap.

Ani Hicap; ang mga fish pen na nagkultura ng mga bioinvasive fish species ay hindi lang nagdudulot ng polusyon at nagpapasikip sa lawa kundi nagbigay daan din ito para kainin ang mga maliliit na tawilis.

Giit ng Pamalakaya na mayroong 5,000 aquaculture structures sa Taal Lake sa kabila ng 2,342 hektarya lamang ang carrying capacity ng lawa para sa aquaculture.

Kung ganito umano ang patuloy na magiging sistema sa Taal Lake ay hindi lamang ang tawilis ang mauubos kundi maging iba pang mga klase ng isda.

Idinagdag pa ni Hicap na maraming mangigisda ang mawawalan ng hanapbuhay sa oras na ipatupad ang fishing ban na sa bandang huli ay hindi rin masosolusyunan ang problema, hingi ng grupo sa gobyerno na tignan umano ang problema at imbestigahan ang punot dulo nito. (Tina Mendoza)



Sandigan to proceed with trial of Gwendolyn Garcia

By ELIZABETH MARCELO

Cebu City third district Rep. Gwendolyn Garcia will have to stand trial for graft and malversation in connection with the provincial government's alleged anomalous purchase of a parcel of land when she was governor in 2008.

In a resolution obtained by reporters yesterday, the Sandiganbayan's Second Division said Garcia failed to raise any new arguments that would warrant the reversal of its Nov. 19, 2018 resolution denying her motion to dismiss the cases.

"The allegations made... in her motion for reconsideration are mere lengthy reiterations of the arguments she interposed in her previous motions which have been passed upon, discussed and judiciously resolved in the assailed

resolution," the court ruling read.

Garcia sought the dismissal of the charges filed against her, saying the Office of the Ombudsman violated her constitutional right to speedy resolution of the cases when it took almost three years to finish its investigation before filing the cases in court.

Garcia said she would suffer the "negative consequences" of the inordinate delay of the ombudsman. She said it might take the prosecution 30 years to rest its case.

In an opposition paper, the ombudsman's prosecution team maintained that the delays in the trial of the cases were caused by Garcia herself.

"The time it took the ombudsman to complete the investigation and the time the plaintiff has prosecuted the instant cases before this court can hardly

be considered an unreasonable and arbitrary delay," the Sandiganbayan ruling penned by Associate Justice Lorifel Pahimna read.

Garcia is facing technical malversation and two counts of graft over the purchase of a 24.9-hectare property in Tiga-an, Naga, Cebu worth P98.926 million for the provincial government's housing and seaport projects.

The ombudsman said Garcia conspired with other provincial officials to enter into a contract that was grossly disadvantageous to the government. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources said at least 19.67 hectares of the property were found unfit for human settlement and construction of an international seaport because they were submerged in water.



POSTSCRIPT

FEDERICO D. PASCUAL JR.

Reviving idle nuclear plant a flawed idea?

COMES now a science professor emeritus of the University of Illinois questioning the sales talk of an American environmentalist who came over last week to urge the government to use nuclear energy to generate cheaper electricity.

The debate pits Dr. Kelvin S. Rodolfo, professor emeritus of earth and environmental sciences, University of Illinois at Chicago, versus Michael Shellenberger, president of Environmental Progress, who holds a master's degree in cultural anthropology.

As reported in our *Postscript* of Jan. 22, Shellenberger suggested during his visit – without giving a feasibility study – the reactivation of the mothballed 600-megawatt (per original design) nuclear power plant in Morong, Bataan. <https://tinyurl.com/yjcgmkypy>

Rodolfo shot that down as a bad idea. Aside from submitting research findings on the geological risks in the BNPP site near Mt. Natib in Bataan, Rodolfo called attention to these points:

- Nuclear weaponry and nuclear energy are inseparable twins that should be studied together.
- Uranium is not a local fuel, and its use would place the Philippines at the mercy of foreign producers.
- Uranium is a finite and shrinking resource that is increasingly competed for as reactors proliferate globally.
- Uranium is not as 'carbon free' as Shellenberger and the nuclear lobby say, making 1/3rd as much carbon dioxide per kilowatt as natural gas before reaching the reactor.
- Nuclear wastes remain toxic for hundreds of thousands of years, and permanent waste storage has yet to be achieved by any country.

Rodolfo recalled that on Oct. 16, 2017, Shellenberger wrote: "Fifty-one nations have nuclear energy; just nine have weapons. What more proof is needed that nuclear energy prevents the spread of nuclear weapons than the fact that South Korea has nuclear energy and no weapon while North Korea has denied nuclear energy and obtained a weapon?"

Then on Oct. 30, 2017, he told the LAEA: "One of FOE-Greenpeace's biggest lies about nuclear energy is that it leads to weapons. Korea demonstrates that the opposite is true: North Korea has a nuclear bomb and no nuclear energy, while South Korea has nuclear energy and no bomb."

But less than a year later (Aug. 29, 2018) Shellenberger wrote in *Forbes.com* (<https://tinyurl.com/y919hhny>): "xxx Of the 26 nations around the world that are building or are committed to build nuclear power plants, 23 have a weapon, had a weapon, or have shown interest in acquiring a weapon...."

The 13 nations that had a weapons program, or have shown interest in acquiring a weapon, are Argentina, Armenia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Egypt, Iran, Japan, Romania, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Taiwan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

This trend fits the historic pattern. In the 60 years of civilian nuclear power, at least 20 nations sought nuclear power at least in part to give themselves the option of creating a nuclear weapon....



"xxx While those 23 nations clearly have motives other than national security for pursuing nuclear energy, gaining weapons latency appears to be the difference-maker.

"xxx After over 60 years of national security driving nuclear power into the international system, we can now add 'preventing war' to the list of nuclear energy's superior characteristics?"

Exclaiming "Aho ba yan!" Rodolfo advised whoever "imported" Shellenberger as his advocate for opening BNPP: "His credentials need serious examination because the issue is a matter of life and death for Filipinos, long after he leaves the country. So what if *Time* once named him 'Hero of the Environment'?"

• 'Sounds like a snake-oil salesman'

THE REASONS given by the Cory Aquino administration for not operating the BNPP were its supposedly being unsafe sitting close to Mt. Natib, its being riddled with technical defects, and its being a bitter fruit of Marcosian corruption.

The project, whose principal cost was \$1,419,380,000 (\$2,118,730,000 when interest is added) was overpriced by \$369 million – based on the presumed clean \$1,050,000,000 price of Kori-II, a Korean plant that is a virtual twin in age and design of the BNPP.

Reacting to the same *Postscript* of Jan. 22, Rene AV Saguisag, one of the closest advisers of Cory Aquino, wrote us:

"I read with interest your column on shifting to nuclear energy. I chaired the Cabinet Committee (1986) and the Senate Committee (1987-1992) on the Bataan nuke power plant. Experts convinced us then that safety concerns aside, it was beyond economic repair. The 70's model may need upgrading and may be more costly now to put it on line, instead of building a new one from the ground up.

"If there is a Three Mile Island (1979), Chernobyl (1986) and Fukushima (2011) nuke disaster, do we have the experience and expertise to deal with same? We are not as technologically sophisticated as the Americans, Russians and Japanese, given our *puede-na-bahala-na* mentality. Left with the American jeep in 1945, Japan now has the Lexus; we have the *dyipni*, uncomfortable, dangerous, with a lot of *borlology*. So Pinoyesque.

"What do we do with the nuke waste? We cannot even handle our ordinary waste problem.

"If not in Bataan, where then? NIMBY, Not in my Backyard, baby. We add the hidden social cost and the price would be humongous indeed. Unaffordable, from where I sit.

"This is a country where taking the Skyway from Makati to Alabang, one ends up with heavy traffic in the toll plaza, which common sense says should be like that in Balintawak, by simply widening it. And then after getting past the plaza, going to San Beda Law Alabang, for a long stretch, one lane! Suppose my old vehicle (Starex) makes *tirik* (our Safari goes back to 1994)?

"I live in Palanan, Makati. Going up the Skyway from the Buendia overpass, one goes down to the right, competing with vehicles crossing from the right, etc.. Weird. And I became a widower partly cuz from Pasay Road, there is no clear view of traffic coming from the south, etc. So accident-prone.

"Any expert saying that no one died from radiation in Chernobyl sounds like a snake-oil salesman to me."

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