

DATE : 07 MAR 2019

DAY : Friday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



No smoking, no drinking policy stays in Boracay

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

✉ @jonlmayuga

WITH the onset of the summer season, local and foreign tourists are expected to flock to some of the country's famous tourist destinations, particularly beach resorts, including Boracay Island, the country's top tourist destination in Malay, Aklan.

Tourism activities on Boracay Island, however, will be under tight watch to ensure full compliance of various environmental laws by tourism establishments, their employees, as well as tourists.

Authorities maintained that the policy banning smoking and drinking in public places, as well as littering, will be strictly enforced to sustain the gains of Boracay's six-month moratorium on tourism activities that started on April 26. Boracay was officially reopened on October 26 last year.

At a news conference in Taguig City on Thursday, Secretary Bernadette Romulo Puyat of the Department of Tourism (DOT) said since Boracay was reopened in October, the Boracay Interagency Task Force (BIATF), together with the concerned local government units (LGUs) in Malay, Aklan, was able to limit the number of tourists visiting the island, strictly within its carrying capacity.

As of February 18, there are 319 accommodations with 11,657 rooms that are all compliant with all environmental laws being enforced jointly and individually by the DOT, Departments of Environment and Natural



"We will give them 15 days to self-demolish. This is the directive of Secretary Año. If they fail to comply, we will demolish their establishments."

—Cimatu

Resources and the Interior and Local Government, and concerned LGUs.

According to Puyat, Boracay has 6,415 tourists as of February 18. "So far, the average tourist arrival is 5,000 tourists a day and tourist leaving the island is 5,200. It is within the carrying capacity," she said.

According to the DOT chief, they expect tourists to flock Boracay Island but Puyat said the number of people visiting the island will still be limited, allowing only tourists who can be accommodated by compliant tourism establishments.

"The number of tourists will be limited within the island's carrying capacity of Boracay. And there will be no smoking and no drinking in public places in Boracay," Puyat reiterated.

Puyat said "beach parties" will also be restricted unless a special permit is approved by the BIATF.

The BIATF said next month marks the start of the second phase of Boracay's rehabilitation. The rehabilitation is shifting its focus on ensuring full compliance of various environmental laws, including easement rules on beaches and road networks.

The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) has committed

to rehabilitating the remaining roads on the island. Most of the road networks have been widened and cleared of obstruction.

The DPWH has so far allocated P50 million for various road repair and road-widening projects.

Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu gave an update of the ongoing rehabilitation effort in Boracay.

Cimatu noted that some establishments have not fully complied with the easement rule and some establishments, despite repeated appeals by the government, have refused to voluntarily demolish their illegal structures that have encroached on the island's road network.

Interior Secretary Eduardo Año, for his part, said the LGU of Malay, Aklan, was asked to issue an ultimatum to these erring business establishments, including several residential units.

He maintained that Boracay is now a "Discipline Zone"

Law-enforcement agencies, he said, will enforce laws in compliance with the island having been declared as such.

There are nine noncompliant establishments as far as the easement rule is concerned, said Cimatu. These business establishments, he said, have been notified of the government's intention to demolish their property that encroached on no-build zones at the White Beach.

"We will give them 15 days to self-demolish. This is the directive of Secretary Año. If they fail to comply, we will demolish their establishments," Cimatu said.



10 Boracay resorts ordered to demolish structures

By **ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ**

The Boracay Inter-agency Task Force (BIATF) on Thursday ordered 10 beachfront establishments in the island to demolish their structures for operating without the necessary permits and clearances and for exceeding the required coastal easement regulation.

The establishments are Steve's Cliff/Boracay Terraces Resort, Willy's Rock Resort, Boracay Plaza Resort, Little Prairie Inn, Watercolors Diveshop, Blue Lilly Hotel, Exclusive Dawn VIP Boracay Resort, True Home, and New Wave Divers, all located in the island's Station 1 area, and Calveston International Inc.

located at Station 2.

Existing laws and regulations set the coastal easement in the island at 30 meters and the road easement at six meters from the center of the road.

All establishments found violating the easement laws were ordered to suspend operations pending the removal of their illegal structures.

DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu said there are still establishments in Boracay that have started to operate without the necessary permits from the BIATF.

Cimatu said the 10 establishments will be given 15 days to demolish their structures and facilities.

"If they still refuse to comply, the inter-agency task force will be forced to demolish these structures," he added.

The prohibition is meant to protect the shore and maintain the pristine quality of the sand, which is Boracay's top selling feature.

Among those prohibited are the construction of stage platform for entertainment purposes and setting up of tables, chairs, massage beds, beach umbrellas, souvenir shops and food stalls.

Electrical fixtures, such as lightings and wirings, will also be removed and prohibited from the beachfront vegetation area.



10 pasaway na resort sa Boracay pinababaklas

Naglabas ng kautusan ang Boracay Inter-agency Task Force para sa 10 establisimyento sa isla upang baklasin nito ang kanilang mga istraktura dahil sa paglabag sa required coastal easement regulation at pag-sasagawa ng operasyon nang walang permit at clearance.

Kabilang sa mga ito ang Steve's Cliff/Boracay Terraces Resort, Willy's Rock Resort, Boracay Plaza Resort, Little Prairie Inn, Watercolors Divehop, Blue Lilly Hotel, Exclusive Dawn VIP Boracay Resort, True

Home, New Wave Divers at Calveston International Inc.

Batay sa umiiral na regulasyon itinakda ang coastal easement sa isla ng 30 metro at road easement naman sa anim na metro mula sa gitna ng kalsada. Ang mga lumabag umano sa kautusan ay pinatawan ng suspensiyon sa operasyon.

Bibigyan ang mga ito ng 15 araw para idemolish ang kanilang mga pasilidad, kabilang dito ang mga stagem lamesa, souvenir shop at food stall.



Wildlife day spurs Manila Bay rehab

By Kuhlín Ceslie Gacula

Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu yesterday said this year's celebration of World Wildlife Day from 2 to 5 March should serve as an inspiration for everyone to proceed and persevere with the rehabilitation of the heavily polluted Manila Bay.

"This year's celebration reminds us of the importance of the marine life as one of the natural resources that we need to sustain, thus giving us more reasons to continue the ongoing efforts to save Manila Bay and other bodies of water in the Philippines," Cimatu said.

Cimatu said the government is keen on rehabilitating the famous bay to a level fit for swimming and other recreational activities.

The theme of this year's celebration is "Life Below Water: For People and Planet."

The agency together with other government agencies and local government units, launched the massive clean-up and rehabilitation of Manila Bay last 27 January.

Since then, several establishments have been issued with cease and desist orders, notices of violations and show cause orders for discharging untreated wastewater into the bay.

Cimatu said the government is keen on rehabilitating the famous bay to a level fit for swimming and other recreational activities and restore it to its traditional use as a fishing ground and vital wetland area.

He said World Wildlife Day 2019 and the Manila Bay rehabilitation align closely with Sustainable Development Goal 14—Life Below Water which focuses on marine species.

Meanwhile, the DENR has lined up several activities to mark the local celebration of world wildlife day.

It includes exhibition of a mural painting and other paintings featuring marine wildlife species and the Benham Rise and film showings.

This year's celebration will also serve as an opportunity to renew commitments in promoting environmental laws and inculcate knowledge of the marine species among the youth.



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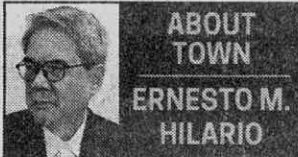
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Bay rehab to benefit from CSR



ABOUT TOWN
ERNESTO M. HILARIO

WE'RE glad that the private sector will soon actively join the campaign of the national government, led by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, to rehabilitate the nearly 2,000 square kilometer Manila Bay covering a number of cities and municipalities in Metro Manila and outlying provinces.

“The companies will pay for the cleanup of rivers.”

The country's biggest shopping mall chain, SM, has already offered to adopt Parañaque River and take part in of its rehabilitation.

Beverage giant San Miguel Corp.

for its part, would adopt the 15-kilometer long Tullahan River that passes through Quezon City, Valenzuela, Malabon and Navotas.

Business titan Lucio Tan has also offered to adopt a river in Navotas City. Marikina River would be adopted by Andrew Tan of Megaworld Corp.

This is corporate social responsibility at work as the companies will pay for the cleanup of rivers that have so much garbage that small boats can no longer use these. When these rivers overflow, Metro Manila streets become flooded.

Turn to A5

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Bay rehab...

From A4

We fully support the clean-up of Metro Manila rivers, including the esteros that discharge polluted water into the Pasig River and onward to Manila Bay.

In fact, the cleanup of Manila Bay was ordered by the Supreme Court way back in 2008. Since then, there's been no coordinated move by the government, the private sector, civil society and ordinary citizens to undertake any serious effort to implement the court order.

Until now, that is. Work has begun to clear three drain channels that empty into Manila Bay. Business establishments that were found to have violated pollution control standards have already been ordered by the DENR to either put up their own sewage treat-

ment plants or connect their discharge pipes to the main sewerage system or face permanent closure.

All rivers as well as *esteros* will have to be dredged and cleaned. Informal settlers living along the banks of rivers and esteros will have to be relocated, or if not, provided with adequate sewage system. A huge challenge for the government, the private sector and environmental NGOs, but one that has to be done if we want Metro Manila to remain livable in the years to come.

Urban decay

While at this, we must also focus attention on the sad state of Metro Manila cities.

The old business districts in Manila, for instance, have definitely seen better days, and urgently need redevelopment.

Many of the business establish-

ments and residential areas in Quiapo, Sta. Cruz, Binondo and Divisoria are in a sad state of disrepair. If you happen to pass by Claro M. Recto Avenue or the former Azcarraga going to Divisoria, you would notice that most of the old buildings built even before World War II are still there but can use much-needed repair. And yes, a fresh coat of paint would definitely enhance the character of the area. The city government does not seem interested in asking property owners to improve the look of their buildings by spending for paint and brush.

The worst eyesore is the concrete building at the corner of Quezon Boulevard and Recto that should already be demolished. I think that's where Recto University thrives these days. Also located in the area is the overcrowded Old Bilibid Prison that should really be relocated elsewhere. The old cinema



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houses along Rizal Avenue with Art Deco architecture—Avenue, Dalisay, Odeon, Galaxy, Scala, Roxan, among others—are all gone. But I think State Theater near Carriedo is still there and should be preserved, even if only the facade will remain after redevelopment.

If Manila is a good example of a city gone to seed, you won't find better proof than a quick drive through R-10 along the Port Area. That's where urban poverty is at its most wretched, with residents left to their own devices by the government.

In Quezon City, the local government unit appears helpless in controlling the influx of informal settlers, as there are many shanties built near Morato Avenue, a major restaurant and entertainment hub.

Reader clarifies railway story

We received a mail from a Brad Peadon of the Philippine Railway His-

torical Society regarding our recent column on the hybrid train project of the Department of Science and Technology. Here's his letter:

"In response to your (and most other media outlets there) claim regarding the Philippines first locally built train.

"Unfortunately, this is not correct. It is the first hybrid train built locally, but it is far from the first trains built there.

"This claim would be held by railcars built prior to the war for the Manila Railroad, and the locally produced railcars of the former Panay Railway.

"For the sake of reporting correct Philippine history, I hope this correction can be made in the publication.

"Many thanks for your support of the railways there."

We stand corrected. Thanks for your clarification, Mr. Peadon.

ernhil@yahoo.com



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AN OPEN LETTER

YES to Manila Bay Rehabilitation!
YES to Pasay Land Reclamation!
YES to Sustainable Urban Renewal!

Dear DENR Secretary Cimat,

We congratulate you for the successful launch of the Manila Bay Rehabilitation, a long overdue initiative to reverse the severe degradation of the bay and its marine life.

For years, Manila Bay has earned the label as Metro Manila's "toilet bowl." Household and industrial wastes, coming from various parts of the metropolis, pour into esteros and waterways that all drain into the Manila Bay, polluting its waters and poisoning marine life.

Thus, we salute your demonstration of leadership in taking the cudgels to arrest the degradation of Manila Bay. Your initiative breathes new life to the long-standing mandamus for its clean-up and rehabilitation as directed by the Supreme Court in *MMDA v. Concerned Residents of Manila Bay*, G.R. Nos. 171947-48, December 18, 2008.

While we embrace your laudable initiative, it is unfortunate that some sectors have tried to ride on the issue to call for the ban of all reclamation projects in Pasay City. As a result, the DENR and other regulatory agencies have come under fire over the reclamation projects.

With all due respect, the call to ban reclamation projects in Pasay City is not only misplaced but grossly uncalled for and unfair.

To begin with, the Pasay reclamation poses no risk to the environment or communities. The project sites are outside any declared watershed, sanctuaries and protected areas. No informal settlers also stand to be dislocated, not even fisherfolk. The level of pollution has practically wiped out the corals, mangroves, and marine life necessary to sustain productive fishing.

In addition, there is nothing in the Supreme Court's continuing mandamus that prohibits reclamation in Manila Bay. Even the Operation Plan for the Manila Bay Coastal Strategy (OPMBCS) invoked by the Supreme Court does not contemplate a ban on reclamation in Pasay (which has no mangroves and wetlands).





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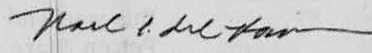
An Open letter


Far from being incompatible with the rehabilitation of Manila Bay, Pasay City's reclamation projects, covering an area of 625 hectares, will hasten the clean up of Manila Bay and promote its sustainable rehabilitation.


Thus, in line with the President's **Build Build Program**, we enlist and count on your support for the success of Pasay City's reclamation projects. Their expeditious implementation will not only hasten the clean up and rehabilitation of Manila Bay but also promote sustainable urban development and renewal.


ANTONINO G. CALIXTO
Mayor



IMELDA G. CALIXTO-RUBIANO
Representative, Lone District



NOEL L. DEL ROSARIO
Vice-Mavor

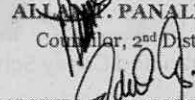

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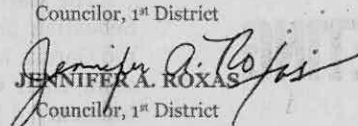

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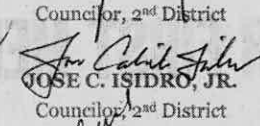
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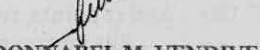

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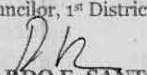

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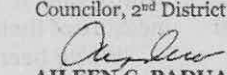

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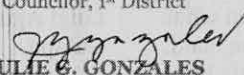

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Councilor, 2nd District


JULIE C. GONZALES
President, Liga ng mga Barangay


JOSE MIGUEL A. MAÑEZ
President, SK Federation

*This open letter was published through the efforts of the joint venture between Pasay City and its private sector partner proponents.



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An Open Letter

1 Pasay City's reclamation projects will dredge out millions of metric tons of wastes from the seabed, hasten the cleanup of Manila Bay, and improve its overall water quality and marine life, all at zero financial cost to the government.

The first phase of reclamation entails the massive removal on an unprecedented scale of accumulated wastes from the bottom of Manila Bay and their disposal outside the bay zone. The desilting will take out layers of stored up mud and pollutants, including household garbage, industrial wastes, heavy metals and non-biodegradable substances.

Any adverse effect of silt dispersal will be temporary and properly mitigated by measures duly identified in the ECC issued for the projects.

Being part of the PPP Reclamation Project, the massive clean up, covering an area of 625 hectares or more, will be carried out at zero cost to the government.

2 Pasay City's reclamation projects will promote the sustainable rehabilitation of Manila Bay and ensure proper compliance with the Supreme Court's continuing mandamus.

Aside from dredging out the stockpiles of toxic wastes, the reclamation projects will put into place new shorelines (with teeming mangroves) and eco-friendly water channels (featuring latest technological advances) designed to regenerate marine life and prevent build up of coliform.

The reclamation projects will also feature state-of the art waste treatment facilities and mini-forests for migratory birds and an enhanced ecosystem. Overall, the reclamation translates to net positive impact to water quality and the environment.

The commercial viability of the Pasay reclamation projects rests on the cleanup and sustainable rehabili-

tation of Manila Bay. Thus, the LGU and its private sector partners have entered into an agreement to ensure that the clean up of Manila Bay is sustained, and not short-lived. This means assuming full responsibility and obligation over the continuing cleanup of waterways in Pasay area (that drain into the Manila Bay) and compliance with the writ of continuing mandamus in Manila Bay.

To ensure Pasay City's contribution to the sustainable rehabilitation of Manila Bay, no less than 25% of revenues from the reclaimed lands will be devoted to fund the continuing cleanup of Manila Bay and other environmental protection projects.



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An Open letter

3 Pasay City's reclamation projects will address the acute problem of land scarcity, generate higher revenue for expanding urban and social services, and promote master-planned development for sustainable urban renewal.

In Metro Manila, Pasay City ranks as one of the smallest in land area, with half already devoted for domestic and international airports. As a result, the City has been saddled by acute land scarcity brought about by expanding population and economic activities.

Across the globe, land reclamation is a proven safe, sustainable and environmental-friendly solution to urban development and renewal. In Dubai, Tokyo, Hongkong, Qatar, Singapore, Shanghai and other urban centers, coastal areas have been harnessed as reclamation sites, hosting new bustling cities, world-class airports and seaports, well-planned urban communities, commercial and industrial centers, tourist destinations, and even Olympic sites.

In the Philippines, the last reclamation was undertaken over 30 years ago in the area that now houses the bustling Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) Complex, the SM Mall of Asia (MOA) and PAGCOR City. The same area has also hosted numerous international conventions and events, showing uncanny resilience against battering typhoons and floods, and proving the stability, safety and reliability of reclamation.

After over 30 years, it is time for Pasay City to build on the success of previous reclamation projects and harness its coastal areas anew for land reclamation. As the gateway to local and international travel and tourism, Pasay has become a highly congested metropolis and already bearing signs of urban decay. With the steady rise in population and economic activities, its residents live in cramped communities; its public streets and avenues taken over by vendors, pedestrians and parked vehicles. Business establishments also abound with no space for expansion.

The new reclamation is expected to diffuse the severe congestion in the existing Pasay metropolis. It will also provide room for urban renewal by addressing the inevitable future demands for more spaces brought about by an expanding population and economic activities, all translating to additional requirements for residential, commercial, public parks and institutional areas.

As in the previous reclamation, the revenues from the new reclaimed lands will be devoted to fund Pasay City's expanding urban services and pro-poor programs, including education, housing, healthcare and livability.



Trusted Since 1938

The Manila Times

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Greenpeace ship campaigns vs plastics

THE *Rainbow Warrior*, Greenpeace's flagship vessel, will arrive this Friday in Manila for the "Ship the Plastic Back" tour and will join millions of Filipinos rallying against plastic pollution.

Angelica Carballo Pago, Greenpeace Southeast Asia-Philippines media campaigner, said the *Rainbow Warrior* would put a spotlight on how the inaction and irresponsibility of fast-moving consumer goods companies quash the prospects of a healthful and plastic pollution-free future for Filipinos.

"It is coming back to the Philippines for the Ship the Plastic Back tour to campaign against plastic pollution and rally the Filipinos as we move to break free from plastic," Pago said.

Greenpeace Philippines said the tour was part of a global campaign that targeted companies producing massive amounts of single-use plastic that pollutes the world's oceans.

The first stop of the iconic ship is the Manila Bay. On March 2 and 3, it will be opened to the public for a chance to see Manila Bay after the government-led clean-ups, which reportedly were for its planned rehabilitation.

Greenpeace said it was inviting the public to see Manila Bay from the point of view of the world's first purpose-built environmental campaigning ship.

The open boat events are free to all visitors, but interested parties must pre-register on the organization's Eventbrite page: [shipitback.event-](http://shipitback.eventbrite.com)

brite.com. Details were also posted at Greenpeace Philippines Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages.

The *Rainbow Warrior* will sail to Cebu for another round of open boat on March 15 and 16 at the Port of Cebu, as the province highlights its initiatives towards becoming a leader in fighting plastic pollution.

Abigail Aguilar, Greenpeace Southeast Asia-Philippines campaigner, said the plastic campaign also aimed to contribute to minimizing the proliferation of plastics in the country as it was constantly named one of the top polluters of plastics in the ocean, among other Asian countries.

She said Greenpeace aimed to highlight the responsibility of corporations whose production of plastic packaging had contributed greatly to the pollution of Manila Bay and other water bodies in the Philippines and to demand that they reduce their single-use plastic packaging production and explore alternative systems of delivering their products to consumers.

"The ongoing Manila Bay rehabilitation had put a spotlight on how we Filipinos were doing our part to clean our country. The clean-up had produced picture-perfect results, as we have seen on social media, but we have to remember that trash would always find its way to Manila Bay if we don't address plastic pollution at source," Aguilar added.

LEANDER C. DOMINGO



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SPECIAL REPORT

Proponents trumpet reclamation benefits

(Conclusion)

By IRIS GONZALES

Proponents of reclamation projects all debunk criticisms against reclamation.

They're also one in saying that reclamation is a viable solution to the country's density problem.

In an interview with **The STAR**, Julianne Jorge, director at JBros Construction, said there is no more contiguous land of such size that is available for development especially in Manila, the capital.

JBros, a triple A contractor, is the proponent of the 419-hectare Horizon Manila Reclamation Project, a joint venture with the city government of Manila.

"Reclamation will provide so much more room for much needed development," Jorge said.

Those arguing against reclamation should look at existing and successful projects such as the SM Group's Mall of Asia, she said.

"Look at the whole area. Has it provided any negative impact on society?"

She said there have been no tsunamis or any incident which resulted in flash floods.

"Anyone who's been to MOA to enjoy the mall, the concerts, the establishments, or walked around there have not complained about these other reclamation projects," Jorge said.

The numerous establishments have provided a source of income to a lot of people, she said.

Citing the development in the MOA area, she said many were given the opportunity to buy premium land at a lower cost.

"All those who bought condominiums are earning now from Airbnb apps," she said.

Boosting LGU income stream

Reclamation also helps decongest cities and provides additional income for local governments.

"It is an empty canvas available for coordinated and planned urban living. It will help with decongestion. It will be a big source of income for the cities through additional real estate and other property taxes and business taxes," Jorge said.

All the reclamation projects have committed to the city that a portion of their profits will be set aside to fund housing projects for the city's informal settlers.

"There are so many benefits that additional land will produce especially on waters like the Manila portion of Manila Bay, which have been dead for a long time," Jorge also said.

All reclamation projects are mandated to comply with environmental compliance certificate (ECC) requirements.

The landfill will come from PRA designated land fill areas which means no landfill will be taken from areas with existing marine life.

Edmund Lim, vice chairman of Manila Goldcast Development Corp. which is behind the Solar City project, said that proponents really address environmental concerns because they are required to secure an ECC.

"Yung issues ng flooding, basura, flow ng tubig, sedimentation, na-address na natin yan," Lim said in a DZMM interview.

He added that proponents like them have tapped global partners to review the reclamation project.

Lim said they are only waiting for a notice to proceed from the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) before they begin developing a portion of Manila Bay.

Manny Fernandez, officer in charge for the Manila Waterfront project, also told DZMM that there have been many successful reclamation projects.

1900s shoreline

The PRA, the lead agency tasked to oversee reclamation, echoed the same position.

It noted, for instance, that the shoreline in the 1900s was actually in Taft Avenue.

"So the area of Luneta all the way to Roxas Boulevard are all reclaimed," PRA assistant general manager Joselito Gonzales said during a recent hearing at the House of Representatives on the different reclamation projects.

He said local governments and their private sector proponents are looking for additional land seaward because there are no more additional decent-sized land space in the different cities because of urbanization.

Furthermore, he assured the public that if there are negative issues, the PRA could reject the project or opt not to issue any notice to proceed.

Conclusion

It is clear that reclamation has its advantages — the creation of new land, tens of thousands of jobs, and additional tax income for the local and national government.

But the issues raised by environmental groups should not be ignored. They warn reclamation could affect marine life, biodiversity, and the environment in general.

Against this backdrop, it is now up to government regulators to make sure that every reclamation project is carefully scrutinized.

However, the problem lies in the fact that the process is sometimes mired in corruption, industry players told **The STAR**.



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Proponent trumpet reclamation benefits

During the recent hearing at the House of Representatives on the different reclamation projects, for instance, lawmakers also said they want to review the joint venture agreements between local governments and their private sector partners.

Quezon City Rep. Winston Castelo said the joint venture agreements should not be disadvantageous to the LGU.

For instance, he noted that the LGU's share should be based on the fair value of the land and not a grossly reduced price such as the case in one reclamation project in Pasay.

It's no secret that regulatory environments in the Philippines as well as local governments can, be prone to rampant corruption.

Will the Duterte administration's new Executive Order 74 governing reclamation problems be able to address this or just worsen the problem? For now, the answer is still anybody's guess.



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ISANG malawakang transport strike ang ikinakasa ng mga transport group bilang protesta sa sunod-sunod na dagdag-presyo sa mga produktong petrolyo.

Ayon kay Steve Ranjo, secretary-general ng Pinagkaisang Samahan ng mga Tsuper at Operator Nationwide (PISTON), mas malaking kilos-protesta ang kanilang

PLANO ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na ideklarang Water Quality Management Area o WQMA ang Bacuit Bay sa bahagi ng El Nido, Palawan.

Sa nasabing plano na dinisenyo sa Integrated Water Quality Management System, dapat anilang maprotektahan ang katubigan sa naturang baybayin sa pamamagitan ng pakikipagtulungan ng mga stakeholders at iba pang government agencies.

Sa ginanap na environmental forum, sinabi ni DENR Assistant Secretary for field operation for Southern Luzon Reynulfo Juan na ang Water Quality Management ay isa sa prayoridad ni Environment

isagawa laban sa gobyerno at sa mga kompanya ng langis kapag hindi kumilos ang mga ito para mapababa ang presyo ng langis.

Aniya, hindi na makasabay ang mga drayber ng jeep at mga operator sa presyo ng diesel na ngayo'y sumampa na sa P44 hanggang P45 kada litro.

Iginiit din ni Ranjo na suspen-

dihin na lamang ng pamahalaan ang pagpapataw ng excise tax sa petrolyo na tatapyas ng dalawang piso at limampung sentimos (P2.50) sa kada litro nito, kaysa umaray ang mga commuter sakaling itaas na naman ang pamasaha sa jeep.

Sa ngayon ay wala pang sinabing petsa si Ranjo para sa isagawa nilang malawakang transport strike.

AYUDA NG GOV'T AGENCIES

Hiniling sa Bacuit Bay

Secretary Roy Cimatu upang mas makilala ang Bacuit Bay bilang water quality management.

Idinagdag pa niya na umaasa rin ang kalihim na magkakaroon ng kolektibong aksiyon para sa kaligtasan ng Bacuit Bay at sa natitirang bahagi ng

likas na yaman sa El Nido, Palawan.

Samantala, kabilang naman sa mga tinalakay sa forum ang pagpapatupad ng 10-year action plan ng Bacuit Bay kaugnay sa mga kinakaharap na isyu ng baybayin, kasama rito ang water quality issue.

Matatandaan na nitong nakalipas na taon ay binuo ng DENR ang Task Force El Nido na pinaangunahan ang paglilinis ng baybayin at tiniyak ang implementasyon ng environmental rules and regulations sa nasabing lugar.



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DEAR Usec. Antiporda hiningi ang suporta ng entertainment press na linisin ang bansa

Yes, it might sound impossible, but we can try. "Sinimulan natin 'yan sa Boracay. Ang sabi nila, e, imposible raw na malinis natin ang Boracay. Ang dami nilang issues na binato. Sinabi pa nila na baka pagtayuan lang daw 'yon ng casino kaya natin nililinis ang Boracay.

"Pero ngayon, may naitayo bang casino? Hindi ba't nalinis naman natin at nailagay sa ayos ngayon ang Boracay, which is one of the premiere tourist destinations sa ating bansa?"

"Sabi nila noon, e, imposible raw na malinis at mailagay natin sa ayos ang Boracay but we've done it. With the support of our president, Rodrigo Duterte, e, nagawa natin ang sinasabi nilang imposible,"



Usec. Benny explained. He's right. Cleaning a polluted and cruddy Boracay is actually possible. All we need is the will and heart to do it and, we are all set.

"Now, our project is 'yung Manila Bay. Sinimulan na naming linisin ang Manila Bay.

And we are happy dahil sa influence na naibigay namin sa mga kababayan natin dahil kahit sila, e, nagkaroon ng kusa para linisin ang Manila Bay," he said.

At this moment, Usec. Benny reminded us that all we need is discipline. Cleaning the whole country will start from our own backyard.

"Kailangan, e, meron tayong disiplinang hindi natin dapat tinatapon ang ating mga basura sa kung saan-saan. At kapag nagkaroon na tayo ng disiplinang, e, walang imposible at siguradong malilinis natin ang ating

bayan at magiging magandang example tayo sa buong mundo."

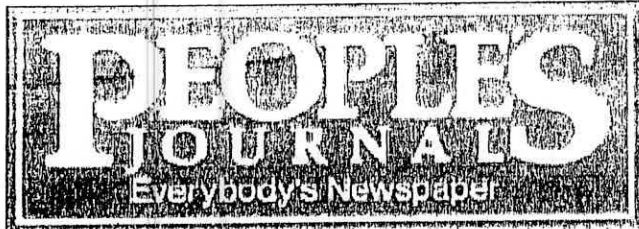
Usec. Benny asked the members of PMPC and the whole entertainment industry to help and make a proposal to support his advocacy in cleaning our environment.

"My office is open anytime para sa inyo. Just give me a proposal kung paano kayo makakatulong sa ating advocacy and rest assured na kung maganda ang inyong proposal, you are going to have my full support," Usec. Benny concluded.

May your tribe increase, Sir Benny.



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DENR aims to make Palawan bay swimmable by May

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is aiming to make Bacuit Bay in El Nido, Palawan swimmable by May this year.

MIMAROPA regional executive director Henry Adornado expressed con-

fidence that the region can present to the public a very much improved Bacuit Bay, which would be safe and fit for bathing and swimming.

Adornado issued the pronouncement in a recent regional forum attended by around 200

participants, which included commercial establishment owners, business operators and representatives of local and national government agencies.

Bacuit Bay is being eyed by various government agencies led by the

DENR to be declared a Water Quality Management Area (WQMA) in consonance with Republic Act 9275 or the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004.

WQMA is an integrated water quality management system designed to

protect and save bodies of water through collaborative efforts of respective stakeholders and government agencies.

The DENR earlier rehabilitated Boracay and started the clean-up of Manila Bay.

Joel dela Torre



5 poachers arrested; hot logs seized

By **MIKE U. CRISMUNDO**

BISLIG CITY – Five poachers were arrested and illegally-cut forest products were seized during an all-out anti-illegal logging drive here, the Bislig City Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said.

The DENR Bislig City CENRO's anti-illegal logging task force also filed charges against the five persons in local court here for violation of PD 705 otherwise known as the Forestry Code of the Philippines.

The anti-illegal logging drive led by Bislig City CENR Officer Victor B. Sabornido has led to the confiscation of 22,413.67 board feet and 61.93 cubic meters of illegal forest products while 16 motorcycles, 6 chainsaws, and one wing van truck were also seized.

“Our environment preservation and forest protection will continue without let up until all the remaining hot spot areas in this part of the region is cleared,” said the Bislig City DENR-CENRO.

The intensified anti-illegal logging operation in the Caraga region ordered by DENR 13 Regional Executive Director (RED) Atty. Felix S. Alicer on the instruction of Environment Sec. Roy A. Cimatu, also resulted in the apprehensions of several illegally-cut forest products in various parts of the region.

The DENR Anti-Illegal Logging Task Force at the provincial and community environment and natural resources offices (PENROs, CENROs) were ordered to search and retrieve illegally-cut lumber products by timber poachers and prosecute them through proper court proceedings.

Alicer said they have been closely monitoring the operation and ordered a crackdown on timber poaching in the remaining hot spot areas in the region.

The continuing anti-illegal logging operation has also resulted in the retrieval of 26 abandoned fitches left by timber poachers in the remote mountain village of Manat, in Trento, Agusan del Sur recently.

DENR team leader Rey Ruiz, in coordination with the Army's Bravo Company, 25th Infantry Battalion, 4th ID, and PNP 1303rd Maneuver Company based in Bunawan Brook carried out a surprise raid and retrieval operation and recovered 26 pieces of mixed dipterocarp fitches with a volume of 1,464.8 bd. ft. worth P43,944.00 in Manat area.

DENR 13-CENRO Tubod, Surigao del Norte, with help from CIDG-PNP agents, also seized 2,092.17 bd. ft. of undocumented lumber products consisting of species of molave, narra, and gmelina worth about P259,053.

DENR-13 Enforcement Division and the CENRO Cantilan personnel under CENR Officer Ruel Efren in coordination with the PNP in Cantilan also swooped down at a mini saw mill shop on Dela Pena and Burgos streets in Cantilan Surigao del Sur recently and apprehended 65 pieces of assorted lumber. The lumbers are good quality materials from the species Mayapis, malatambis, sahaan, lauan, yakal and Gmelina. The seized forest products were brought to a government depository for safekeeping.

The DENR-CENRO anti-illegal logging task force and police operatives in Agusan del Norte have also apprehended 44 pieces of illegal lumber products during separate operations.

The anti-illegal logging task force under CENR Officer Teresa Salisid in Tubay, Agusan del Norte made a surprise visit to illegally-operating mini sawmill plants in Barangays La Union and Mabini in Cabadbaran City and seized lumber products with a volume of 502.96 bd. ft worth about P18,303.60.



Aboitiz Group helps save the pawikan

ABOITIZ Group through Aboitiz Foundation and AboitizPower business unit Davao Light and Power Company renewed its commitment to intensify conservation efforts for the marine turtle or pawikan particularly the critically endangered hawksbill turtle in Davao City.

Aboitiz last month signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with

the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and Davao City local government to establish a Pawikan Center — a rescue and hatchery facility at the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park.

The center has a temporary shelter, clinic, laboratory, observation deck, boardwalks, and other facilities for the rescue, rehabilitation, con-

servation, protection and care of marine turtles in Punta Dumalag. This supports the multi-sectoral effort of “pursuing sustainable development within the context of a balanced ecology.”

As part of this project, Aboitiz will also continue to plant endemic trees to maintain biodiversity in the area.

“Today, after more than 13,000 mangrove seedlings planted and more than 3,000 hatchlings released, we renew our commitment,” said Jim Aboitiz, AboitizPower executive vice president and chief operating officer for Distribution Group.

Apart from protecting the nesting areas at the park, the Pawikan Center aims to identify, document,



Jim Aboitiz (center, kneeling) leads the release of a hawksbill turtle (pawikan) on the grounds of the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park. He is joined by DENR assistant secretary Ruth Tawantawan (left, kneeling) and Davao Light chief operating officer Rodger Velasco (right, kneeling) while Aboitiz Equity Ventures adviser for Mindanao Art Milan (second from left, standing) and Davao Light Community Relations Manager Fermin Edillon (2nd from right, standing) look on.

and address threats to marine turtles and their habitats in Punta Dumalag; promote research, monitoring and information exchange; enhance public awareness on the conservation initiatives in the area; and fortify the collaboration between the public and private sectors for

the long-term recovery of pawikan population in the area.

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



Business and biodiversity

WORLD VIEW

ROBERT WATSON

Bonn—At the World Economic Forum's (WEF) annual meeting in Davos last January, the evidence of mounting threats to nature, and of nature's contributions to people, featured higher on the agenda than ever before. The task for business leaders around the world is to embrace this evidence and start acting as stewards, rather than spoilers, of our vital natural assets.

The latest edition of the WEF's Global Risks Report is correct in concluding that, "Of all risks, it is in relation to the environment that the world is most clearly sleepwalking into catastrophe." But PwC's latest annual CEO survey, also released at Davos, reveals that business leaders no longer include environmental concerns in their Top 10 threats to corporate growth.

Such findings reflect an inexcusable myopia on the part of business leaders. The loss of biodiversity—stemming from the destruction of individual species, entire ecosystems and even genetic resources—is not just an environmental issue; it is also a threat to global development, security and economic prosperity. Products ranging from coffee to cotton rely on strong, functioning ecosystems and a minimal level of biodiversity. Without a healthy environment, forced migrations, conflicts over resources, and a range of other direct and indirect disruptions to global trade and commerce become more likely.

According to one estimate cited in this year's Global Risks Report, the annual value of nature's contributions to people—in the form of food, water purification, pollination, protection against floods and so forth—is \$125 trillion, or roughly two-thirds more than the global GDP. Hence, the WEF concludes that biodiversity loss

and ecosystem collapse are both more likely and potentially more damaging to business than most other global threats.

Fortunately, last November, prior to the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP14), participants in the Business and Biodiversity Forum recognized the "urgent need for increased collective ambition to halt and reverse biodiversity loss."

To that end, a growing number of firms have committed to such collective action. Many, for example, have signed onto the global Business and Biodiversity Pledge that was introduced at the CBD gathering in Mexico in 2016. And last July, companies meeting in France detailed concrete steps they are taking to safeguard biodiversity as part of the Act4Nature initiative.

By integrating biodiversity concerns into their global growth strategies, and by supporting targets set by the international community, these businesses are helping to lay the groundwork for a major summit in Beijing next year. The delegates who gather for CBD COP15 will decide on global biodiversity targets for the next decade.

Biodiversity pledges by businesses vary. For its part, AXA Insurance Company is developing new ways to account for biodiversity loss in its assessments of financial risk. This, in turn, will help to channel investments toward projects that maintain or reinforce ecosystems. Meanwhile, the French cosmetics company L'Oréal has pledged that, by 2020, none of its products will

include ingredients linked to deforestation.

For others seeking to incorporate biodiversity considerations into their decision-making, the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services' (Ipbes) latest regional assessment reports offer a range of evidence-based policy options. And at its next plenary session this coming May, Ipbes will release the first global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services since the landmark Millennium Ecosystem Assessment in 2005. The new report will place a much stronger emphasis on the role that all decision-makers, including those in businesses, have to play in safeguarding biodiversity.

The scientific and expert evidence is unequivocal: Human activities are changing Earth's climate and destroying the natural resources and ecosystems on which we all rely. Businesses, governments and members of civil society—including indigenous peoples and local communities—all have a duty to reduce and reverse this damage.

But while we all need to work together, the private sector, in particular, must redouble its efforts to protect natural systems and shape the future we want. That will require business leaders with a vision that extends beyond quarterly earnings.

Around the world, customers are becoming increasingly concerned about the wider consequences of production and consumption. By recognizing that business as usual can no longer continue, corporate leaders can usher in a future that is better both for their bottom lines and for our shared natural world. *Project Syndicate*

Robert Watson is chair of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.



OPINION AND OPTION

Rethinking our negative perception about cutting trees



By **ELINANDO B. CINCO**

OVER the decades, we have seen countless forests around the country laid to waste because of irresponsible and illegal logging.

In far too many instances, deforestation has directly contributed to tragedies in the form of flashfloods and landslides, resulting in the loss of too many lives and destruction of many communities.

These in turn have contributed to the negative perception we have about cutting trees. Whenever we hear those two words, we conjure up images of miles of forests dying because of man's greed, loggers with chain-saws felling any and all types of trees without reverence, and destruction at the cost of our environment.

Though there is legitimate concern about illegal logging, it may be time to revisit our perception about cutting trees.

The act of cutting a tree is as natural to us

human beings as starting a fire. It is ingrained into our very DNA. Wood has been a material that we have used for fuel and shelter ever since the dawn of time. Trees have provided us with countless materials that enabled humanity to progress and reach new heights.

Recognizing this, many people are now advocating sustainable forest management, a concept which recognizes the vital role of trees in our ecosystem while balancing the need of the public for wood and other by-products.

But before changing perceptions, we must first dispel myths and fallacies that have poisoned the discourse around cutting trees.

One of the most common of these misconceptions is that if a tree has been felled, all the carbon dioxide it has absorbed throughout its lifetime through the process of photosynthesis will be released back into the atmosphere. This is not true; a tree will always keep that carbon dioxide even if it is cut down, unless it's allowed to burn or decompose.

Another flawed belief is that all loggers, including those with proper permits, do not take into consideration the types of trees to be cut. This is not the case as they choose only old and mature trees to prevent a crowded forest and steer harm away from the younger trees.

The notion that all forms of logging do not have any positive benefits is also false. Cutting mature trees, for example, promotes regeneration, improves habitat for many species, and maintains forest health in the long run. This also provides a source of livelihood for residents in upland areas.

I believe this is one of the oft-sidelined points in this whole conversation.

Countless Filipinos, many of them in rural areas, depend on the forestry industry to provide decent livelihoods for their families in communities. Most of them recognize the vital role of trees in fighting climate change and they will be the first to tell us that they want to work with the authorities to protect the environment, while also ensuring that they continue to earn from harvesting trees.

This begs us to do something, and it really might be time to have a dramatic shift in our approach to cutting trees and

the use of wood. It is time to put things in proper context. Cutting trees, if and when done responsibly, can do a whole lot of good not only for the people who depend on it but also for the environment.

Organizations like the Philippine Wood Producers Association are now leading the charge to change the nature of discourse about cutting wood. They are recalibrating the conversation and advocating for widespread adoption of sustainable forest management.

Notably, they are highlighting the fact that we can find a balance between environmental preservation and forest management that is sustainable, socially acceptable, and economically viable. It is the key to maximizing the benefits of tree cutting while keeping the negatives down to a minimum and thus help ensure that the well-being of the environment is preserved for future generations.

At the end of the day, it all boils down to one thing – sustainability. There is a sustainable way to manage our forests and enjoy the riches it can provide us. We can find a middle ground, if only we work together to strive towards it.



Phl to hit greening goal by 2028

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu is optimistic of reforesting the remaining unproductive, denuded and degraded forestland nationwide by 2028.

“At the rate we’re going, we’re confident of meeting the 7.1 million hectares by 2028,” Cimatu said in a message delivered by DENR Undersecretary Juan Miguel Cuna at the international forest landscape restoration (FLR) conference in Makati City earlier this week.

The program aims to promote Philippine self-sufficiency in wood and wood products, economic security and environmental stability.

The DENR launched in 2011 the National Greening Program (NGP) to reforest by 2016 some 1.5 million hectares of unproductive, denuded and degraded forestland around the country.

In 2015, Malacañang issued Executive Order 193 extending NGP’s implementation period from 2016 to 2028 to cover the country’s estimated 7.1 million hectares of remaining unproductive, denuded and degraded forestland.

The program aims to promote Philippine self-sufficiency in wood and wood products, economic security and environmental stability.

Latest available data from the DENR show that the NGP registered a 109 percent planting accomplishment during the 2011 to 2018 period, greening nearly two million hectares of unproductive, denuded and degraded forestland nationwide.

Some 1.7 billion seedlings were planted during the period.

“Last year, we produced more than 145 million pieces of planting materials using native and fast-growing species – in addition, we produced 3.3 million bamboo culms or cuttings and 1.72 million mangrove propagules and beach forest tree seedlings,” he added.

Aside from implementing the NGP, Cimatu said the Philippine government also banned the export of logs and lumber from natural forests, as well as timber-cutting in natural and residual forests to help protect these ecosystems.

“From the foregoing, it may be gleaned that the Philippines has built up several years and almost two million hectares of experience in FLR,” he said.

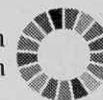
He said the Philippines is willing to share its reforestation experience with interested parties as FLR regains ecological functionality and enhances human well-being across deforested or degraded forest landscapes.

Experts said FLR is not just about planting trees but involves restoring a whole landscape to meet present and future demands, as well as offer multiple benefits and land uses over time.

“FLR has been steadily gaining interest globally over the past years,” Cimatu said.

Fanning such interest is Germany’s Bonn Challenge, a global effort launched in 2011 to bring 150 million hectares of the world’s deforested and degraded land into restoration by 2020 and 350 million hectares by 2030.

There’s a consensus that gaps remain between FLR’s ideals and action actually taken to transform these into reality,” Cimatu said.





Greening goal kayang matapos sa 2028

UMAASA si Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu na magtatagumpay sila sa layuning matapos ang pagpapanumbalik ng sigla ng mga nalalabing hindi produktibo at kalbo nang kagubatan sa buong bansa sa 2028.

"At the rate we're going, we're confident of meeting the 7.1 million hectares by 2028," sabi ni Cimatu, ayon kay DENR Undersecretary Juan Miguel Cuna

sa international forest landscape restoration (FLR) conference sa Makati City nitong Lunes.

Inilunsad ng DENR noong 2011 ang National Greening Program (NGP) para isalba ang mga hindi na produktibo at kalbo ng kagubatan sa buong bansa.

Noong 2015, ang-isyu ang Malacañang ng Executive Order 193 na nagpahaba ng panahon ng implementasyon ng programa simula 2016 hanggang 2028, para saklawin ang tinatayang 7.1 milyong hektarya ng unproductive, denuded at degraded forestland.

Layunin ng programang i-promote ang Philippine self-sufficiency sa kahoy at magproduktong gawa sa kahoy, economic security at environmental stability.

Ipinakita sa pinakahuling datos mula sa DENR, 109 percent na ang tagumpay ng NGP na nagsimula pa noong 2011 hanggang 2018,

at nagawang taniman sa programa ang halos dalawang milyong hektarya ng unproductive, denuded at degraded forestland sa buong bansa.

Aabot naman sa 1.7 bilyong buto ang naitanim sa nasabing panahon.

"Last year, we produced more than 145 million pieces of planting materials using native and fast-growing species -- in addition, we produced 3.3 million bamboo culms or cuttings and 1.72 million mangrove propagules and beach forest tree seedlings," dagdag pa niya.

Bukod sa implementasyon ng NGP, sinabi rin ni Cimatu na pinabawalan ang gobyerno ng Pilipinas na mag-export ng mga troso at lumber mula sa natural na kagubatan, gayundin ng pagpuputol ng kahoy mula sa mga natural at nalalabing mga kagubatan upang makatulong sa pagpoprotekta ng ecosystem.

"From the foregoing, it may be gleaned that the Philippines has built up several years and almost two million hectares of experience in FLR," sabi niya.

Binanggit din niyang handa ang Pilipinas na magbahagi ng reforestation experience sa mga interesadong partido dahil "FLR regains ecological functionality and enhances human well-being across deforested or degraded forest landscapes".

Ayon sa mga eksperto, ang FLR ay hindi lamang tungkol sa pagtanim ng puno ngunit pati ng pangangalaga sa buong lugar para sa kasalukuyan at sa mga hinaharap na pangangailangan, pati na upang mapagkunan ng mga benepisyo at land uses sa paglipas ng panahon.

"FLR has been steadily gaining interest globally over the past years," ani Cimatu.



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TREES BY ROTARY. Representatives of 1,052 Rotary Clubs across the country sign their 'Trees 100' national tree planting agreement in the presence of Ciara Sotto, daughter of Senate President Vicente Sotto III, who was invited by the Rotary Club of Manila to witness the signing on Feb. 25 at the Mall of Asia in Pasay City. The Rotary Club seeks to plant one million trees to aid the common effort of helping solve the country's ecological and environmental problems.



This is On Me

Floro Mercene

More rain increases risk of flooding

GLOBAL warming increases the risk of flooding because the amount of rain that can fall during an extreme downpour increases exponentially as temperatures rise. When more heat-trapping pollutants surround the Earth, more moisture is held in the air, leading to more rainfall.

Cutting these emissions is crucial to reducing flood risks for future generations. Global temperatures have already risen by more than 1 deg C above pre-industrial levels, and are expected to continue rising. Countries committed in 2015 to try to hold global temperature rise to well below 2 deg C, but the world is currently on track for more than 3 deg C of warming, a level expected to cause much more extreme and unpredictable weather.

More and more rainfall extremes are observed in regions around the globe – triggering both wet and dry records, a new study shows. The central and Eastern US, northern Europe and northern Asia have experienced

heavy rainfall events that have led to severe floods in recent past. In contrast, most African regions have seen an increased frequency of months with a lack of rain. Climate change is already taking place and we must get on with finding solutions so we can adapt to climate change.

Unless countries boost their flood defenses more people will be at risk from river flooding in the next 20 years as global warming increases the likelihood of severe rainfall, according to a study by the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research. In Asia, the numbers at risk will more than double with India, China, and Indonesia among the worst-affected countries, scientists said.

In a new study published in the journal Science Advances, unless actions are taken – such as enhancing dykes, boosting building standards, relocating settlements and managing rivers – the number of people affected by devastating floods could skyrocket.



DENR turns over Mitsubishi EV/ PHEV to Office of the President



Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corporation (MMPC) stood as witnesses as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) turned over one i-MiEV (Pure Electric Vehicle) and one Outlander PHEV (Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle) to the Office of the President during the signing and turn over ceremony held at the Malacañang Palace.

During his opening remarks, DENR Assistant Secretary Jesus Enrico Moises B. Salazar thanked Mitsubishi Motors for being at the forefront in electric vehicle development and for being one of the private sectors to promote the use of EVs and help the Department in its vision to sustain a clean and healthy environment.

In praise of Mitsubishi Motors' initiatives is Assistant Secretary Kelvin Lester K. Lee of the Office of the Executive Secretary. He mentioned that the vehicles will be a great addition to their motor pool and that this will be taken care of. He also thanked DENR for their efforts in making the ceremonial turn over possible.

Also in attendance was Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea who personally accepted the vehicles and was impressed with the capacity of the units.

Present at the event were Deputy Executive Secretary for General Administration, McJill Bryant T. Fernandez; Malacañang Motorpool Director, Edwin Sicat; Deputy Executive Secretary for Finance and Administration, Rizalina N. Justol; Senior Deputy Executive Secretary, Michael P. Ong; Executive Secretary, Salvador C. Medialdea; MMPC President and CEO, Mutsuhiro Oshikiri; MMPC Senior Vice President for Corporate Division, Yasuki Maruyama; DENR Assistant Secretary for Administration, Jesus Enrico Moises B. Salazar; MMPC Assistant Vice President for Legal and Government Affairs, Atty. Imelda A. Brown; and MMPC Vice President for Corporate Public Relations, Renato S. Lampano.