

30 JAN 2019

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DAY : Wednesday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



MANILA BAY CLEANUP

DENR TO LGUS: TAP FUNDS FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has urged local governments to apply for and maximize national government subsidies intended for sewage treatment facilities.

According to Maria Paz Luna, DENR regional director in Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon), about P200 million is available under the National Sewerage and Septage Management Program (NSSMP).

Under the Clean Water Act of 2004, the national government sets aside subsidies and puts the money in the care of the Department of Public Works and Highways for sewerage and septage projects.

The NSSMP, however, remains unused, if not fully utilized, due to lack of applicants among local government units (LGUs).

Luna, in a telephone interview, brought this up in light of the government's program to rehabilitate the 2,000-square-kilometer Manila Bay.

Informal settlers

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu earlier said the Manila Bay rehabilitation must involve local governments and communities in three regions—Metro Manila (National Capital Region), Central Luzon and Calabarzon.

Luna said Calabarzon had the biggest population of informal settlers at 144,000.

At Bacoor City in Cavite province alone, about 12,000 families live along the coastlines of Manila Bay.

The lack of septic tanks or access to treatment facilities has forced communities to drain sewage and household waste into rivers and tributaries, the DENR said.

Luna said about 80 percent of a person's average daily water consumption ended up as waste.

Ignored

She said septage management was a problem "ignored for a long time."

Coliform level in Manila Bay tests as high as 330 million most probable number per 100 milliliters. The government aims to bring this down to a "compliance level" of at least 100 MPN per 100 ml.

About 2,500 DENR employees and other volunteers from the region took part in the Manila Bay cleanup drive on Sunday in Bacoor City; Baras town in Rizal province; and Los Baños town in Laguna province.

The DENR on Tuesday said 12,944 kilograms, or 1,154 sacks of trash, were collected from riverbanks and coastal areas in Bacoor. —MARICAR CINCO INQ



DENR launches cleanup of Manila Bay in 3 CL provinces

By **ASHLEY MANABAT** | *Correspondent*

A MASSIVE cleanup of Manila Bay in three provinces of Central Luzon was conducted by more than 5,000 individuals from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) here and other government agencies; local government units (LGU), business sectors, academe and civil-society organizations on Sunday.

The DENR said this is to avert further degradation of the historic bay and bring back its water back to a level that is safe for swimming.

In a news statement, the DENR said current fecal coliform level in Manila Bay is at 330 million most probable number per 100 milliliters. The acceptable level for Class SB water, which is deemed safe, is 100 MPN/100 ml.

According to Paquito T. Moreno Jr., executive director of the DENR regional office, the cleanup was conducted simultaneously in the provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga and Bataan in Region 3, Metro Manila in the National Capital Region (NCR) and Cavite in Region 4A on January 27 as ordered by Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu.

It signaled the start or "D-day" for the launching of massive cleanup and rehabilitation effort of the bay, he added.

"Bringing back Manila Bay to its origi-

nal state is a gargantuan task for the DENR which requires a lot of commitment, cooperation and support from other government agencies, LGUs, business establishments, civil-society organizations and other stakeholders," Moreno said.

He explained that the launching of the Manila Bay cleanup in Central Luzon was conducted at the Obando River in Barangay Tawiran in Obando, Bulacan; Guagua River in Barangay Sto. Filomena in Guagua, Pampanga, and in the more than 700 meter stretch of the Mariveles coastline in Barangay Lucanin in Bataan.

"Actual cleanup was conducted in these areas while the total volume of waste collected was more than 5,000 kilograms," he said.

"Three thousand mangrove species were also planted in these sites to protect our coastal areas," he added.

Moreno emphasized that phase one of the rehabilitation program is the cleanup and water quality improvement, which involve the actual cleanup of designated esteros and waterways to reduce fecal coliform level and toxic discharges from establishments and the implementation of solid waste management.

Enough with reclamation

LAWYER Antonio Oposa Jr., who won a Supreme Court decision for the rehabilitation of Manila Bay 10 years ago, has opposed the

implementation of development projects along the coasts of Manila Bay that will involve land reclamation.

Interviewed by the BUSINESSMIRROR at the sidelines of a news conference during the launch of the Battle for Manila Bay in Pasay City on Sunday, Oposa said if the government will continue to allow land-reclamation projects to continue, it should drop altogether the idea of saving Manila Bay.

"We were talking a while ago and I told them that if I will be asked about land reclamation, I will say that let us stop this cleanup and pour concrete pavement. Let us reclaim the entire Manila Bay. Of course, I was being sarcastic," he told the BUSINESSMIRROR.

Cimatu, in an earlier interview, said part of the rehabilitation of Manila Bay calls for the massive reforestation of mangrove and beach forest, starting with the Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area and a thorough review of land-reclamation projects along Manila Bay.

According to Oposa, land reclamation will not help save Manila Bay because it will only attract people, including squatter families, who will eventually contribute to the degradation of the coastal and marine environment.

"If we will reclaim at all, let it be for public parks and open space," he said.

With Jonathan L. Mayuga



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Suspend Manila Bay rehab, lawmakers urge

Eight party-list lawmakers yesterday filed a resolution urging the government to suspend the Manila Bay rehabilitation program.

The resolution was signed by Reps. Fernando Hicap and Ariel Casilao of Anakpawis, Carlos Zarate of Bayan Muna, Emmie de Jesus and Arlene Brosas of Gabriela, Antonio Tinio and France Castro of ACT Teachers and Sarah Jane Elago of Kabataan.

"The rehabilitation program could be a prelude to 43 reclamation projects covering more than 32,000 hectares in the bay under the Build, Build, Build program," the resolution stated.

The lawmakers said that among the projects is the 265-hectare "Pasay Harbor City" joint venture involving Davao-based businessman Dennis Uy, among the contributors to President Duterte's campaign.

They noted that Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año said the informal settler families living near the bay would be relocated to Central Luzon and Calabarzon.

Hicap said relocating around 300,000 families "to far-flung settlement sites away from their source of livelihood" would only compel them to return to their former communities.

The lawmakers accused Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu of "turning a blind eye to the chemical and toxic wastes being discharged by industrial and commercial structures on a regular basis, as well as other government projects that are destructive to the marine ecology of one of the country's major fishing grounds."

-Ding Cervantes



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Employ 1-m workers for Manila Bay rehab—lawmaker

A LEGISLATOR on Tuesday proposed the hiring of workers to plant trees and clean the beaches, rivers and lakes that flow to Manila Bay.

Party-list Rep. Neil Abayon of AANGAT TAYO recommended to the Duterte administration the rollout of a government-led massive jobs program that would hire millions of unemployed millennials and adult Filipinos to clean up Manila Bay, Laguna de Bay, beaches, rivers, *esteros* and other waterways as well as plant trees to alleviate air pollution in Metro Manila.

Abayon, a deputy majority leader, made the suggestion as he commended the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Metro Manila Development Authority for their latest Manila Bay clean-up operations.

"The cleanup must be sustained and sustainable. This jobs-and-environment program can achieve this goal," he said.

Citing Philippine Statistics Authority data released in December, Abayon said the official national unemployment figure is 2.3 million while the underemployed are 6.7 million. **Maricel V. Cruz**



Ramalakaya wants biz held accountable for Manila Bay degradation

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA
@jonlmayuga

BIG businesses operating along Manila Bay should be held accountable for contributing to the degradation of the coastal and marine environment in Manila Bay.

The Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) said this after the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) issued a closure order and notices to various establishments for violating environmental laws, particularly the Clean Water Act, at the launch

of the "Battle for Manila Bay," an ambitious P47-billion, seven-year rehabilitation program to save Manila Bay.

Among those issued notices of violation for releasing polluted water into Manila Bay were SM Corporate Office, SM Prime Holdings, SM Ferry Terminal, SMDC Sea Residences, Lola Taba Lolo Pato Seaside and Aliw Inn.

SM Group earlier issued a statement stating that the official findings from the joint inspection with the LLDA held last January 16, 2019, is an isolated case involving only one of their tenants.

It said the matter was immediately corrected.

The SM Group said it will im-

mediately meet with the LLDA and discuss the corrective measures already implemented to address the problem.

"On the other notices of violation served, we will comply with the five-day grace period given to respond with the corrective actions already undertaken. The SM Group is in full support of the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program of the government," the statement said.

"It became clear who are the biggest source of pollution in Manila Bay. It's not the fishermen and residents who are being blamed, but establishments like SM that dump their wastes in the fishing ground. Worse, we [fish-

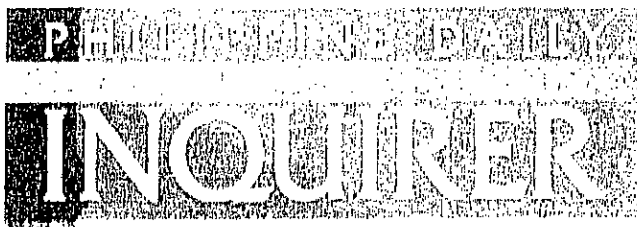
ermen] have become the victims of the degradation of our ocean are being evicted now," lamented Fernando Hicap, Pamalakaya national chairman and a fisherman in Rosario, Cavite.

Hicap, a former Anakpawis party-list solon, chided the Manila Bay Interagency Task Force's plan to demolish dwellings of hundreds of thousands of informal settler families in pursuit of the government's so-called rehabilitation campaign.

Pamalakaya said the said SM establishments and other businesses situated along Roxas Boulevard were reclaimed lands that had already inflicted destruction in Manila Bay's ecosystem.



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MANILA BAY'S NEW STORY OF HOPE

THE Philippines is gifted with the richest marine waters—the “center of the center of marine biodiversity on Earth.” Manila Bay is right on top of it.

But what did we Filipinos do? With our apathy and abuse for the last 50 years, we turned it into a garbage dump. We also turned it into a toilet bowl—that we do not bother to flush.

Ang ating yamang dagat ay ating binastos, binaboy, nilapastangan, sinalaula, gihugaw-hugawan!

Jan. 27 marked the beginning of a new narrative of how we Filipinos have finally awakened from the addiction of abuse. Let it be the new and happy story of how we all got together one morning—shoulder-to-shoulder in the spirit of *bayanihan*—to take this walk

for strong, serious and sustained action. Thank you to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Department of the Interior and Local Government, and their Bisayan *bossing* for their political will, and for getting us all together.

Thank you even more to each and every Filipino who will now take acts of enlightened citizenship to be the change that we want to see. Without the people's support, the people in power can do nothing. But when we, the people, get our act together, there is nothing we cannot do. Yes, “the power of the people is more powerful than the people in power.”

ANTONIO OPOSA JR.,
lawyer and environmental activist



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THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
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UNRAVELING

Manila Bay clean-up: Gargantuan and historic endeavor



By GETSY TIGLAO

SAY what you will about the Duterte administration but one thing it is unafraid to do is tackle the country's big and complicated problems with minimal fuss, limited photo ops, and almost no grandstanding.

There's the illegal drugs problem, which no other administration dared to tackle. Despite the stupid criticisms from Western media, the campaign to contain illegal drugs and the crimes they engender continue to be undertaken. (People have taken note of the drop in the crime rate nationwide, a fact that is not widely reported in biased media.)

The Communist problem is another one that is being tackled head-on despite the Red's advantage in having many sympathizers in local media.

After trying the usual route of negotiating with the Communists, who then proceeded to ask to be co-leaders in government (hey, get elected first!), the Duterte administration decided it was better to just eliminate these terrorists and criminals instead of wasting time and money in useless "peace talks" in European capitals.

Now here's the latest Gordian-knot situation that this government has decided to undertake: the cleaning and rehabilitation of Manila Bay, famed for its glorious sunsets, but also notorious for its fetid waters and floating garbage.

In a word, Manila Bay stinks. Decades-long inflow of waste and untreated discharges into the Bay has resulted in one of the most polluted waters in the world. (Manila is also unlucky in having lazy mayors who have done nothing to clean up the city.)

The coliform bacteria level in

Manila Bay has been measured at 330 million mpn (most probable number) per 100 milliliters with the safe level at 100 mpn per 100 milliliters. The people swimming in the bay during the summer months have no idea how dirty the waters are with millions of disease-causing organisms swirling around and entering their bodies.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu said their initial target is to lower the coliform level to less than 100 mpn/100 ml so that it can be safe for swimming and other water recreation.

This is the dream, at least, but before this can be achieved, there's a lot of hard work to be done. While the Manila Bay rehabilitation is an inter-agency project, volunteer groups are welcome to help in the clean-up effort.

It was thus heartening to see a 5,000 strong contingent of government workers and concerned citizens attend the kick-off last Sunday, starting with a solidarity walk and ending with actual garbage collection in the bayside.

Volunteers and local officials also carted off garbage from estuaries in adjoining provinces, notably Cavite that is adjunct to Metro Manila and also hosts a long shoreline, the southern part of the Bay. The province's historic Zapote River, which also dumps water directly into Manila Bay, also requires massive clean-up.

We hope that other civic, social, and political organizations will volunteer their services to the DENR to help clean Manila Bay and other waterways that are linked to it. This is the time to walk the talk about serving the country and the people.

President Rodrigo Duterte has approved the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Plan proposed by the DENR with an

initial budget of P43 billion with a three to five-year implementation program.

By the end of the program, the quality of the water in Manila Bay should have improved tremendously. But it will take more than three years to rehabilitate not only the Bay but also the rivers, creeks, and estuaries that feed into it.

There is also the big problem of the thousands of illegal settlers that have occupied areas around Manila Bay. Squatters (estimated at 300,000) have also illegally built houses and other structures near rivers, creeks, and esteros in the city.

This is where the presence of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) in the rehabilitation project is a key factor. DILG will assist the DENR in the relocation of the thousands of illegal settlers that are living beside the waterways.

A firm hand is needed in this regard. DILG should look into reports that some local politicians have been tolerating the proliferation of squatters in order to gain their votes come election time.

We hope that the leftists will not use this issue to harangue government again about "human rights," an overabused and overly politicized term. Cleaning up Manila Bay will benefit all, including the leftists and communists.

DILG has already signed an order directing 178 LGUs and almost 5,714 barangays to conduct weekly clean-up activities in areas around Manila Bay.

We can only hope that the next administration in 2022 will continue this heroic and historic undertaking. This is a non-partisan project that will benefit all Filipinos and it should be supported by whomever is elected the next president.



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By **ATTY. JOEY D. LINA**
Former Senator

LAST Sunday's launch of the "biggest battle of them all" to rehabilitate and restore Manila Bay to its former glory is undoubtedly the most ambitious cleanup program that would test government's resolve to go all-out and get full support from the people to overcome formidable obstacles that have plagued previous efforts to combat environmental degradation.

"This is a battle that will be won not with force or arms but with the firm resolve to bring Manila Bay back to life," Environment Secretary Roy 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."

At a cost of P43 billion, the massive cleanup drive targeted to be finished by 2022 spans a 190 km coastline and a total area of 1,994 kilometers extending across the National Capital Region, Central Luzon, and Calabarzon

region.

Apart from commercial and industrial establishments, more than a million informal settlers are situated along estuaries that discharge all sorts of waste into Manila Bay which is reported to have a coliform level of 330 million MPN (most probable number) per 100 milliliters, with some areas of the bay at 1 billion MPN – a far cry from the acceptable level of 100 MPN per 100 ml.

How Manila Bay, world-famous for a view of the golden sunset, is plagued with massive environmental degradation has been obvious all these years with the all-too-familiar sight after heavy rains: Tons of plastic trash and all forms of debris and filth floating by the breakwater.

Improper garbage disposal is indeed a habit so difficult to break for many people, in spite of common knowledge that littering and indiscriminate throwing of all sorts of trash – particularly plastics, styropore, and other non-biodegradable materials – end up clogging drainage systems, canals, esteros, and rivers, with part of the plastic

debris finding its way into the sea. Also dumped into the water tributaries connecting to Manila Bay are wastes from livestock farms and households without septic tanks.

Effective waste disposal can be found in RA 9003, the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, but Sen. Loren Legarda, author of the law, laments that more than a decade after it was enacted in 2001, most local government units have yet to comply with its provisions.

Citing the case of Manila Bay, Legarda said in 2015: "Out of 178 LGUs in the Manila Bay region, only 51 percent are compliant with segregation-at-source; 50 percent for segregated collection; 44 percent with functional Materials Recovery Facilities; and 30 percent with the allowed disposal facilities/ sanitary landfills. Only two of the concerned LGUs have an approved 10-Year Solid Waste Management Plan."

The worsening degradation of Manila Bay can be traced back to the 1990s, prompting a group of environmental activists led by lawyer Antonio Oposa to file a landmark lawsuit in 1999 asking

FINDING ANSWERS

Conquering an enormous challenge



13 government agencies to clean up the area. In 2008, the Supreme Court "issued a continuing mandamus that required government agencies named in the lawsuit to report to the high court every three months on the progress of the bay's rehabilitation until its completion." Despite the order, the degradation continued.

Efforts are now underway to get LGUs deeply involved in the extensive cleanup campaign. DILG Secretary Eduardo Año issued memo circular 2019-19 on January 24 which states: "All 178 Cities and Municipalities, and all 5,714 Barangays in the Manila Bay Watershed Area shall organize a clean-up drive which shall be conducted in areas, such as, but not limited to, coastal areas and/or inland water systems in their respective localities on a weekly basis, starting on Sunday, January 27, 2019, and every Sunday thereafter."

The DILG memo adds: "LGUs may organize a network of volunteers, non-government organizations, civil society organizations, academe, etc. to encourage participation from different stakeholders in the conduct of the

clean-up drives."

I find Sec. Año's memo circular highly significant if indeed all concerned LGUs throw their utmost support to the ambitious cleanup campaign. To encourage full cooperation of the citizenry, it means LGUs would have to be unrelenting in their efforts to change the mindset of Filipinos towards proper waste disposal.

All of us have a civic duty to protect the environment. With a disciplined citizenry taking a collective stand against irresponsible trash disposal, this gargantuan task of rehabilitating Manila Bay – described by Sec. Cimatu as the "biggest battle of them all" – can be achieved.

Even the simple gesture of refraining from mindlessly throwing on the street a candy wrapper or cigarette butt could make a difference. Especially so if we bear in mind what St. Mother Teresa used to say: "We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of the missing drop."

And as Christians, we ought to heed the papal encyclical to avert degradation of the environment. Let's draw inspiration from Pope Francis who wrote: "Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start."

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CTALK CITO BELTRAN

The spider web of faults

The fault-finding process involved in the "Battle for Manila Bay" has started to take shape in the form of a spider web. Yes it's a spider web of sorts where if you press on one spot or point at one fault, it will result in a ripple effect of blame throwing at another point and so on and so forth. It never ends because everything is interconnected and everyone is to blame, you and me included, but we are all looking for the easy target, the biggest fish, or the donkey to pin the tail of blame upon.



That is the first challenge facing any and all of us who sincerely want to save Manila Bay or help fight the even bigger monster called "Human Polluters": We all need to confess our sins or take responsibility. Admit that we are individual and/or community polluters, list down our "sins", make a decision and commitment not to continue with such behavior or habits, and set goals to stop being polluters at personal, family, corporate and community level. Find a role model or successful business model or example; perhaps copy what certain Japanese or European communities came up with on how to reduce their waste products, how to get rid of waste products etc.

While everyone is talking about fecal coliform levels in Manila Bay and targeted the Manila Zoo, Aristocrat Restaurant, etc. nobody talked about the thousands of restaurants all over Metro Manila, Laguna, Cavite, Pampanga and Bataan whose kitchen and toilet drainage go directly into drainage canals and are part of the spider web of tributaries that spill gunk, *sebo*, kitchen waste, dishwashing etc. straight into the many rivers that also connect to the spider's nest called Manila Bay. Congressman Lito Atienza wants to go after Manila and Maynilad Water for allegedly failing to set up the water treatment facilities required by their franchise.

But why are we not calling out governors, mayors, and barangay captains for their role as co-conspirators in the pollution of Manila Bay? Why is the DENR not chasing after building contractors and developers who while in the process of building are the major contributors for serious levels of dust pollution, run offs of sand, cement slurry, and polluted construction water. Even the DOH, DILG and DENR should be studying how developers and builders manage human waste generated by hundreds of thousands of construction workers many of whom use portable toilets or dig temporary latrines in construction sites. Just because we do something for Mother Nature in one hand, it does not excuse, or forgive us for conspiring or tolerating other violations done by others. As the Bible teaches us: He who sins in one part of the law, sins in all. You may not shit in your own backyard but if you patronize a restaurant, business establishment or client who dumps his garbage in the canals, streets or buries them in his backyard and know about it, you are guilty.

If the DENR and the DILG want to convince they are serious in their Battle to Save Manila Bay, they should declare a 60-day grace period for people and businesses to clean up their act, then the authorities should act immediately to issue warnings, suspensions, fines, punish even imprison as many guilty people they can find. Go after developers, homeowners, politicians, business establishments. And cast the operations all over the spider web not just in front of Roxas Boulevard.



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A chance for change



BACK CHANNEL
ALEJANDRO DEL ROSARIO

Shifting to another subject close to his heart, Atienza also said we should stop blaming restaurants and other business establishments along Roxas Boulevard for the tons of garbage in

Manila Bay. He pointed out that these business establishments pay Maynilad and Manila Water Corporation huge sums of money that include funds for water treatment and sewage disposal. He asked why Manny Pangilinan and the Ayalas are not using the money in the implementation of proper sewage disposal when these funds are being collected from businesses and consumers all these years. This monthly collection does not include the loans both water utilities borrowed from the World Bank for

water treatment and disposal.

Aristocrat Restaurant and all hotels along Roxas Boulevard are paying for this sewage treatment and they should not be closed for alleged improper waste disposal. Atienza is prodding President Rodrigo Duterte to instead revoke Maynilad's and Manila Water's permit to operate. He said only President Duterte can do this and the people will thank him for the real cleanup of Manila Bay once one of the world's most scenic tourism spots reopens.

As long as one does not go near the water, the setting of the sun on Manila Bay is still a sight to behold.

As secretary of Environment and Natural Resources under then President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, Atienza took the unprecedented position of siding with the complainant against the government in forcing the City of Manila to cleanup Manila Bay. As a Cabinet member then, Atienza normally should have sided with the government—but he did not. He even helped complainant win the

case in the Supreme Court, which issued a mandamus for implementation of compliance to clean up Manila Bay.



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Manila Bay clean-up: 'Broken windows' theory on a grand scale

IT is not an exaggeration to say that President Duterte's dramatically termed "Battle for Manila Bay," his grand-project to clean up what has been the polluted-landscape symbol of the Philippines, will be a watershed in our nation's history.



**RIGOBERTO
D. TIGLAO**

► TiglaoA6



Krizette Laureta Chu
11 hrs

I honestly did not think it would happen in my generation. Or in any generation. Manila Bay looking like this. Squeakout.

I honestly did not think there was hope for this area, or that a leader will be able to move 5,000 people to clean up Manila Bay.

■ One of many similar comments on social media.

■ TIGLAO FROM A1

Manila Bay clean-up: 'Broken windows' theory on a grand scale

Its impact on our culture and institutions will go beyond simply the physical accomplishment of cleaning up the bay and its waterfront.

That area had been the Philippine version of the mythical Augean stables of ancient Greek legend; the cleaning of centuries of horse shit there seemed an impossible task until the demi-god Hercules did the job — cleverly rechanneling a nearby river to flow through it. (Duterte and Environment Secretary Frank Cimatú's version of that: Get a wave of over 5,000 people to "flow" through it, and clean it up.)

One dimension of realizing the impact of this Duterte project would be in terms of the famous sociological and criminological "broken-windows" theory. First proposed in 1982 by social scientists James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling, the idea became renowned when the New York police head and Mayor Rudi Giuliani used it as their framework to restore peace and order in the metropolis that had become so crime-infested that mugging was a commonplace occurrence.

In simple terms, the theory says that "visible signs of crime, anti-social behavior and civil

disorder create an urban environment that encourages further crime and disorder, including serious crimes." To change that situation, prevent those visible signs from being created.

Climate of lawlessness

The theory's name is from the illustration that if a broken window in an abandoned building isn't fixed fast, it would attract vandals to break its other windows. A building with all its windows broken would portray a climate of lawlessness, which would then create a culture of impunity in the area, so that more and more crimes will occur.

The theory says that it is not only fear of police enforcement that prevents people from committing crimes. People look for signals in their environment on how they would behave. If an environment is filled with things that suggest criminal or anti-social behavior — windows shattered by rocks, graffiti, and litter — people would be emboldened to commit not just similar crimes, but even worse.

The cesspool that Manila Bay had become, starting roughly in the 1960s, has been a colossal,

feces-filled building with broken windows. What made it so is a microcosm of almost everything that's gone wrong in our nation.

We have a capitalist class with no sense of responsibility to the community they live in and generate their profits from. It is not just the restaurants along the bay (one of which is reportedly the famous Aristocrat restaurant owned by the family of Sen. Bam Aquino's wife) that polluted it.

The filth also came from the numerous factories and squatters along the Pasig River that had been discharging their wastes there which eventually end up in the Bay.

Corrupt political class

We have a political class that is not just incompetent but corrupted by our kind of capitalists. Those enterprises polluting the Pasig River and Manila Bay would have been closed overnight with the power of city governments to issue business and even sanitary permits. But they weren't, for millions of reasons of course.

It is not just graft money that has made our political class look away from the hideous picture of a bay world-famous for its sunset



Trusted Since 1900

The Manila Times

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Manila Bay clean-up ---

that had become a cesspool. The urban poor squatters along the Pasig River who throw their wastes there that end up in the bay are there because mayors and other politicians protect them, since they have made these communities their electoral bases that deliver the crucial votes on election day.

It is a condemnation of our political system that the capital of the country, the City of Manila, has been governed by mayors who proved to be either incompetent or corrupt that they have allowed its bay to be turned into a cesspool. Manila even has a mayor who is a former President of the Republic, whose popularity and therefore political base has been enormous yet who hasn't lifted a finger to clean up Manila Bay.

A clean Manila Bay with clear waters, without squatters and petty criminals, will create a culture of peace and order and of responsibility to the community we live in. It will have a chain effect on the things that the nation needs to clean up - the *esteros* of Chinatown that have become garbage dumps, the whole length of the Pasig River and its estuaries, the squatter areas along the river. More importantly perhaps,

this drive to clean up "things" will evolve into cleaning up our institutions. Indeed, the histories of societies involved a single precedent, which was then replicated.

As corrupt before

The US bureaucracy was as corrupt as any developing nation before. The reform of its Department of Agriculture which had been notorious in its corruption due its power to give subsidies to farmers, was the precedent that led to the anti-graft campaigns in most of its other federal departments.

Hong Kong's bureaucracy in the 1960s was also a graft-ridden one. It was the cleanup of its police department in the late 1970s by a newly established Independent Commission Against Corruption (funded by income from its world-renowned horse races) that became a precedent for the transformation of its entire bureaucracy into a graft-free and efficient machine.

The following are from my book *Debunked**:

"Note the following descriptions by scholars:

— 'Patronage-oriented political parties and free-spending corruption dominated...' The political

system consisted of a 'distinctive complex of a weak national administration, divided and fragmentary public authority, and non-programmatic political parties.'

— 'The nation-state had a weak hold on the imagination and consciousness of a people who were now forced to think of them as one community. Most identified themselves with their province of birth, not with the nation.'

Apt descriptions of the Philippines today these may be, but these referred to different countries. The first described the USA in the 1930s. The second described Italy in the 1920s. Yet these two countries were able to build strong nation-states within a generation.

For the sake of our children's children, I hope Duterte does build a strong nation-state. Wouldn't it be dramatic if the Manila Bay clean-up signals the start of such a strong Republic?;

*Available at National and Popular book stores; and amazon.com

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Manila Bay mabubura sa 40 reclamation project

Iginiit kahapon ng mga mambabatas na miyembro ng Makabayan bloc sa Kamara na ipagpaliban o suspendehin ang rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay habang hindi pa nailalatag ang komprehensibong pag-aaral kaugnay sa magiging implikasyon nito sa mga informal settler.

Sa House Resolution No. 2452 na inihain ng Makabayan bloc kahapon, iginiit ng grupo na isa-publiko muna ang master plan at magkaroon ng public consultation.

Umalma ang mga kongresista dahil magbibigay-daan lamang umano ang rehabilitation program sa mahigit 40 reclamation project sa Manila Bay.

Kabilang sa mga reclamation project na tinu-

koy ng Makabayan bloc ang 148-hektaryang joint venture Solar City' reclamation project ng Manila Goldcoast Development Corp. at ng lokal na pamahalaan ng lungsod ng Maynila; ang 360 hektaryang joint venture para sa reclamation project ng SM Prime Holdings Inc. at local government ng Pasay City; at ang 265-hektaryang joint venture para sa Pasay Harbor City ng consortium ng negosyanteng si Dennis Uy at ng Pasay City.

Samantala, padadal-

han na umano ng liham ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ngayong araw ang lokal na pamahalaan ng Pasay City upang mapuwersa itong ipasara na ang mga establisimyento sa Manila Bay na kanilang inisyuhan ng cease and desist order (CDO).

Tiniyak din ng DENR na madadagdagan pa ang mga establisimyento na bibigyan ng CDO dahil sa paglabag sa environmental laws. (Aries Cano/Tina Mendoza)



Abante



30 JAN 2019

DATE

Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

UNA SA BALITA

BROADCASTER'S VIEW



TWITTER @ElySaludar

Reclamation project, ipagbawal sa Manila Bay

Nagsimula na ang rehabilitasyon sa Manila Bay na naglalayong maging malinis ito para sa lahat.

Aabot pala sa 43 bilyong piso ang rehabilitasyon sa Manila Bay na matagal ding napabayaang ng gobyerno mula sa lokal na pamahalaan At national government.

May natukoy na ang Department of Environment and Natural

Resources (DENR) na mga establisimyento tulad ng mga hotel at restaurant na siyang nagdudumi sa Manila bay.

Dapat ay papanagutin ang mga establisimyentong ito at pagmuhitahin ng malaking halaga.

Upang mabawasan ang 43 bilyong piso na gagastusin ng gobyerno sa rehabilitation sa Manila Bay.

Pero dapat ay ipag-

bawal ng gobyerno ang anumang reclamation project sa Manila bay.

Imbestigahan din ang mga lokal na opisyal na siyang nagbigay ng permiso sa reclamation project sa Manila Bay upang matiyak kung sila ba ay nakinabang at posibilidad na nasuhulan.

Kung itutuloy kasi ang reclamation project sa Manila Bay ay parang lilitaw na ang mga kompanyang magtatayo ng gusa-

li at negosyo ang pangunahing makikinabang sa rehabilitasyon.

Dapat ay ang taumbayan ang makinabang sa rehabilitasyon sa Manila Bay at hindi ang mga kompanyang mag-sasagawa ng reclamation project.

Kung mayroong nalagdaang kontrata at nai-award sa mga kompanya para sa reclamation ay maaaring ito ay ipawalangbisa ng National Government.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
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MALAWAKANG CLEANUP DRIVE SA BULACAN

LUNGSOD NG MALOLOS – Pinangunahan ni Gobernador Wilhelm Sy-Alvarado ang malawakang paglilinis at rehabilitasyon sa ilang munisipalidad at mga lungsod sa lalawigan kamakalawa ng umaga, kaugnay ng adbokasiya ng pamahalaang nasyunal sa rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay.

➤ Kaisa ang higit kumulang 2,000 Bulakenyo, pinangunahan ni Alvarado ang cleanup activity sa Brgy. Tawiran, Obando habang ang ibang grupo ay nagsagawa ng parehong aktibidad sa mga lungsod ng Meycauayan at San Jose Del Monte at mga munisipalidad ng Marilao at Santa Maria.

Kasama ng gobernador sa gawain sina Regional Director Chief Supt. Joel Napolcon Coronel, Senior Supt. Chito Bersaluna, 48th IB Philippine Army Commanding Officer Lt. Col. Amel Cabugon, Department of Environment and Natural Resources for Field Op-

eration Asec. Joselin Marcus Fragada, Environmental Management Bureau Regional Director Lormelyn Claudio, Department of Tourism Regional Director Carolina Uy at iba pa.

Sinabi ni Alvarado na hindi ito ang oras para magturuan at ibigay ang sisi sa iba, sa halip, ito ang sandali upang makibahagi sa gawain para sa ikabubuti ng kapaligiran.

Bago ito, 15 gusali na sa Bulacan simula noong Biyernes ang ipinasara sa pangunguna ng EMB bunsod ng parehong paglabag.

Ang paglulunsad ng sabayang Manila Bay cleanup at rehabilitasyon na tinawag bilang "Battle for Manila Bay", ay ginanap sa Rajah Sulayman, Maynila; Obando, Bulacan; Guagua, Pampanga; Mariveles, Bataan; at Bacoor, Cavite na nagsimula sa pamamagitan ng Solidarity Walk na dinaluhan ng libo-libong kalahok.

A. BORLONGAN



Mga tambay paglinisin sa Manila Bay

INIREKOMENDA ng isang kongre-sista sa administrasyong Duterte na pakinabangan ang mga kababayang tambay at bigyan ng trabaho ang mga ito kapag umarya na ang reha-bilitasyon ng Manila Bay.

Maraming millennial at adult na Pinoy na nakatunganga at walang kayod ang mabibigyan ng trabaho kung ang mga ito ang iempleyo at paglilinis ng Manila Bay, Laguna de Bay, mga ilog at estero at pag-tatanimin ng puno, ayon kay Deputy Minority Leader at Aangat Tayo Party-list Rep. Harlin Neil Abayon III.

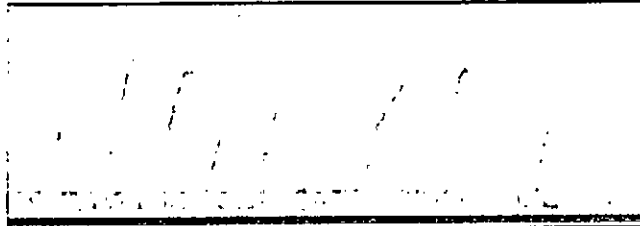
"The clean-up must be sustained and sustainable. This jobs-and-envi-ronment program can achieve this goal," pahayag ni Abayon.

Batay aniya sa datos ng Philip-pine Statistics Authority (PSA) noong Disyembre ng nakalipas na taon ay

umaabot sa 2.3 milyon ang bilang ng walang trabaho habang nasa 6.7M naman ang underemployed.

"For example, to quickly give jobs to one million Filipinos, the DENR, under the able leadership of Secretary Roy Cimatu, can hire them at 1,000 pesos a day per worker for 5 days in a month. That is P5,000 monthly. If you have two unemployed members of a family mobilized, that is P10,000 a month for that family. Total cost of 1 million workers for P5,000 a month is P5 billion a month. Multiply that by 13 months, that is P65 billion in a year," paliwanag ni Abayon.

Para mapondohan ang job program, puwede aniyang magpa-taw ang gobyerno ng "green fines" o multa laban sa mga magkakalat at hindi maayos na magdidispata ng mga basurang plastik. (Aries Cano)



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PNP TUMULONG PARA SA PAGBABALIK NG SIKAT NA 'SUNSET'

SEEN: Magkakasabay na nag-renew kahapon, January 29, 2019, ng kontrata sa ABS-CBN sina Jolina Magdangal, JM De Guzman at ang Viva Artists Agency stars na sina Bela Padilla at Yassi Pressman.

SCENE: Isang teleserye ang next project ni Bela sa ABS-CBN habang naghihintay ng pelikula na pagbibidahan niya.

SEEN: Magsisimula sa February 15 ang shooting ng *Untrue*, ang first movie team up nina Xian Lim at *Cristine Reyes*. Kukunan sa Georgia ang mga eksena ng pelikula ng *Viva Films* na mula sa direksyon ni *Sigríd Andrea Bernardo*.

SCENE: Nagpatubo ng bigote at balbas si Xian para sa karakter na gagampanan niya sa *Untrue*. Makikita ang new look ni Xian sa guestings at mall shows nila ni *Louise delos Reyes* para sa pelikula na *Hanggang Kailan* na showing sa February 6.

SEEN: Nagtagumpay ang Duterte administration sa unang araw ng paglilinis nito sa Manila Bay na dinarayo ngayon ng mga turista. Kasabay ng unti-unting paglilis ng Manila Bay ang pagbabalik ng lost glory at world famous sunset ng Manila Bay na immortalized sa hindi na mabibilang sa daliri na local movies.

SCENE: Tumulong ang 192,000 members ng Philippine National Police sa paglilinis ng mga basura sa Manila Bay. Maglalagay ang DILG ng



mga CCTV camera sa paligid ng Manila Bay para mahuli ang mga nagtatapon ng basura. Sa dami ng mga naging pangulo ng Pilipinas, si President *Rodrigo Duterte* lang ang nakaisip sa rehabilitation ng naghihingalo na Manila Bay.

SEEN: Magkakaroon ng co-production venture ang *Star Cinema* sa isang film company sa South Korea pero tumanggi pa ang mga executive na sabihin ang mga pangalan ng mga local star na kasama sa mga magbibida sa malaking proyekto.

SCENE: Nakaburol ang labi ng Filipino rock icon na si *Joey 'Pepe' Smith* sa Loyola Memorial Park sa Sucat, Parafiaque City. Cardiac arrest ang ikinamatay ni Smith sa edad na 71 noong Lunes.

SEEN: Ginanap kagabi sa Viva Films office ang story conference ng *Just A Stranger*, ang pelikula na pagbibidahan nina *Anne Curtis*, *Marco Gumabao* at *Edu Manzano*. Kukunan sa Germany ang mga eksena ng bagong pelikula ni *Jason Paul Laxamana*.



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BOSES NG NASA LABAN NG BAYAN



Huwag-puro kita ang nasa isip

Mga bumababoy sa Manila Bay, makonsensiya naman kayo

SUBUKAN nating pumunta sa Manila Bay ngayon at mamamangha tayo sa kalinisang ating makikita.

Dalawang araw pa lang 'yan, ano pa kaya kung dalawa, tatlong taon na ang nakalipas baka mag-ala-Boracay Island ang dating maruming Manila Bay?

Marami ang nag-post sa Facebook ng mga larawang nagpapakita ng bagong hitsura ng Manila Bay matapos ang unang araw ng paglilinis nito.

Makikitang malinis at maaliwalas ang bahagi ng dagat sa Bay Promenade, habang enjoy na nanonood ng magandang "Manila Sunset" ang mga tao.

Sa isa naman ay makikitang may buhangin pa sa harap ng "beach" ng Manila Bay. Nagulat

ang maraming netizens at sinabing hindi nila akalaing may buhangin pala sa Manila Bay!

Noong Linggo ang paglulungsad ng Manila Bay Rehabilitation Project na pinangunahan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). Ang tawag ni DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu sa proyekto ay "Battle for Manila Bay."

"Ito ay laban na hindi gagamit ng dahas o armas, sa halip ay ang matinding paninindigan na maibalik ang Manila Bay sa dati nitong kagandahan. Kapag nagpasya ang mga tao na sumama sa laban na ito at determinado silang magtrabaho, panalo tayong lahat," sabi ni Sec. Cimatu.

Pagkatapos ng solidarity walk kung saan 5,000 volunteers at empleyado ng gobyerno ang sumama, nagsimula ang paglilinis sa Manila Bay. Nangolekta ng mga basura ang mga tao hanggang sa matapos ang araw ng Linggo.

Sumatutal ng nakolektang basura sa unang araw pa lang ng paglilinis — 45 tonelada ng basura na inilulan sa 11 trak ng Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA).

Nagsimula rin ang paglilinis sa bahagi ng Manila Bay sa Cavite at pati na rin ang mga estero at ilog sa Bulacan, Pampanga, Bataan, Navotas at Las Piñas.

Nakatataba ng puso ang ganitong pangyayari. Nagtutulung-tulong ang mga ahensiya ng gobyerno kasama ang pribadong sektor sa paglilinis ng ating likas na yaman, ang Manila Bay.

Sa mga sutil d'yan, sigurado tayong ang sabihin nila ay "sa umpisa lang 'yan". Hindi, ibahin ninyo ang administrasyong Duterte na tulad ng ginawa nito sa Boracay Island, kapag sinabi nilang gagawin nila ang paglilinis ay itaga natin 'yan sa bato.

Noong unang inanunsiyo ang pagsasara sa Isla ng Boracay para malinis ito, maraming umalmang dilawan.

Marahul, marami sa may-ari ng mga resort sa Boracay Island ay mga taga-Aklan at Roxas, mga elitistang dilawan na ayaw kay Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

Gayunman, tinuloy pa rin ng gobyerno ang pagpapasara sa Isla ng Boracay ng anim na buwan. Ang resulta? Napakalinis nito ngayon.

Nawala ang mga basura at hindi na amoy imbumal ang beach. Inayos na lahat ng tubo at sewer.

Ngayon, ang Manila Bay naman ang gustong linisin ng administrasyong Duterte. Mas malaking hamon ito.

Mas maraming kaaway sa layuning ito kabilang na ang malalaking hotel, korporasyon, restoran at iba pang business.

Pero, naniniwala tayong marami sa mga negosyong ito ay boluntaryong tutulong sa gobyerno sapagkat alam nilang kapag nalinis ang Manila Bay ay lalong darami ang bilang ng mga turistang pupunta sa lugar at lalago pa ang mga negosyo nila. "Win-win", 'ika nga nila.

Habang naniniwala tayong mas maraming makabayan na negosyante, mayroon din d'yan, na kontra. Kaya kailangan pa rin ang kamay na bakal para sa mga sutil na susuway o nagpakita ng paglabag sa batas ng Clean Water Act.

Umpisa pa lang, nagbigay na ang DENR sa pamamagitan ng Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) ng cease and desist orders laban sa tatlong establisimiyento na hindi sumusunod sa mga batas sa pagprotekta ng kalikasan.

Ang tatlong ipinasara ay ang Aristocrat Restaurant sa Roxas Boulevard, Gloria Maris Restaurant sa CCP Complex at Esplanade o San Miguel by the Bay.

Ayon kay LLDA General Manager Jaime Medina, ang tatlong restorang ito ay naglalabas daw ng maraming dumi sa mga estero, ilog at iba pang daanang-tubig na patungong Manila Bay.

Bawal ang ganito, dapat "treated" muna ang dumi at tubig ng mga establisimiyento bago ito ilabas sa mga tubo.

Naghain din ang DENR-LLDA ng notices of violations laban sa mga establisimiyento ng SM Prime Holdings, Aliw Inn, Sea Residences, Lolo Taba at Lolo Pato Restaurant.

Ano ba naman 'yung mag-invest ng kaunti sa water treatment at sewer facilities para hindi madagdagan ang dumi ng Manila Bay.

Huwag puro kita ang nasa isip. Makonsensiya naman tayo at simulang tumulong na pagandahin ang bayan natin.



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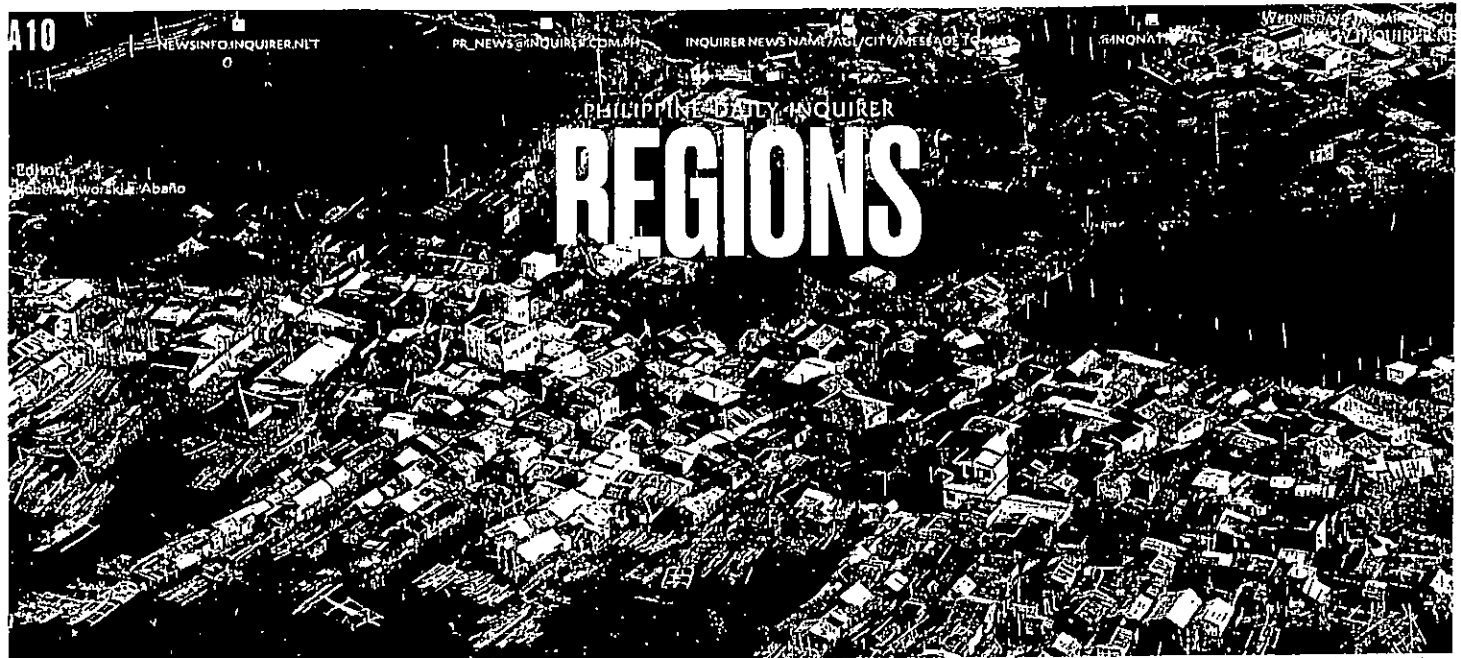
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SLUMS **AY LIVING** Communities of informal settlers in sections of Manila Bay, like this settlement at the border of Cavite province and Parañaque City, have been blamed for polluting the waters shared by Metro Manila and its nearby provinces. —LYN RILLON



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
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BREATHING MANILA BAY. Men and women, young and old have started flocking back to the shoreline of Manila Bay, with its rehabilitation—the “#Battle for Manila Bay”—showing pulsating signs of recovery of this once upon an era gateway for socio-economic development even prior to nearly four centuries of Spanish occupation from 1521. Photo courtesy of Kiko Ribleza



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
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MANILA BAY CLEANUP. Listed Asian Terminals Inc., operator of international gateway port Manila South Harbor, shows readiness to support multi-sectoral efforts, led by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, to bring Manila Bay back to its glory days. Shown are ATI employee volunteers taking part in DENR's 'Manila Bay-anihan' program kick-off on Jan. 27, a multi-sectoral campaign to resuscitate the Manila Bay.



Trusted Since 1993

The Manila Times

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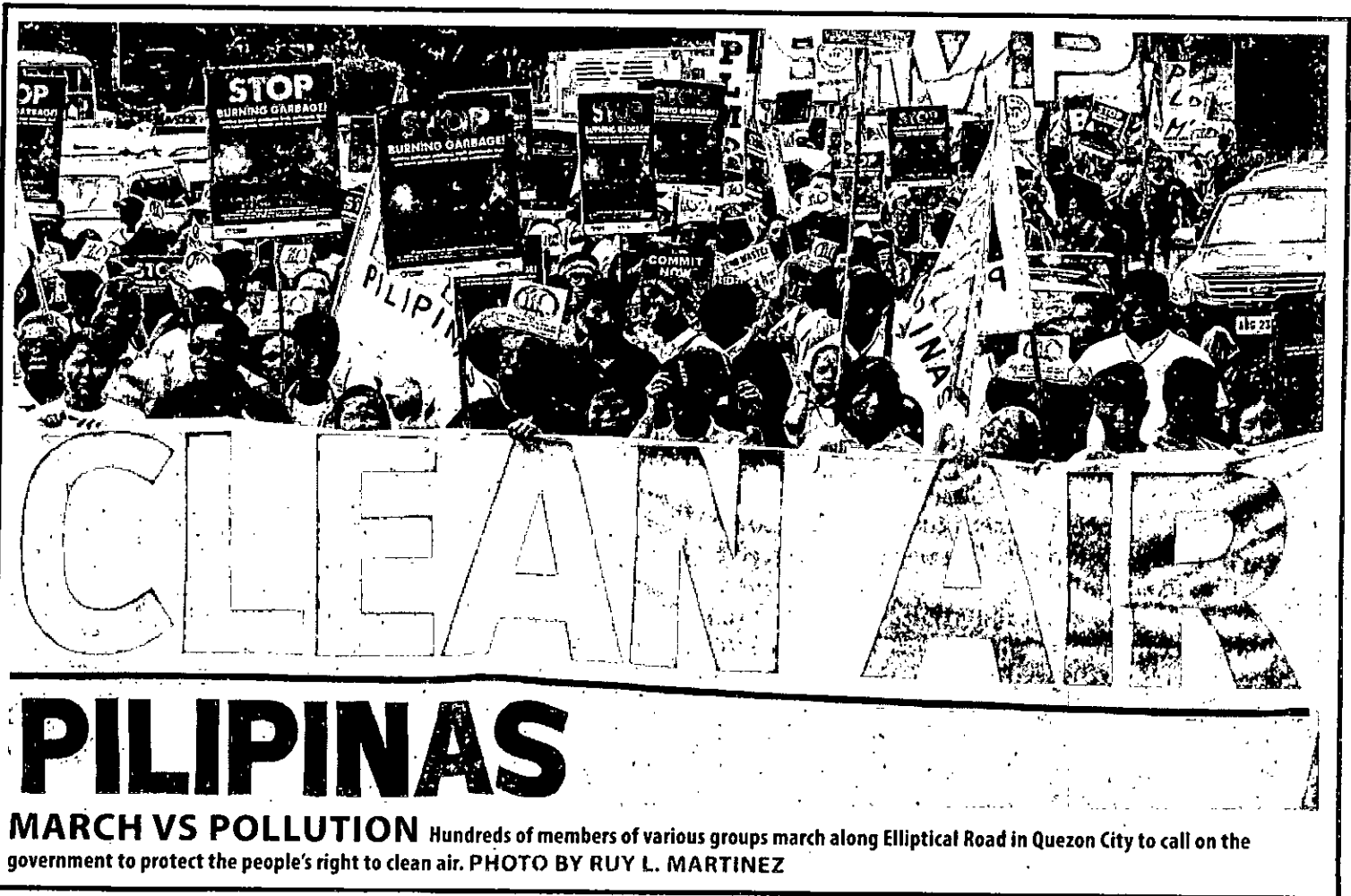
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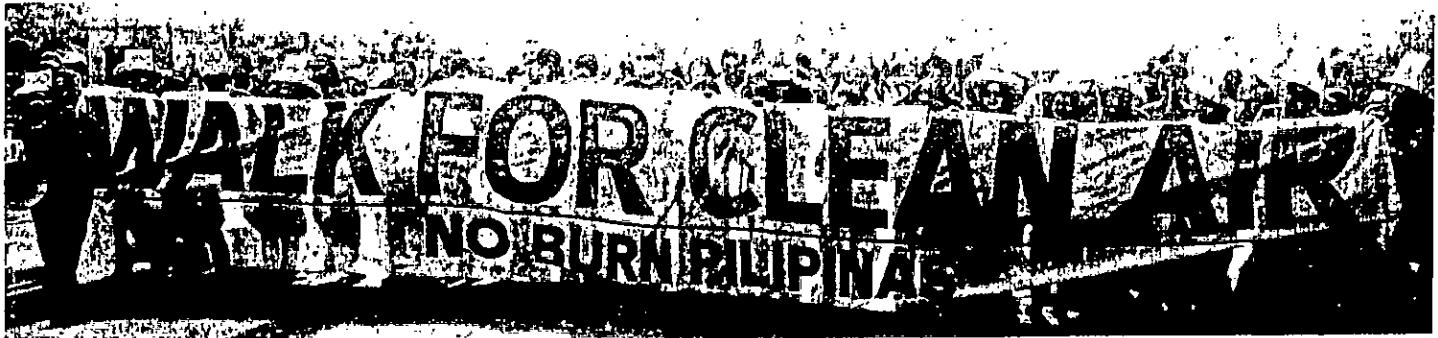
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PILIPINAS

MARCH VS POLLUTION Hundreds of members of various groups march along Elliptical Road in Quezon City to call on the government to protect the people's right to clean air. PHOTO BY RUY L. MARTINEZ



VARIOUS groups walk for clean air and against burning at the Quezon Memorial Circle.

ANALY 1



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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EU firms take closer look at PH waste management

By **BERNIE CAHILES-MAGKILAT**

Two top-level EU business missions, comprising some of Europe's largest firms, are visiting the Philippines this year to explore opportunities in waste management and construction sectors.

Florian Gottein, executive director of the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP), said the first mission will be held in March this year comprising of 30-50 European firms.

The mission members are engaged in waste management and are offering their expertise and capabilities to the country's drive to implement waste management systems.

According to Gottein, the mission members will also attend a fair organized by Asian Development Bank (ADB) in March.

Participants are expected to come from the bigger economies of EU, including Germany and France, said Gottein.

The mission will also visit other countries in Asean, including Singapore.

This mission coincides with President Duterte's strong warning against establishments that are causing pollu-

tion to the Manila Bay. Last year, Duterte shutdown Boracay for six months to give way for a thorough clean-up of the island paradise.

Boracay establishments with no proper waste water treatment facilities were also ordered to put up their own plants for them to continue operations.

The second EU mission scheduled in November this year is composed of businesses from the construction sector.

Europe's construction and engineering players are looking at opportunities in the government's Build Build Build projects.

To maximize their stay in Manila, mission members will also attend the Philconstruct expo in November this year.

Gottein said that ECCP is working with business organizations in Europe for these missions.

"In September last year we were able to bring in the largest ever business mission from Europe comprising of 52 companies in the healthcare sector," said Gottein.

In addition, ECCP is supporting an outbound mission to the Balkan states in the third quarter and to Scandinavian countries in the third or last quarter this year.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
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THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
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Sinulog fest yields 11 tons of garbage

By MINERVA BC NEWMAN

CEBU CITY—Eleven tons of trash were collected by 50 eco-stations set-up along the parade route of last weekend's Sinulog celebration.

Out of the 11 tons of solid wastes, 40 percent were recyclable materials such as polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottles and cans, 25 percent were residual wastes such as plastic bags and food wrappers and 35 percent were biodegradable items such as food wastes, according to the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB).

EMB said that of the 10 days the eco-stations were deployed, the procession on Jan. 19 and the Sinulog Mardi Gras on Jan. 20 generated the biggest volume of garbage, 7.2 tons.

Through segregation at the eco-stations, 75 percent or 8.25 tons can be diverted and recycled.

EMB Central Visayas Director William Cuñado thanked the public for being responsible enough to reduce their litter during the celebration of the feast of the Holy Child.

"We hope to continue this the next Sinulog festivity with the Cebu City government and other organizations and involving companies whose products end-up at these eco-stations to be responsible enough in managing their wastes," Cunado said.

"Vendors along the Sinulog route will be encouraged to put up their own eco-stations next time," he said.



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Tieza invests P1b in Boracay island

THE role of the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Authority in rehabilitating Boracay and addressing the perennial flooding in the island tops the agency's accomplishments for 2018.

"We are proud that Tieza is helping make Boracay a sustainable tourism destination. Through this, generations of tourists will benefit from a cleaner and waste-free island," Tieza chief operating officer Pocholo Paragas said.

"We are fully committed to complete long-term engineering solutions which will permanently address the problems that beset Boracay," he said.

Tieza invested more than P1 billion to address the flooding problem in Boracay when they implemented Phase II of the Boracay Water Drainage Project.

The construction period was shortened to two years instead of the original seven years. The implementation of Phase II is expected to be completed by end of 2019.



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REST IN FISH, 'TAWILIS'

WHAT caused the steady decline of the endemic *tawilis* and other Taal Lake species?

The proliferation of fish cages and fish pens is way beyond the established carrying capacity of the lake, which should just be 10 percent of its 94,000 hectares, as against the more than 60 percent that has been occupied by big fishing companies. This caused the lake to reach a point where conservation efforts are no longer effective.

The fish inventory of Taal Lake listed 76 migratory and endemic species in 1927, but 50 years later, the inventory was down to 15. The catch of *tawilis*, the most endemic species, dropped by more than 80 percent. Obviously, the occurrence of fish kill was due to the gov-

ernment's failure to enforce existing environmental laws.

Whatever happened to the Supreme Court's writ of *kalikasan* in 2012 to stop the further issuance of clearance for fish cage operators? Was the issue over 28 commercial and backyard piggeries discharging animal wastes to Lipute River, a tributary of Taal Lake, ever checked? And did the overcrowding of approximately 6,000 or more fish cages in different municipalities surrounding the lake spark the deterioration of *tawilis* quality, and soon, its mortality?

Rehabilitate Taal Lake now!

NORMA G. ATIENZA,
board of trustees,
Pamanlahi Inc.,
normaatienza@yahoo.com

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THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900

MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Department of Environment and Natural Resources
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Swiss miner diversifies into agriculture

By **MADELAINE B. MIRAFLOR**

Swiss mining firm Solway Investment Group, who operates two chromite mines in the Philippines, is interested to diversify into agriculture, with an initial plan to build in Mindanao what could be the next largest contiguous banana plantation in the world.

Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol said on Friday that it is Solway Investment Group and Techiron Resources, Inc. who are interested to put up massive banana plantation in Mindanao.

Solway Investment Group is a private mining and metals group headquartered in Switzerland, with mines and smelting plants in Guatemala, Ukraine, Russia, Macedonia, Indonesia and Philippines.

It operates two open pit chromite mines in the Philippines, both of which are in Homonhon Island, Municipality of Guiuan, Province of Eastern Samar.

It is not clear, however, in which Philippine company Solway Group is invested in or if it's related to Techiron Resources. A data from Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) showed that there are only two chromite mines in Eastern Samar as of 2016, namely Techiron Resources and Mt. Sinai Resources

and Exploration Corporation.

In a separate data, it was disclosed that Techiron is 38 percent owned by Swiss investors, which were not specified. The firm's investment in Philippines as of 2016 already amounted to P1.1 billion.

Techiron Resources is one of the companies that former Environment Secretary Regina Paz Lopez wanted to close down.

Piñol said Solway Group and Techiron Resources are being represented by Philippine-based French-Russian businessman Robert Gaspar.

A report last week quoted the Department of Agriculture (DA) chief saying that the investors were supposed to be Russians. But the DA chief specified on Friday that the interested investors, namely Techiron and Solway, have "both interests in mining and minerals but are now venturing into agriculture and aquaculture in the Philippines targeting the Russian market".

Solway Group was sought for confirmation but Business Bulletin is yet to get a reply.

Officials of these companies are said to arrive in the Philippines on February 16, the target launch date of the project. They will initially develop 1,000 hectares

of land.

But the plan is to really secure 5,000 to 20,000 hectares of land within the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) main enclave of Camp Abubakar in the boundaries of Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur for the banana plantation.

"This is our modest contribution to the efforts of President Rody Duterte to bring peace and development to Mindanao," Gaspar said, as cited by Piñol.

The project, estimated at P8 billion, will be the first and biggest investment in the Bangsamoro area, following the signing and ratification of the Bangsamoro Organic Law, Piñol said.

He said that Gaspar and a group from Bangsamoro, which was represented by former Buldon Mayor Taunggan Macasandag and former Vice Mayor Nasrudin Maluag, already signed initial agreement for the project.

This should allow the investors to conduct surveys, soil tests and aerial mapping of the area.

The survey team will proceed to Camp Abubakar on Monday, January 28, and will stay there for one week.

When fully operational, the project is expected to provide work for at least 10,000 people, many of whom former cadres and combatants.

Meanwhile, the Bureau of Soils and Water Management and the Information and Communications Technology Service of the DA will assist in the soil survey, aerial mapping and geo-referencing.

The Philippines is currently the second largest exporter of banana, next

to Ecuador. Bulk of the country's supply comes from Mindanao.

Right now, the world's largest contiguous banana plantation is also in Mindanao, which is being operated by Tagum Development Corp. (TADECO) under a joint venture deal with Bureau of Corrections (BuCor).



To go nuclear or not

You may have watched too much of *The Simpsons* if you still think of radioactive waste as an ominous green sludge-like liquid, often sealed in leaking drums and waiting to slip past Charles Montgomery Burns' feet like his entire wealth did in the show.

That is Springfield stuff.

Nuclear waste comes out in the form of a piece of metal, not the humming and throbbing liquid that seemed to breathe danger and death as well as money for Monty Burns.

Recent *Daily Tribune* guest Michael Shellenberger, an environmental activist, made clear that this is not mere misconception but clearly ignorance that drives people away from supporting nuclear energy to power the world.

It is safe and cheap, he says.

Shellenberger says going nuclear's "the best environmental. It's the best for the environment because you can store it, make sure it doesn't go into the atmosphere as air pollution or as water pollution. It gives you a chance to both lift everybody out of poverty and protect the natural environment."

Adopting nuclear as main energy source to power the country up has met opposition from not a few.

Its safety was raised but the country's first nuclear power plant built in Bataan in the 1980s was not closed due to safety issues. It was mothballed because it was a trophy symbol of Ferdinand Marcos' waste and corruption.

Cory Aquino did not want anything which could have showed any Marcos success. But she still paid for the loans Marcos secured to build that nuclear power plant. That's the bigger waste.

But even as efforts to go nuclear is fast gaining ground in the country, the Bataan nuclear power plant could no longer be revived. Not because it is unsafe but because it would cost more to make it breathe than build a new, modern and safer one.

While we have read and heard about news of nuclear fallout, with Chernobyl and Fukushima fresh in our minds, it is most likely we never did further research as information was limited to whatever the West had wanted us to consume before the Internet about Chernobyl in 1986, while Fukushima somehow opened our eyes to a better understanding of what happens during a nuclear fallout.

But still, majority among us may still believe what they probably saw in *The Simpsons*.

Take the case of Shunichi Yamashita, considered a pariah in Japan for telling those evacuated after the 2011 Fukushima nuclear accident that the hazards are much less than they suppose.

Yamashita made a case with his mother who was 16 and two miles away from the "Fat Man" when it was dropped by an American fighter plane in Nagasaki in 1945.

It was the third nuclear explosion in history. Yamashita was born to that girl seven years later in 1952, also in Nagasaki which was obliterated from the map and had led Japan to surrender its dream of Asian domination. She still lives with Yamashita at 88.

Naoto Matsumura, 55, a former construction worker, had volunteered to live by his lonesome in Fukushima's 12.5-mile exclusion zone. Its residents left after they were told to evacuate, leaving behind an entire town the way neighborhoods act — tea cups still on smalls plates, pairs of slippers on the doors, clothes hanging on the line.

Matsumura still sees them as they were left by the



Aldrin Cardona



Fukushima residents. He stayed because somebody has to take care of the pets left by their masters.

He calls his exposure to radiation "at rock and roll levels." But claims he will survive for as long as the pets needed care. He is a hero in Japan for being the "guardian of Fukushima's animals."

Former Rep. Mark Cojuangco, who brought Shellenberger here says: "There's only one place in the world where people died and that's in Chernobyl. But I want to exclude Chernobyl from the consideration of the death, because Chernobyl had no containment and that is forbidden in the West."

"The only nuclear plants in the world that were built without containment were built by the (former) Soviet Union. And those that were the RBM case that is in Chernobyl. That is forbidden in the West and all nuclear plants in the West have containment. That's why when we had the triple meltdown in Fukushima — three at the same time — the amount of radiation that escaped was not even enough to increase the radiation to be above that of Seattle or Denver. And that's the worse that has happened, not a single person died, not a single person was injured by radiation, same with TMI."

"If I exclude Fukushima," Cojuangco continued, "zero people have died from nuclear in the entire 60-plus-year's history of nuclear power. Now tell me, what industry can boast that kind of safety? There's none. That's the safest ever and you cannot get better than zero."

Shellenberger also raised economy as a primary factor in considering the use of nuclear power. It is, he said, cheaper and cleaner than coal which the Philippines use today.

"You're killing yourself by burning coal and wood and smoke. So, how many people have died in the Philippines because of these superstitious fears of nuclear power? The Philippines does not have its own energy, so you have to pay billions of dollars a year to foreign countries — including the United States, Australia, Indonesia — to import energy. Electricity prices in the Philippines are three times higher than the cost of electricity in South Korea. With nuclear power, you still have to import the fuel, but the fuel is just 20 percent of the cost of nuclear energy as opposed to 70 to 80 percent on natural gas, coal. If you want to grow as an economy, the per capita income in the Philippines is like \$3,000 a year; in Korea, it's more like 30,000, ten times higher," he said.

Shellenberger and Cojuangco have opened up another debate about nuclear energy. But this time, talks will be different from the issues that wrapped the controversial Bataan plant.

It's time to revisit its pros and cons.

With those scenes from *The Simpsons* debunked.



Power and paranoia



Dinah S. Ventura

If one can get past the paranoia that surrounds the word "nuclear," then one may argue the timely question: should the country revisit the use of nuclear energy?

Nuclear energy is currently a hot topic nowadays because of how the Department of Energy has been doggedly pursuing alternative power sources — and this is one of them.

First, to get the fear out of the way, nuclear energy is considered to be quite safe.

"MIT found that air pollution from burning fossil fuels kills 200,000 Americans every year and calculated, in terms of deaths per terawatt-hours of electricity generated, nuclear is the safest form of energy that comes from industrial plants," goes a recent article, "Nuclear energy might be the answer to climate challenges" in a US publication.

**“
The fear
of radiation
exposure
lies at the
core of the
resistance
against
nuclear
energy.**

This is also the core of the message of a visiting environmentalist from the United States, who spoke about it in detail at last week's "Straight Talk with Daily Tribune," along with fellow guest, former Pangasinan Rep. Mark Cojuangco who was instrumental in bringing Michael Shellenberger here.

Cojuangco believes nuclear energy is the answer to our energy woes. He has been staunchly working toward the revival of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP), largely considered a costly mistake that can possibly now help power up our country anew.

According to Cojuangco, the BNPP can generate electricity at a fraction of the cost that Meralco charges. He answers the doubts that surround the possible operation of the plant, such as the safety of the use of nuclear energy, the plant's location near an active volcano and the anomalies that surrounded its investment.

What government has been focusing on, meanwhile, is how to meet the rising demand for power, which is expected to increase further this year. Many of the country's power plants are coal-fired and in need of maintenance.

Using nuclear energy, according to Shellenberger, would generate cheaper electricity while also protecting the natural environment.

Shellenberger, who is the founder and president of Environmental Progress and a *Time* magazine "Hero of the Environment" award-winning author, has been doing the rounds of Philippine government officials and media outlets to spread the word on "why we need nuclear energy."

He said, "Nuclear energy is the safest way to make electricity. It produces no deadly smoke. While people were scared of Fukushima and other accidents, the only harm was from panic, not radiation, which proves that our fears of nuclear are more dangerous than the technology."

Indeed, the same US newspaper article acknowledges, "Nuclear proliferation, historical mishandling of nuclear waste and nuclear reactor meltdown events, such as Chernobyl and Fukushima, have all been responsible for anti-nuclear energy sentiment among environmentalist groups. The cold war period of America soured many activists to the idea of nuclear science since any scientific development in the field was deemed as enabling the development of potential nuclear armaments. Environmentalists fear that nuclear materials or waste could be stolen (by terrorists) or mishandled, which could create ecological disasters — although these events are incredibly rare and occurred decades ago."

Another publication supports this idea: "American University professor Joshua Goldstein, the co-author of 'A Bright Future: How Some Countries Have Solved Climate Change and the Rest Can Follow,' acknowledged the positive and negative aspects of different energy sources — like the harmful health implications of coal — but concluded that nuclear power is the safest power source."

Basically, the fear of radiation exposure lies at the core of the resistance against nuclear energy. Perhaps a clear and simple, thorough and credible explanation of the pros and cons of using such energy is what's needed so the country can move forward in its power goals.

Based on what experts have said so far, the Philippines stands to gain something from exploring the possibility of using a resource that had long been left idle due to politics.

Beyond the allegations of overprice, government should examine the viability of using the nuclear power facility to help bring current power rates down, as well as save on the importation of expensive energy sources such as coal, oil and natural gas, even as it ensures that the unused plant is not defective (another allegation) and truly in a safe zone.

A "good energy mix," as Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi calls it, is perhaps what we need, after all.