17 APR 2019

DATE : ______________

Wednesday

DAY : ______________

DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service

Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

PEOPLES JOURNAL Tonight

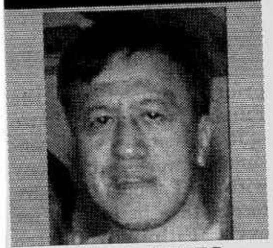
5
PAGE

UPPER
LOWER
PAGE 1 STORY
BANNER STORY
EDITORIAL
CARTOON

17 APR 2019
DATE

Usec Benny Antiporda, pinuri ng mga taga Lian, Batangas

ON THE BEAT



Ni EDD REYES

MUKHANG nakakita na ng kakampi ang mga resort owner at residente ng Lian, Batangas sa pamunuan ngayon ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa katauhan ni Usec Benny Antiporda na hindi naman maikakaila na dati ring mamamahayag.

Kay Usec Antiporda kasi nila naramdaman ang tunay na pagmamalasakit matapos tugunan kaagad ang kanilang hinaing na nagsimula pa noong taong 2016 kaugnay sa ipinaiiral na P25 kada tao na environment user's fee sa mga nagtutungo sa beach ng Matabungcay batay sa ipinasang ordinansa ng munisipalidad ng Lian, Batangas.

Sa pulong balitaan sa isang lugar sa Pasay City, ipinaliwanag ni Dennis Ilagan, kinatawan ng mga residente ng Barangay Santiago sa Lian na wala sanang problema kung sa kalinisan at pagpapahalaga sa kalikasan napupunta ang malaking halaga ng salapi na nakolekta sa environmental user's fee ng munisipalidad pero mukha raw hindi nagagamit ng wasto ang salapi dahil sa halip na maging malinis ang kapaligiran, lalo pang nasalaula sa dami ng basura at lumala pa ang polusyon.

Lumiham na rin aniya sila sa tanggapan ni Mayor Isagani Bolompo upang humiling ng kopya ng pampublikong pagdinig kung mayroon man bago ipasa ang ordinansa na dati'y P5 lamang subalit itinaas sa P25 kada tao.

Gayunman, wala pa aniyang tugon ang munisipalidad sa kanilang liham na malinaw na paglabag sa umiiral na batas sa ilalim ng R.A 6713 o ang Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.

Batay aniya sa huling impormasyong ibinahagi sa kanila ng lokal na pamahalaan, nanakaw umano ang tinatayang P500,000 pondo ng environmental user's fee subalit duda sila rito dahil wala namang inihaing reklamo o kaso ang munisipyo.

Bukod dito ibinahagi na rin ng grupo kay Usec Antiporda ang umano'y pagkakaloob ng permiso ng munisipalidad sa development at quarrying sa kanilang lalawigan kahit walang Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC).

Nagpasalamat din ang grupo kay Usec Antiporda dahil kaagad na nagpadala ng kinatawan sa kanilang lalawigan upang suriin ang lugar at siyasatin ang kanilang hinaing.

Free internet access

NANG lagdaan ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang Free Internet Access law noong Agosto ng nagdaang taon, umasa ang publiko na magkakaroon na ng libreng internet sa mga tanggapan ng lokal at pambansang pamahalaan, mga pampublikong paaralan, pagamutan, health centers, pampublikong transport terminals at mga paliparan at daungan.

Pero mukhang hindi yata naging makatotohanan ang batas dahil hindi maramdaman ang libreng internet sa naturang mga lugar gayung inatasan pa ng pangulo ang Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT) na pangasiwaan at tiyaking matutupad ang batas.

Buti pa nga sa Navotas City dahil nararamdaman na ang libreng internet sa kanilang Centennial Park maging sa Navotas Polytechnic College, amphitheater, library, city bus station at ilang mga health center at basketball court.

Inilunsad kasi ni Navotas City Mayor John Rey Tiangco ang NavoConnect wifi program at in-anunsiyo niya ito sa regular na aero-zumba session tuwing araw ng Linggo sa Centennial Park kung saan nasa 250 user ang makakokonekta sa bawat hotspot at bawat isa sa kanila ay makagagamit ng internet nang libre sa loob ng isang oras.

Umaasa naman si Mayor Tiangco na gagamitin ng mga Navoteño ang kapangyarihan ng internet sa pagsaliksik ng karunungan at pagpapaunlad ng sarili kasabay ng paalala sa mga magulang ng mga kabataan na suriin ang website na binubuksan ng kanilang mga anak upang hindi malinlang at mabiktma ng fake news.

Pwede naman pala

Maluwag ngayon ang area ng Blumentritt, maayos ang linya ng mga vendor at hindi na rin nagagamit bilang terminal ng mga tricycle ang gitnang bahagi ng lansangan dahil sa tuwina'y itinataboy sila ng nag-iikot na mga pulis mula sa Blumentritt Detachment sa utos na rin ng kanilang hepeng si P/Maj. Roy Augustus Calulot.

Sa text ng isang reader, puwede naman daw palang malinis ang lugar eh bakit ngayon lang ito ginagawa? Dahil daw ba panahon ng halalan at nangangamba sila na dito mag-ikot para mangampanya si Mayor Erap at makita ang magulong lugar?

Sana raw ay tumulong naman ang barangay officials sa paglilinis lalo na dito sa Antipolo St. kanto ng Felix Huertas na nilagyan na ng malalaking freezer ang bangketa kaya hindi halos makadaan ang mamimili. Ibinigay na kasi sa vendors ang buong lansangan pero pati pala bangketa, ginawang extension ng groserya dahil dito inilagay ang naglalakihang freezer.

Sa puna at reaksiyon, mag-email sa eddreyes-2006@yahoo.com o mag-text sa 0919-2425644.

Strategic Communication Initiatives Service

Abante
UNA SA BALITA

5
PAGE

UPPER
LOWER
PAGE 1 STORY
BANNER STORY
EDITORIAL
CARTOON

TITLE :
PAGE 1/
DATE

Environment user's fee sa Matabungkay pinalagan

MARIING tinututulan ng mga residente ng Lian, Batangas ang paniningil ng kanilang lokal na pamahalaan sa 'environment user's fee' sa mga beach sa Matabungkay samantalang tambak naman ang basura dito.

Nabatid na nakipagpulong kahapon ang mga residente ng Brgy. Santiago sa pangunguna ni Dennis Ilagan sa mga mamamahayag sa isang lugar sa Pasay City upang ipabatid ang kanilang hinaing.

Ayon kay Ilagan, nagpadala sila ng sulat sa tanggapan ni Lian, Batangas Mayor Isagani Balompo para humiling ng kopya ng public hearing at mga minutes of meeting na may kaugnayan sa ordinansa hinggil sa paniningil ng P25 kada tao para sa sinasabing 'environment user's fee'.

Ngunit hanggang sa kasalukuyan ay wala pang ibinibigay na kopya sa kanila ang tanggapan ng alkalde.

Nabatid na 2016 pa aniya hiniling ng mga residente para ipatigil ang paniningil ng environment user's fee, na kinukuwestiyon nila kung saan itó napupunta.

Samantalang tambak naman aniya ang basura sa dagat ng Matabungkay at hindi naman aniya ito nililinis.

Nagpadala rin ng sulat ang grupo sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) hinggil sa kanilang hinaing na agad namang inaksiyunan ni DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda sa pamamagitan nang pagpapadala nito ng kinatawan upang imbestigahan ang naturang reklamo. **(Armida Rico)**

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

Pilipino Star NGAYON
Diyaryong disente ng masang intelihente

9 PAGE | UPPER | LOWER | PAGE 1 STORY | BANNER STORY | EDITORIAL | CARTOON

17 APR 2019
DATE

TITLE: PAGE 1/

'Environment user's fee' sa Batangas kinontra

Mariing tinututulan ng mga residente ng Lian, Batangas ang paniningil ng kanilang lokal na pamahalaan ng "environment user's fee" sa mga beaches sa Matabungkay samantalang tambak naman ang basura rito na nakakasira ng kalikasan.

Ayon sa mga residente ng Brgy. Santiago sa pangunguna ni Dennis Ilagan, nagpadala sila ng sulat sa tanggapan ni Lian, Batangas Mayor Isagani Balompo, para humiling ng kopya ng public hearing at mga minutes of meeting na may kaugnayan sa ordinansa hinggil sa paniningil ng P25 kada tao para sa sinasabing "environment user's fee" ngunit hanggang ngayon ay wala pang tugon ang tanggapan ng alkalde.

Sinabi ni Ilagan na 2016 pa nila hiniling na itigil ang paniningil ng "environment user's fee" na kinukuwestiyon nila kung saan ito napupunta dahil tambak naman umano ang basura sa dagat ng Matabungkay at hindi naman ito nililinis. Aniya, nagpadala na rin sila ng sulat sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). Agad namang umaksyon si DENR Usec. Benny Antiporda at nagpadala ito ng kinatawan ng ahensya upang imbestigahan ang naturang reklamo.

Una ring kinuwestiyon ng grupo ni Ilagan ang pamahalaang lokal ng Lian hinggil sa development at quarrying na isinasagawa sa ilang lugar dito sa kabila na pinatitigil ito ng DENR. *(Lordeth B. Bonilla)*

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

INQUIRER Bandera
BALITA • BUENAS • CHIKA

3
PAGE

UPPER
LOWER

PAGE 1 STORY

BANNER STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

17 APR 2019
DATE

TITLE:

PAGE 1/

Environment user fee sa Matabungkay inalmahan

IPINOPROTESTA ng mga residente ng Lian, Batangas ang paniningil ng lokal na pamahalaan ng environment user's fee sa beach sa Matabungkay.

Ayon kay Dennis Ilagan, kinatawan ng mga residente ng Brgy. Santiago sa Lian, nagpadala na sila ng komunikasyon kay Lian Mayor Isagani Bolompo na humihiling ng kopya ng public hearings para sa paniningil ng P25 environment user's fee.

Sa salaysay ni Ilagan, 2016 pa nang hilingin ng mga residente ang pagpapatigil ng paniningil dahil hindi naman ito napupunta sa paglilinis sa lugar. Aniya, lumalala na ang polusyon sa lugar.

Una na ring kinuwestyon ni Ilagan ang development at quarrying na isinasagawa sa Lian sa kabila ng pagpapalabas ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources ng cease and desist order laban dito.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

Abante
UNA SA BALITA

3
PAGE

UPPER ✓
LOWER

PAGE 1 STORY | BANNER STORY | EDITORIAL | CARTOON

17 APR 2019
DATE

TITLE: PAGE 1/

DENR iimbestigahan ang buyer ng 2 agila

IIMBESTIGAHAN ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang nakabili ng dalawang agila sa isang pribadong indibidwal.

Ang imbestigasyon ay naglalayong mabatid kung sino ang responsable sa pagbenta ng agila.

Ito ay matapos dalhin sa DENR ang dalawang inakay na agila ni Police Staff Sargent Conrad Waperi III na umano'y ibinigay sa kaniya ng kaibigang nakabili sa mga ibon.

Inakala umano nito na manok panabong ang inilalako ng lalaki.

Napag-alamang mula umano sa Initao, Misamis Oriental ang mga agila. Ibinenta ng P5,000 ang serpent eagle habang P8,000 ang hawk eagle.

Magsasampa ng kaso ang DENR sa nagbenta ng inakay na agila sa paglabag ng Republic Act 9147 o Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act. **(Riz Dominguez)**

Strategic Communication Initiatives Service

PILIPINO MIRROR
PILIPINO MIRROR MEDIA GROUP CORPORATION
- SALAMIN NG KATOTOHANAN -

14
PAGE

UPPER LOWER PAGE 1 STORY BANNER STORY EDITORIAL CARTOON

17 APR 2019
DATE

TITLE: PAGE 1/

NAKABILI NG 2 AGILA, IIMBESTIGAHAN NG DENR

SISIYASATIN ng Department of Enviroment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang nakabili ng dalawang agila sa isang pribadong indibidwal.

Ang imbestigasyon ay upang matukoy kung sino ang responsable sa pagbenta ng naturang agila.

Napag-alamang dinala sa tanggapan ng DENR ang mga agila ni Police Staff Sgt. Conrad Waperi III na umano'y ibinigay sa kaniya ng kaibigang nakabili sa mga ibon.

Inakala umano nito na manok na panabong ang inilalako ng isang lalaki kung saan may kamahalan umano ang bili sa mga ito subalit hindi na pinansin ng kanyang kaibigan dahil sa awa sa mga inakay na puwedeng mamatay sa init ng panahon lalo't hindi kalsada ang natural nitong tahanan.

Nabatid na mula sa Initao, Misamis Oriental ang mga agila na ibinenta ng P5,000 ang isa habang P8,000 naman ang isa pa.

"Yung pagkakakuha raw noon, tinitirador ang parent ng eagle tapos inakyat ng bata yung pugad bago kinuha 'yung sisiw," sabi ni Wapiri.

Nakatakda namang magsampa ng kaso ang DENR sa nagbenta ng inakay na agila sa paglabag ng Republic Act 9147 o Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act.

"Yung wildlife 'di mo puwedeng ibenta o alagaan ng walang Certificate of Wildlife Registration (CWR) mula sa DENR," sabi ni Wildlife Department chief Aisah Pacote.

Pansamantalang aalagaan ng DENR ang mga inakay sa isang CWR holder sa lungsod bago ibalik sa gubat.

BENEDICT ABAYGAR, JR.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

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ANG DIARYO NG MASA

a
PAGE

UPPER | PAGE 1 STORY | BANNER STORY | EDITORIAL | CARTOON
LOWER

17 APR 2019
DATE

HINDI TATANTANAN NG TASK FORCE POGI ANG PAGLABAN SA ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE

ANG INYONG LINGKOD

DR. HILDA C. ONG

MULI na namang ipinakita ng Pilipinas na hindi nila tatantanan ang paglaban sa illegal wildlife trade hanggang sa tuluyang maubos ang mga ito matapos ang dalawang matagumpay na operasyon na nagresulta sa pagkakasagip sa mga buhay na wild animals at pagkaaresto sa may kagagawan ng krimen.

Ayon kay Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, Abril 8 nang masagip ng mga tauhan ng Philippine Operations Group on Ivory and Illegal Wildlife Trade o Task Force POGI ang mga buhay na exotic animals sa Mati City, Davao Oriental na aabot sa halagang P50-million na nagmula pa sa Indonesia.

Matatandaan din na kamakailan nang masakote ng Bureau of Customs ang 700 buhay na tarantula na may halagang P310,000 sa Ninoy Aquino International Airport na naging dahilan ng pagkakaaresto sa dalawang katao kabilang na ang consignee ng shipment na nagmula sa Poland.

Sinabi pa ni Cimatu, hindi magbabago ang paninindigan ng gobyerno upang mabigyan ng proteksiyon ang wildlife at mahinto ang illegal trafficking at maaresto ang nagbebenta ng wildlife species.

"The Philippines is taking illegal wildlife trade seriously," sabi pa ng dating military chief. "We want to send a clear signal that the country does not tolerate illegal wildlife crime, trafficking and trade that is driving endangered species to the brink of extinction."

Bukod sa illegal drugs, human trafficking at arms trade, ang illegal wildlife trade ay pang-apat sa pinakikinabangang krimen sa buong mundo na kumikita ng $23 billion kada taon.

Naging kilala rin ang Pilipinas bilang "consumer", "source" at "transit point" ng illegal trade ng wildlife at mga produktong nagmumula rito na nagiging dahilan upang manganib ang populasyon ng mga species at maapektuhan ang ating economic development at biodiversity.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE
BusinessMirror
A broader look at today's business
A-2
PAGE
UPPER
LOWER
PAGE 1 STORY
BANNER STORY
EDITORIAL
CARTOON
17 APR 2019
DATE

Writ of kalikasan sought to protect West PHL Sea

By Joel R. San Juan
@jrsanjuan1573

A PETITION was filed on Tuesday before the Supreme Court seeking the issuance of a writ of kalikasan to compel concerned government agencies to rehabilitate and protect the West Philippine Sea, particularly Panatag Shoal, Ayungin Shoal and Panganiban Reef from environmental damage due to poaching and other illegal activities being undertaken by Chinese nationals.

In a 35-page petition, the members of the Kalayaan Palawan Farmers and Fisherfolk Association (KPFafa) and the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) is seeking the same relief that the Court issued in 2008 when it ordered all concerned government agencies to coordinate for the cleanup, restoration and preservation of the Manila Bay.

The petitioners used as basis the documents submitted by the Philippine government in the interstate arbitration proceedings under Annex VII to the 1982 United National Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos) as well as the 2016 award by the tribunal in the South China Sea Arbitration, which established that foreign poachers and foreign construction and land-reclamation entities have caused massive environmental damage in Philippine waters and the Philippine exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

The Philippines won the arbitration on July 12, 2016, but the Philippine government has failed or refuses to enforce the ruling in a manner that is beneficial to Filipinos, particularly local fisherfolk, the petitioners said.

"The fishing communities in Palawan, together with the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, now seek a writ of kalikasan and writ of continuing mandamus from this Honorable Court, in assertion of their constitutional right to a balanced and healthful ecology, their public right to obtain the prosecution of violations of Philippine environmental laws in the Philippine EEZ and their right to prevent the further destruction of the marine environment in the Philippine EEZ," the petition read.

The petitioners accused foreign fishermen and other entities of harvesting threatened and endangered species and using cyanide and explosives in Panatag Shoal and Ayungin Shoal, as well as undertaking illegal construction activities in Panganiban Reef.

They noted that the SCS arbitral tribunal has upheld the Philippine government's claim that Ayungin Shoal, Panganiban Reef and Panatag Shoal are well within the Philippine EEZ; thus, the country's environmental laws are required to be enforced in the said areas.

"Chinese fishermen harvested endangered and threatened species and used cyanide and explosives in their fishing. Foreign entities engaged by Chinese authorities constructed and damaged coral reefs in the process. The marine environment and resources in the areas were damaged severely and extensively in spite of adequate Philippine laws to protect them. Clearly, the damage is brought upon by lack of enforcement of Philippine environmental laws by respondents," they claimed.

Under Presidential Decree 1599, the petitioners said the government is mandated to exercise its sovereign right to conserve and manage the natural resources, preserve the marine environment, and prevent and control pollution in the Philippine EEZ.

Among those named as respondents in the petition for the issuance of a writ of kalikasan and a writ of continuing mandamus are Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel F. Piñol and Philippine Coast Guard chief Admiral Elson E. Hermogino.

Co-counsel with the IBP is the Free Legal Assistance Group headed by La Salle Law School Dean Jose Manuel Diokno.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

PEOPLES JOURNAL Tonight

4
PAGE

UPPER
LOWER

PAGE 1 STORY
BANNER STORY
EDITORIAL
CARTOON

17 APR 2019
DATE

EDITORIAL

Ban plastics

A FORMER chairman of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) has called on government offices and agencies to gradually ban the use of plastics and do regular clean-up activities.

The ex-MMDA chair, Francis Tolentino, aired the call as part of a serious and concerted effort to encourage a culture that cares for the environment, which is being threatened by climate change.

Tolentino's remark coincided with the start of this year's Earth Month commemoration. Earth Day will be celebrated on April 22.

"Our ultimate goal should be the total ban of plastics nationwide, but we have to start somewhere, and government is a good place to start," said the soft-spoken but workaholic Tolentino.

We agree with Tolentino, when he said that the government cannot expect the citizens to value cleanliness if we who serve do not actively implement pro-environment measures.

"An effective ban should focus on single-use plastics, which include plastic bags, coffee cups, bottled water, straws, coffee stirrers, and food packaging or wrappers," said Tolentino, a senatorial bet in the May 13 polls.

A 2015 report by the United Nations Environment Program revealed that about half of all of the plastic waste that ends up in the oceans comes from five Asian countries.

These are China, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. Of the five countries, only China is not a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Specialists and experts across the globe agree that the continued use of plastics would have untold consequences for tourism, fisheries and other industries.

Let's stop manufacturing and using single-use plastics if we are to save the Planet Earth.

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INQUIRER Bandera
BALITA • BUENAS • CHIKA

3 PAGE | UPPER | LOWER | PAGE 1 STORY | BANNER STORY | EDITORIAL | CARTOON

17 APR 2019
DATE

TITLE: PAGE 1/

German biker na nagbalik ng basura sa kotse pinuri

UMAPELA ang EcoWaste Coalition sa mga motorista na iwasan ang pagtatapon ng basura sa labas ng sasakyan.

Ginawa nito ang panawagan matapos mag-viral sa social media ang video ng German na si Frank Schuengel na dinampot ang plastik ng basura at ibinalik sa van kung saan ito itinapon.

Nakabisikleta si Schuengel papasok sa trabaho nang makita niya ang pagtatapon ng basura sa Makati-Mandaluyong Bridge.

"You should care when someone throws garbage out of a car because that's how decent human beings should react," ani Schuengel sa kanyang post. "And as flattering as everyone's reaction is, the pollution problem in this country won't be solved by one bloke on a bike. It will take all of us to make a difference." —*Leifbilly Begas*

Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

PEOPLE'S JOURNAL
Everybody's Newspaper

4
PAGE

UPPER / LOWER | PAGE 1 STORY | BANNER STORY | EDITORIAL | CARTOON

17 APR 2019
DATE

SAVE OUR SHOALS —PINOY FISHERS

By Hector Lawas

THE Supreme Court was asked yesterday to compel the government to protect disputed shoals in the West Philippine Sea where Chinese fishermen have reportedly been harvesting marine resources.

In a 34-page petition filed through the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, a group of fishermen from Palawan and Zambales asked the SC to issue a writ of Kalikasan and writ of continuing mandamus ordering the government to protect, preserve and rehabilitate the environment in Scarborough or Panatag Shoal, Ayungin Shoal and Mischief Reef or Panganiban Reef.

They sought relief from the SC against what they called "neglect of performance of the duties of the government in violation of environmental laws resulting in environmental destruction of damage in the shoals."

They said the government failed to act on activities of Chinese fishermen in the disputed areas, which violate the country's environmental laws.

"Chinese fishermen harvested endangered and threatened species and used cyanide and explosives in their fishing... the marine environment and resources in the abovementioned areas were damaged severely and extensively in spite of adequate Philippine laws to protect them. Clearly, the damage is brought upon by lack of enforcement of Philippine environmental laws by respondents," they argued.

Petitioners also cited the island-building activities at Panganiban reef.

"Based on compelling evidence, expert reports, and critical assessment of Chinese claims described above, the Tribunal (international arbitral court) has no doubt that China's artificial island-building activities on the seven reefs in the Spratly Islands have caused devastating and long-lasting damage to the marine environment," they added.

Giant clams

The harvesting by Chinese vessels of giant clams in the Scarborough or Panatag Shoal is a violation of Philippine territory and sovereignty, Malacanang said.

"Siyempre (of course), natural because if it's our territory, therefore it is an affront to our territory and to our sovereignty," Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo said in a Palace briefing yesterday.

Panelo said Foreign Secretary Teddyboy Locsin will take legal action after filing a note verbale against the Chinese activities that endanger maritime resources at the shoal claimed by the Philippines.

However, Panelo refused to preempt Locsin's next move because "that is his territory."

Meanwhile, Panelo said that "China, as far as it is concerned, it owns the vast South China Sea, hence, it will be performing acts of ownership or sovereignty over those areas.

"In other words, they are just being consistent with themselves. Eh tayo rin, we have to be consistent with ours. As far as we are concerned, that is ours so we will be objecting to any intrusion into our own territory," added Panelo.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

BusinessWorld™

12/S1 PAGE | UPPER | LOWER | PAGE 1 STORY | BANNER STORY | EDITORIAL | CARTOON

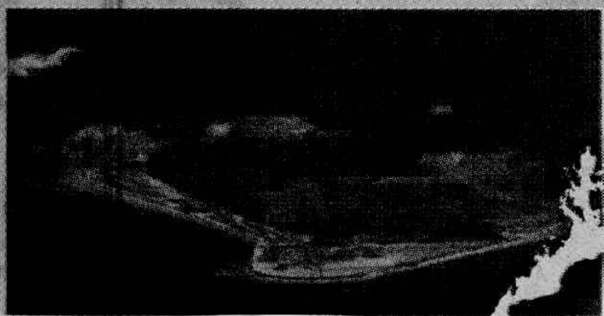
17 APR 2019

DATE

TITLE : PAGE 1/

IBP, fisherfolk groups ask high court to order gov't to enforce laws protecting West Philippine Sea

MEMBERS OF farmers and fisherfolks groups, together with the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP), have asked the Supreme Court (SC) to direct the government to enforce laws protecting the country's territories in the West Philippine Sea (WPS). In a petition for the issuance of Writ of Kalikasan, the Kalayaan Palawan Farmers, Fisherfolk Association, and the IBP said the government has refused to take legal action against violations of environmental laws committed specifically by Chinese at the Panatag Shoal (Scarborough Shoal), Ayungin Shoal (Second Thomas Shoal) and Panganiban Reef (Mischief Reef). Respondents in the case are Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel F. Piñol, Philippine Coast Guard Admiral Elson E. Hermogino, Philippine Navy Flag Officer-in-Command Robert A. Empredrad, and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources National Director Eduardo B. Gongona, among others. "Respondents have failed to perform their duties as mandated in the above-mentioned environmental laws and regulations. Petitioners have no other plain, speedy and adequate remedy as Petitioners are complaining of acts by the government agencies themselves who are supposed to be upholding Philippine environmental laws and protecting the environment and resources in Philippine territory," the petitioners said. They cited, among others, the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 which mandates the government to prosecute perpetrators of illegal acts. They also noted that the July 2016 international arbitral ruling won by the Philippines found that Chinese fishing vessels have been involved in harvesting threatened and endangered species in Panatag and Ayungin Shoals. It also found island-building activities led by China at the Panganiban Reef. They also said that in May 2013, two Chinese vessels accompanied by two Chinese Marine Surveillance ships were spotted near Ayungin Shoal gathering corals and clams and undertaking dredging activities. — **Vann Marlo M. Villegas**



Compel govt to protect disputed islands, SC urged

BY JOMAR CANLAS

A GROUP of fishermen asked the Supreme Court (SC) on Tuesday to compel the government to protect disputed shoals in the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea), where Chinese fishermen have reportedly been harvesting marine resources.

In a 34-page petition for a "Writ of Kalikasan" to order the government to protect, preserve and rehabilitate the environment in Scarborough (Panatag) Shoal, Ayungin (Second Thomas) Shoal and Mischief Reef (Panganiban) Reef, the group of fishermen from Palawan and Zambales named the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Agriculture, Philippine Navy, Philippine Coast Guard, Philippine National Police and Department of Justice as respondents.

The petitioners, represented by the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, stated that Ayungin Shoal and Panganiban Reef are part of the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the Philippines on the basis of the 2016 decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague.

Scarborough Shoal is likewise part of the EEZ under Republic Act 9522 or the "Philippine Baselines Law."

They argued that since the three areas are part of the country's EEZ, these should be covered by environmental laws of the country such as the Philippine Fisheries Code.

They argued that they "have no other plain, speedy and adequate remedy as petitioners are complaining of acts by the government agencies themselves who are supposed to be upholding Philippine environmental laws and protecting the environment and resources in Philippine territory."

"Respondents have failed to perform their duties as mandated in the above-mentioned environmental laws and regulations," they pointed out.

"Chinese fishermen harvested endangered and threatened species and used cyanide and explosives in their fishing... the marine environment and resources in the abovementioned areas were damaged severely and extensively in spite of adequate Philippine laws to protect them. Clearly, the damage is brought upon by lack of enforcement of Philippine environmental laws by respondents," they added.

The group also slammed the island-building done by China on Panganiban Reef.