

DATE : 28 APR 2019

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**DENR**

**IN THE NEWS**

**Strategic Communication and Initiative Service**



## Coliform level in Boracay 'significantly' down — DENR

By CORY MARTINEZ

**THE coliform level in Boracay waters "has significantly gone down" based on the latest water quality monitoring done by the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).**

This was disclosed by DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu as he reported that the world class resort-island Boracay keeps getting better a year after it started undergoing rehabilitation.

"Much has changed in Boracay since we started and I am happy that we are able to sustain the gains we achieved since we reopened in October last year," Cimatu, who heads the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF) in charge of the island's rehabilitation.

On April 26, 2018, the resort island was closed to the public for six months to pave the way for its rehabilitation from serious environmental damage.

Cimatu noted that the highest coliform level recorded was only 40 most probable number per 100 milliliters (mpn/100 ml).

The safe level is 100 mpn/100 ml for Class SB water that is suitable for swimming, skin diving and other recreational activities.

He also reported that there had been "no algae year-round," indicating that "it is really the dirty water which is causing what used to be a natural occurrence."

Cimatu added that the entire stretch of Boracay's White Beach is already safe for swimming, and he was hoping the Bulabog Beach, which is now solely used for water sports, will also be declared "swimmable" soon.

So far, Cimatu said 51 establishments along the White Beach have their own sewage treatment plants (STPs) while others are now connected to the sewer line. Forty-two establishments in other areas of the island opted to have their own STPs, he added.

He further disclosed that demolition orders have been served to establishments violating the 25+ 5 meter easement rule along the White Beach and Bulabog Beach, almost all of them chose to self-demolish. Those who violated the 12-meter road easement were also ordered to remove their illegal structures.

Cimatu said the construction of the Circumferential Road will continue. "Last year, it would take tourists an hour to reach their hotels because of traffic congestion. Now it would only take 20 minutes because of the paved and cleared roads," he said.

At present, the road from Cagban Port to Hue hotel is now 95 percent finished; Hue Hotel to the Elizalde property is 95 percent done; and what is called the Missing Gap is also 95 percent completed.

Plans are also underway to make Cagban Jetty Port an all-year round port. Previously, it was only used during the Amihan or dry season from November to April as an alternate to Tagbisaan Jetty Port, which is used during Habagat or wet season from May to October.

Despite these achievements, Cimatu said more needs to be done for Boracay to ensure its sustainability as a world-class ecotourism destination.

"Although we have reopened Boracay to global tourism, the rehabilitation of Boracay is not yet complete and remains a work in progress," he said.

"What we have ac-

complished thus far has earned commendations, but building sustainability requires time as well as the continuing support of the people of Boracay," he added.

The government, through the BIATF, is commemorating the first anniversary of the much-publicized closure of Boracay with a week-long celebration promoting the conservation and sustainability.

Low-key activities were lined up for the first-ever "Sustainability Week," which runs from April 26 to May 1.

The BIATF wanted to keep the observance of "Sustainability Week" simple and without much fanfare, unlike the infamous "Laboracay" which used to be celebrated every Labor Day weekend.

Laboracay was an annual event where beach parties were held to draw people to Boracay. Tourist arrivals tend to peak around this time.

For the Sustainability Week, the BIATF has identified activities that would distribute crowds to pocket events at different locations on the island, particularly in plazas, gyms, and other spaces.

No parties would be allowed on the beachfront. All activities are also scheduled only until 12 midnight.

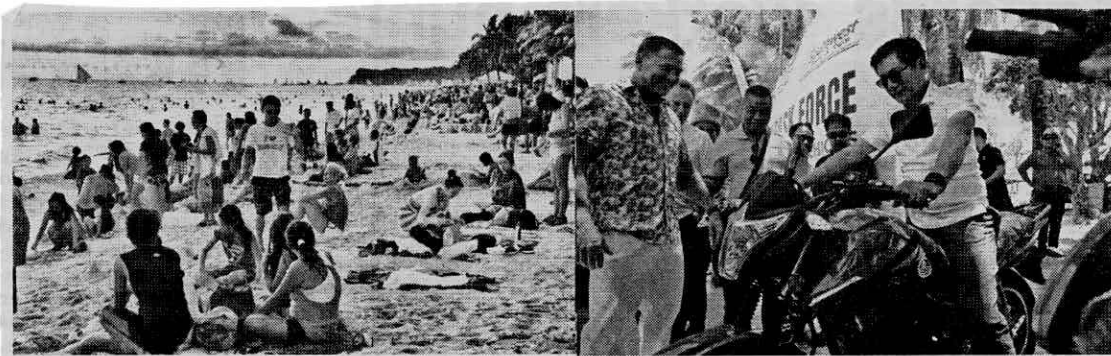
The BIATF reminds

those in the island to maintain cleanliness, which will be strictly monitored by enforcers from the DENR-LAWIN and the Malay-Solid Waste teams.

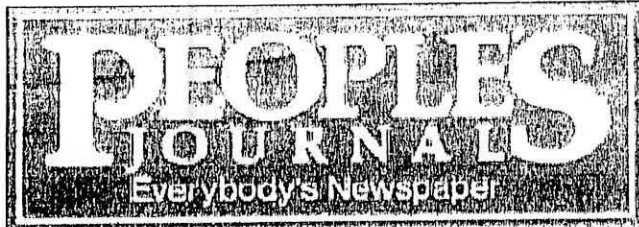
Tourists and guests can test their taste buds in a nightly banchetto food festival sponsored by the Boracay Foundation along Laketown Road.

They can also register to avail of free rides that will ferry them from D'Mall to other event locations.

Other activities during the week-long celebration include Zumba sessions, paraw-sailing and dive festivals, Ati-atihan parade, sports competition, symposiums and mini-concerts.



**E-BIKES FOR BORACAY PATROLLERS.** Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu tries one of the three e-bikes donated by Star 8 Green Technology to the DENR for use in Boracay island. The e-bikes run at a speed of 100kph and a 150km-range at approximately 10 hours of use. These will be used in patrolling the island. Looking on is Star 8 Chief Operating Officer Jacob Maimon (left).



28 APR 2019

DATE

## Boracay getting better -- Cimatu

By Joel dela Torre

**A YEAR after world-famous Boracay Island was closed to the public, it keeps getting better with the latest record of coliform level at its lowest.**

"Much has changed in Boracay since we started and I am happy that we are able to sustain the gains we achieved since we reopened in October last year," said Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, who expressed satisfaction with what the inter-agency task force has achieved since the "historical and ambitious" six-month Boracay rehabilitation program of the Duterte administration.

Citing the latest water quality monitoring done of the DENR's Environmental Management Bureau, Cimatu said the coliform level recorded was only 40 most probable number per 100 milliliters (mpn/100ml).

The safe level is 100mpn/100 ml for Class SB water that is suitable for swimming, skin diving and other recreational activities.

Cimatu added that there had been "no algae year-round," indicating that "it is really the dirty water which is causing what used to be a natural occurrence."

The entire stretch of Boracay's White Beach is already safe for swimming, while hoping the Bulabog Beach, which is now solely used for water sports, will also be declared "swimmable" soon.

At least 51 establishments along the White Beach have installed their own sewage treatment plants (STPs) while others are now connected to the sewer line.

Some 42 establishments in other areas of the island opted to have their own STPs.

"Last year, it would take tourists an hour to reach their hotels because of traffic congestion. Now it would only take 20 minutes because of the paved and cleared roads," he said.

Cimatu said roads previously described as the "missing gap," is now also 95 percent completed.

However, he said despite these achievements, there is more to be done for Boracay to ensure its sustainability as a world-class ecotourism destination.



28 APR 2019

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

PAGE 1/ \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## Cleaner waters in Boracay

Coliform level in Boracay waters has gone down significantly, a year after the island paradise has started undergoing rehabilitation, according to Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu.

"Much has changed in Boracay since we started and I am happy that we are able to sustain the gains we achieved since we reopened in October last year," Cimatu.

The resort island was closed to the public for six months in April 26, 2018 to pave the way for its rehabilitation from serious environmental damage.

Cimatu, who heads the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF), said the coliform level in Boracay waters "has significantly gone down" based on the latest water quality monitoring done by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB).

He noted that the highest coliform level so far recorded was only 40 most probable number per 100 milliliters (mpn/100 ml), from millions before the rehabilitation. **(Ellalyn de Vera-Ruiz)**



28 APR 2019

TITLE:

PAGE 17

DATE

## BORACAY ECO FRIENDLY NA

**N**ATUPAD ng pamahalaan na gawing sustainable eco-tourism destination ang Boracay nang makatanggap ng limang solar-powered vehicles na gagamitin sa pagpapatrolya at rescue service sa sikat na isla.

Ang mga sasakyan ay kinabibilangan ng isang patrol boat, tatlong e-bikes, at isang ambulansya na ipinagkaloob ng Star 8 Green Technology Corp. at ng Southwest Travel and Tours sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Ang donasyon ay nakapaloob sa isang Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) na nilagdaan ng dalawang kompanya at ng DENR na siyang nangunguna sa Boracay Inter-agency Task Force (BIATF) sa pagpapanumbalik ng sigla ng isla.

Kasama ni DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu na lumagda sa MOA sina Star 8 Green Technology Corporation President Jacob Maimon at Southwest Travel and Tours President Cedric Sazon.

Alinsunod sa MOA, nagkaloob ang Star 8

Green Technology Corporation ng isang unit ng solar-powered patrol boat, tatlong units ng electric bike at isang unit ng solar-powered medical rescue van o ambulance.

Nakasaad pa sa kasunduan na gagamitin ang solar-powered banca sa pagpapatrolya sa mga baybayin ng isla, ang tatlong unit naman ng electric bike ay magagamit sa pagbibigay ng seguridad sa kalupaan, habang ang medical rescue van ay para sa disaster and rescue operation.

"The donated vehicles will not only help sustain enforcement and sustainability efforts, but also minimize air and noise pollution in Boracay," pahayag ni Cimatu.

Ang e-bike ay may speed na 100 kilometer per hour at range na 150 kilometers bago muling i-charge, samantalang ang ambulansiya ay may maximum speed na 90 kph.

Ang solar-powered na patrol boat naman ay may speed na 5 knots, at tumatagal ng 8 oras bago i-recharge.

**BENEDICT ABAYGAR, JR.**



STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE



18  
PAGE

UPPER  
 LOWER

PAGE 1  
STORY

BANNER  
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

28 APR 2019

DATE

TITLE:

PAGE 1/

# DOT: Ban on partying, drinking in Boracay stays

By ROBERTZON RAMIREZ

Summer beach parties in Boracay, also known as "LaBoracay," are strictly prohibited in the island resort, the Department of Tourism reminded the public yesterday.

Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat said the order banning parties, drinking and smoking in Boracay, which was implemented when the island was reopened to tourists last October, is still in effect.

"*Bawal po ang LaBoracay. No drinking, no smoking in public places. That still stands,*" Puyat said.

She said the nationwide ban on smoking is also provided under an executive order issued by President Duterte in 2017 while a local ordinance prohibits tourists from drinking in public places.

LaBoracay parties, which draw local and international

artists as well as foreign tourists, are usually held on Labor Day or the weekend before May 1.

Puyat said parties are allowed provided establishments follow certain rules, such as the maximum noise level of 55 decibels. "We want to ensure that tourists who want to enjoy space and quiet will be able to do so," she said.

## Coliform level down

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said the rehabilitation of Boracay has been sustained since its reopening.

The coliform level in the waters of Boracay has gone down

based on the latest water quality monitoring of the Environmental Management Bureau.

The highest coliform level was recorded at only 40 most probable number per 100 milliliters. The level of coliform in water that is safe for swimming, skin diving and other recreational activities is 100 mpn/100 ml.

"The entire stretch of Boracay's White Beach is safe for swimming... We hope that Bulabog Beach, which is now solely used for water sports, will also be declared swimmable soon," Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said.

At least 51 establishments along White Beach have their own sewage treatment plants while the rest are connected to a sewer line. Forty-two establishments in other areas on the island also have their own STPs.

Cimatu said the demolition

of establishments violating the easement rule is ongoing. He said construction of the circumferential road is also ongoing.

"Last year, it would take tourists an hour to reach their hotels because of traffic congestion. Now, it only takes 20 minutes because of the paved roads," the DENR chief said.

Despite these accomplishments, Cimatu said much remains to be done to ensure Boracay's sustainability as a world-class ecotourism destination.

"The rehabilitation of Boracay is not yet complete. It remains a work in progress," he said.

"What we have accomplished so far have earned commendations, but building sustainability requires time as well as the continuing support of the people of Boracay," Cimatu said. — With Louise Maureen Simeon



## BORACAY REHAB EPEKTIB, TURISTA BUMAHA - BERNA

NAGBUNGA ang isinagawang rehabilitasyon ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa Boracay matapos na manumbalik ang kagandahan ng isla at muling sumipa ang turismo, ayon kay Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat.

Sinabi ni Sec. Romulo-Puyat na nanumbalik ang sigla ng Boracay kahit pa naharap sila sa maraming limitasyon.

Saad ni Puyat, patuloy ang kanilang pakikipagtulungan sa ibang ahensya para magtuloytuloy ang rehabilitasyon ng isla, na matatandaang isinara sa publiko ng anim na buwan para bumaba ang coliform bacteria level ng karagatan.

Katulong ang Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) ilang kalsada ang naisaayos at patuloy pang kinukumpuni, samantalang ang Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone ay sinisiguradong makumpleto ang drainage system sa malaparaisong lugar.

Patuloy din aniya ang paglago ng ekonomiya sa Boracay kasabay ng pagsisiguro na sumusunod la-

hat ng negosyo sa kanilang polisiya.

"We've accredited more than 300 accommodation establishments already. Our accreditation process is still on-going for those that are still non-compliant," ayon sa kalihim.

Patuloy pa rin aniya ang pinatupad na limitadong pagtanggap ng turista sa isla, nakatakda sa 19,215 kada araw, para mapanatili ang kalinisan sa lugar.

Sa Disyembre inaasahan na matapos ang kumpletong rehabilitasyon ng Bora na isa sa mga malalaking accomplishment ng DOT.

"All efforts are on track to phase three (ng rehabilitasyon) as we continue to make Boracay as model of sustainable tourism," ayon pa kay Puyat.

Bukod pa sa tagumpay sa Bora, lumago rin ang turismo sa ilang mga vacation spot tulad ng Siargao, patunay sa 7.1 million increase sa tourist visit kahit pa kalahating taon isinara ang Boracay. **(Ray Mark Patriarca)**



STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE



28 APR 2019

TITLE:

PAGE 1/

DATE

# Chinese top Boracay violators

**By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.**  
@nestorburgosINQ

BORACAY ISLAND, Aklan—Chinese tourists have topped the list of violators of laws and ordinances being implemented on Boracay Island which was closed last year to tourists to undergo rehabilitation.

Tourism officials said they would enhance education and information campaign especially on foreign tourists to raise awareness on the rules and regulations being imple-

mented on the island.

Out of the 1,043 violators recorded from January to March this year, 605 or 58 percent were tourists from China. This was followed by Koreans with 220 or 21.09 percent.

Filipino violators numbered 73 or 6.99 percent.

## Smoking ban

The violations include those related to ordinances banning smoking along the beach and other nonsmoking areas, carrying of glass bottles

along the beach, regulation on tour guides and the operation of unmanned aerial vehicles and drones.

The proportion of Chinese violators relative to the total number was double the percentage of Chinese tourists compared to the total tourists who visited the island in the first quarter of the year.

Data from the Malay municipal tourism office showed that 512,516 foreign and domestic tourists visited the island from January to March this year.

Of this number, 149,019 were from China (29.07 percent) and 97,797 (19.08 percent) from Korea. Local tourists reached 184,632 or 36.02 percent.

Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat said she had discussed with her Chinese counterpart the focus of the country on sustainable tourism and agritourism.

She said they were unable to discuss specific issues including those of Chinese tourists in the country and Boracay. INQ





# BULGAR

  
PAGE  
UPPER  
  
LOWER  
PAGE 1  
STORY  
BANNER  
STORY  
EDITORIAL  
CARTOON

28 APR 2019

DATE

**BOSES ng PINOY, MATA ng BAYAN**

Ni: V. REYES  
R2

## *Mga numero-unong pasaway – TREU*

# BORACAY, BINABOY NG MGA INTSIKAT KOREANO



# BULGAR

2  
PAGE

UPPER  
 LOWER

PAGE 1  
STORY

BANNER  
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

28 APR 2019

DATE

**BOSES ng PINOY, MATA ng BAYAN**

**Mga numero-unong pasaway — TREU**

## **BORACAY BINABOY NG MGA INTSIK AT KOREANO**

**NANGUNA ang mga Chinese national sa listahan ng mga malimit na lumabag sa ipinatutupad na mga ordinansa sa Boracay Island.**

Batay sa ipinalabas na impormasyon ng Boracay Tourism Regulatory Enforcement Unit, aabot sa 739 paglabag ang kinasangkutan ng mga Intsik mula noong Enero hanggang Abril ng kasalukuyang taon.

Sa nasabing bilang, 150 ang naitalang paglabag ng mga turistang Chinese noong Enero, 248 noong Pebrero, 207 noong Marso at 134 ngayong buwan.

Pangalawa sa listahan ang Korean nationals na may 277 na paglabag sa nabanggit na panahon. Pangatlo ang mga Pilipino sa mga pasaway na may 92 paglabag

at sinundan ng Russians at Taiwanese.

Ilan umano sa mga paglabag na ginawa ay ang paninigarilyo, pagkakalat at pagkain sa beach.

Sa kabila nito, sinabi ng Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force na kung tutuusin ay nabawasan na ang mga lumabag sa ordinansa mula nang ipatupad ng mga awtoridad ang mahigpit na pagdidisiplina at pagmonitor sa isla.

Nauna na ring sinabi ni Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu na pinakamarami ang mga Chinese sa hanay ng mga dayuhan na bumibisita sa Boracay. (*V. Reyes*)



## Mga illegal Chinese worker sisipain sa Boracay

Magsasagawa ng inspeksiyon ang Pamahalaang Lokal ng Malay, Aklan sa mga establismiyento o negosyo sa Boracay para malaman kung may mga nagtatrabaho dito na illegal foreign worker partikular ang mga Chinese na nagdadagsaan ngayon sa naturang isla.

Kasunod na rin ito ng pagdaing ng mga manggagawang Pilipino sa Boracay dahil sa pagdagsa ng bilang ng mga Chinese sa Boracay na hindi lamang pagnenegosyo ang pakay kundi trabaho rin.

Nabatid na sa umiral na local ordinance ng Boracay dapat ay 60% na mga Pilipino ang mga manggagawa ng bawat kompanyang matatagpuang sa isla.

Paliwanag ni Malay Mayor Abram Sualog, kailangang iprayoridad ang mga residente ng Aklan bago kumuha ng mga empleyado mula sa labas ng isla.

Bagama't puwede aniyang kumuha ng mga empleyadong bayaga, dapat kumpleto ang mga ito sa dokumento katulad ng working visa.

Kapag may nahuli umano na illegal foreign worker sa mga establismiyentong kanilang iinspeksyonin ay agarang ipapadeport ang mga ito.

Nauna rito ay isang Chinese restaurant ang isinumbong sa Malay Municipal Police Station dahil sa paglabag sa anti-smoking ordinance sa loob ng kanilang establismiyento noong Abril,

ayon kay Police Regional Office 6 deputy director Col. Jesus Cambay Jr.

Nang siyasatin, nadiskubre na bukod sa anti-littering at anti-smoking violation ay mayroon palang tatlong Chinese worker doon na walang kaukulang permit o undocumented worker.

Hindi binanggit kung anong restaurant iyon pero nabatid sa ulat ng PTV 4 na ito ay ang Da Tang Bai Lu.

Sa ulat ng naturang TV station, pinaliwanag umano ng nasabing Chinese restaurant na kumuha sila ng mga Chinese worker para i-training ang mga Pinoy sa pagluluto ng pagkaing Chinese at pagkatapos ay aalis din ang mga ito. (W/PNA)



STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE



28 APR 2019

TITLE:

PAGE 1/

DATE

## CHINESE NATIONALS NANGUNA Sa listahan ng mga lumalabag sa Boracay Island

**NANGUNA** ang mga Chinese nationals sa mga turista na malimit lumabag sa mga panuntunan sa Boracay Island.

Batay sa datos ng Tourism Regulatory Enforcement Unit mula Enero hanggang Abril ng taong ito, mahigit sa 700 Chinese nationals ang pinagmulta ng tig-P2,500 dahil sa paglabag sa panuntunan tulad ng pagtatapon ng basura at paninigarilyo sa beach front.

Mga Korean ang pumangalawa sa

rami ng paglabag sa mga panuntunan ng Boracay samantalang 92 lamang ang mga lokal na nahuling may paglabag.

Samantala, sa unang anibersaryo ng rehabilitasyon ng Boracay Island, inihayag ni DILG Undersecretary Epimaco Densing na sisimulan na nilang busisiin ang pagdami ng mga establisimiyento sa Boracay na umano'y pag-aari ng mga Chinese national.

**DWIZ882**



# BONDING SA BORA TRADISYON NG PAMILYA

**M**atapos ipasara ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang isla noong nakaraang taon dahil sa mga environmental issue, bumabalik na muli ang kinang ng Boracay.

Ayon kay Rob Cuan, isang office worker sa Maynila, malaki ang pinagbago ng Boracay buhat noong ipatupad ang anim na buwang rehabilitasyon sa isla.

Tradisyon na ng pamilya ni Cuan ang magpunta ng Boracay tuwing tag-init, halos taon-taon nasa isla ngunit hin-

di nakapasyal noong nakaraang taon dahil sa pansamantalang pagsasara.

Kung dati ay makikita ang dumog ng tao sa Boracay, ngayon ay bumaba ang bilang ng mga turista dahil na rin sa ipinatupad na paglimita sa mga bibisita kada araw.

"Mas okay din kasi na-lesser 'yung kalat, saka mas na-appreciate namin ang island kasi 'di na ganun ka-crowded kahit summer," ayon kay Cuan.

Aniya pa, mas ramdam niya ngayon ang pagiging ligtas sa isla lalo't pinaigting ang police visibility sa sikat na beach ng Bora.

"Yes maraming station, mas secure lalo na may kasama pa kong mga bata," pahayag ng turista.

Pinatunayan ito ng record ng Malay Municipal Police Station



(MGA KUHA NI RAY MARK PATRIARCA)



na sinaad ang malaking pagkakabawas ng crime rate sa isla.

Simula noong muling nagbukas ang Bora, nagtatak lamang ito ng 37 crime volume, ngayong Abril ay mas lalo pang bumaba sa anim.

Saad ni Malay police chief Captain Jose Mark Gesulga, nakatulong ang Bora rehab para maplanong mabuti ng kapulisan ang kanilang hakbang para sa seguridad ng isla.

"The closure really helped us in making the decrease of the total crime volume because when the island was closed, we were given time to plan for the programs and other security activities that were implemented in the opening," paikli ng Malay police chief.

At nang maitanong kay Cuan kung itutuloy nila ang tradisyon, ito ang kanyang naging tugon.

"Sana magtuloy-tuloy, babalik kami," panapos ni Cuan. **(Ray Mark Patriarca)**



# BULGAR

3  
PAGE

UPPER  
 LOWER

PAGE 1  
STORY

BANNER  
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

28 APR 2019

DATE

Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

**BOSES ng PINOY, MATA ng BAYAN**

*Editorial* **EDITORIAL** *Editorial*

## Mga pasaway na turista, dagsa na naman sa Boracay Island!

**M**ATAPOS ang paglilinis at pagsailalim sa rehabilitasyon ng Boracay Island, dumarami na rin ang mga turistang bumibisita rito para magbakasyon.

Upang mapanatili ang kalinisan at kagandahan ng isla, nagpatupad ang mga opisyal ng mga ordinansa rito.

Bagama't, may mga bakasyunistang sumusunod sa mga ipinatupad na ordinansa, mayroon ding dedma o hindi sumusunod.

Ayon opisyal ng isla, top violator ang mga turistang Chinese kung saan umabot sa 739 ang nahuling lumabag sa iba't ibang ordinansa mula noong Enero 2019.

Pumangalawa naman ang mga Koreano na nagtala ng 277 paglabag.

Dagdag pa ng opisyal, bagama't, patuloy ang pagpapaalala ng mga tour guide sa mga turista na sumunod sa ordinansa, matigas umano ang ulo ng mga ito.

Kabilang sa mga karaniwang nilalabag ay ang anti-smoking, pagkakalat at pagkain sa beach.

Dahil dito, dapat umanong managot ang sinumang mapatunayang lalabag.

Bilang responsableng mamamayan, dapat seryosohin at pahalagahan ang mga batas na ipinatutupad dahil ginawa ang mga ito hindi para basahin lamang kundi para sundin, anuman ang lahi natin.



## Turismo sa Manila Bay

**L**iba talaga ang paglubog ng Araw sa Manila Bay. Iba kahit saan mang lugar. Walang kapantay kaya nga sinasadya ang lugar na ito.

Bukod sa napakagandang tanawin na ito, mayroon na ring mga batang naglalaro sa breakwater ng Manila Bay sa may Roxas Boulevard.

Pero ipinagbawal ito agad ng DENR dahil marumi at hindi pa ito ligtas pagliguan.

Sabi ni DENR Undersecretary Sherwin Rigor, maaari ng pali-guan ang ilang bahagi ng Manila Bay sa Disyembre.

Sa ngayon, hindi pa ligtas ang pagligo sa Manila Bay dahil sa mataas na lebel ng bakteryang fecal coliform.

Pero idiniin ni Rigor na pag-sapit ng Disyembre ay may parte na raw na ligtas pagliguan.

Natukoy na rin ng DENR ang ilang establisimiyento na nakapuwesto malapit sa Manila Bay at

mga ilog at esterong konektado rito na nagtatapon ng maruming tubig sa look.

Sabi ng DENR, gagawing 'mala-Boracay' ang look. Ibig sabihin, lalo itong dadayuhin at mag-aakyat ng kita sa national at local government. Aarangkada lalo ang turismo sa Maynila, panigurado ito.

Samantala, hindi pa man inihahayag ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang rehabilitasyon sa look ay nag-annunyo na si Mayor Joseph 'Erap' Estrada ng kanyang reclamation project sa lugar at may pareho rin palang plano ang pamahalaang lokal ng Pasay.

Nagpahayag ng pagtutol ang DENR sa reclamation project ng Manila at Pasay dahil magiging sagabal daw ito sa rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay.

Pero ayon kay Rigor, si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte lang ang makakapagdesisyon ukol sa recla-

mation project.

Mapapalakas din umano ang turismo sa Maynila dahil suportado ng Tourism Congress of the Philippines (TCP) ang rehabilitasyon sa look.

Ayon sa grupo, mas mapapalakas ang turismo sa Maynila kapag lubusang nalinis ang Manila Bay.

"Pag naayos 'yan, ang magiging effect niyan sa tourism ay dadami pa iyong puwede naming maialok sa ating mga turista," ani TCP President Jojo Clemente.

Ayon pa kay Clemente, hindi lang daw mga hotel ang dapat silipin ng gobyerno sa rehabilitasyon kundi pati mga komunidad na nakapuwesto sa may dagat sa Maynila, Cavite at Laguna.

Sabi ni Mayor Estrada, mahigit sa 500,000 trabaho ang malilikha sa reclamation project ng lungsod na 100 porsyentong magpapasirit sa komersyo at turismo ng lungsod. **(Mia Billones)**





STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE

THE PHILIPPINE  
**STAR**  
TRUTH SHALL PREVAIL



PAGE



UPPER

LOWER



PAGE 1  
STORY



BANNER  
STORY



EDITORIAL



CARTOON

28 APR 2019

DATE

TITLE:

PAGE 1/



**Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission workers clean up a section of the river in Manila yesterday.**

KJ ROSALES





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INITIATIVES  
SERVICE

28 APR 2019

TITLE:

PAGE 1/

DATE



WORKERS of Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) clean up a portion of the Pasig River in Manila. (Jansen Romero)



STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE

28 APR 2019  
DATE

TITLE:

PAGE 1/



PART of rehabilitating Manila Bay involves the cleanup of the Pasig River as these workers from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources do at a portion of the waterway in Binondo, Manila. BOB DUNGO JR.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

# Balita

ANG NANGUNGUNANG PAHAYAGANG TAGALOG SA BANSA

4  
PAGE

UPPER  
 LOWER

PAGE 1  
STORY

BANNER  
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

28 APR 2019

DATE



**MASIGASIG  
SA PASIG  
CLEAN-UP**  
Tuluy-tuloy  
ang paglilinis  
ng mga tauhan  
ng Pasig River  
Rehabilitation  
Commission sa  
isang bahagi ng  
ilog sa Maynila,  
kahapon.  
**JANSEN  
ROMERO**



Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

# Balita

ANG NANGUNGUNANG PAHAYAGANG TAGALOG SA BANGSA

3  
PAGE

UPPER  
 LOWER

PAGE 1  
STORY

BANNER  
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

28 APR 2019

DATE



*Walang humpay ang isinasagawang paglilinis ng workers ng Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission sa bahagi ng Pasig River sa Maynila kahapon. ( Kuha ni KJ Rosales)*



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COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE

**Abante**  
UNA SA BALITA



PAGE



UPPER  
LOWER



PAGE 1  
STORY



BANNER  
STORY



EDITORIAL



CARTOON

28 APR 2019

TITLE:

PAGE 1/

DATE



**Naglunsad ng clean-up drive sa Pasig River ang grupo ng Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission kahapon. (Patrick Adalin)**



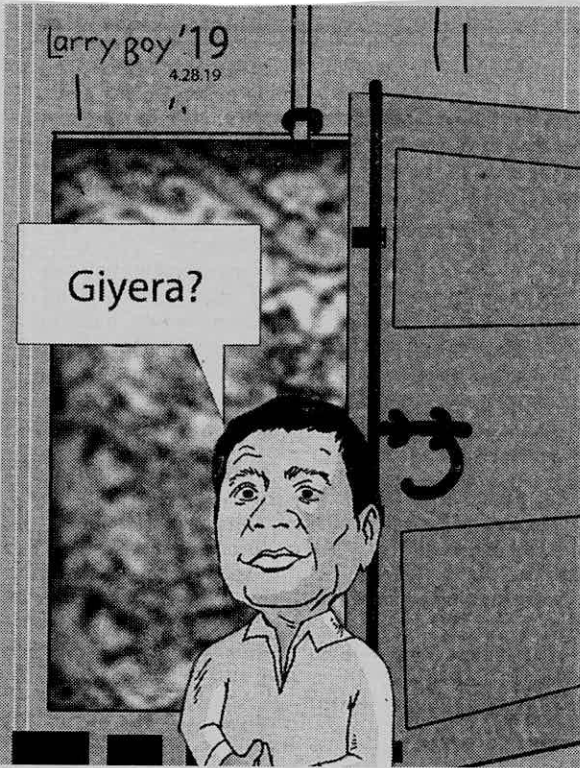
Editorial

## *Pakikipaggyera sa Canada dahil sa basura*

**P**ITONG taon nang nasa bansa ang mga basura ng Canada at hanggang ngayon, hindi pa nila kinukuha. Nangako noon ang Canadian prime minister na kukunin na nila ang basura pero hindi tinupad.

Napuno na si President Duterte sa basura ng Canada kaya nang dumalaw siya sa Pampanga noong Miyerkules para inspeksiyunin ang pinsala ng lindol sa Porac, sinabi niya na magdedeklara siya ng giyera sa Canada kapag hindi pa kinuha ang basura. Sabi pa ng Presidente, huwag gawing basurahan ang Pilipinas. Naasar na si Duterte sapagkat walang aksiyon na ginagawa si Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau ukol dito.

Noong Nobyembre 2017, nag-usap sina Duterte at Trudeau ang tungkol sa basura. Nagpahayag ang



Canadian leader na aaksiyunan na ang problema sa basurang umaabot sa mahigit 100 container van. Pero lumipas ang mahigit dalawang taon, wala pa ring aksiyon si Trudeau.

Dumating sa bansa ang basura noong 2013 at 2014. Pawang household at hospital wastes ang laman ng containers. Dalawampu sa containers ng basura ay itinapon sa Tarlac noong Mayo 2015 samantalang ang karamihan ay nananatili at nabubulok na sa Port of Manila at Subic.

Nang tanungin si Trudeau noon ng mga reporter kung ibabalik na sa kanilang bansa ang sariling basura, wala itong malinaw na sagot. Meron na raw solusyon sa problema pero hindi naman sinabi kung ano iyon.

Ang hinihintay na sabihin ni Trudeau noon ay ipag-uutos niya ang agarang pagbabalik ng basura sa kanilang bansa. Pero walang ganoong sagot kaya ngayon, ang pakikipaggyera ni Duterte na lamang ang maaaring remedyo.

Dapat lamang ibalik sa Canada ang mga basura sapagkat nakasaad sa Basel Convention na anumang hazardous wastes na dumating sa bansa ay dapat ibalik sa pinanggalingang bansa. May karapatang tanggihan ng Pilipinas ang basura. Alam ng Canada ang batas dahil isa sila sa mga pumirma sa international treaty noong 1992. Kailangan pa yatang isaksak sa Canada ang nakasaad sa treaty.



# Balita

OPINION ADVISORY

4  
PAGE

UPPER  
 LOWER

PAGE 1  
STORY

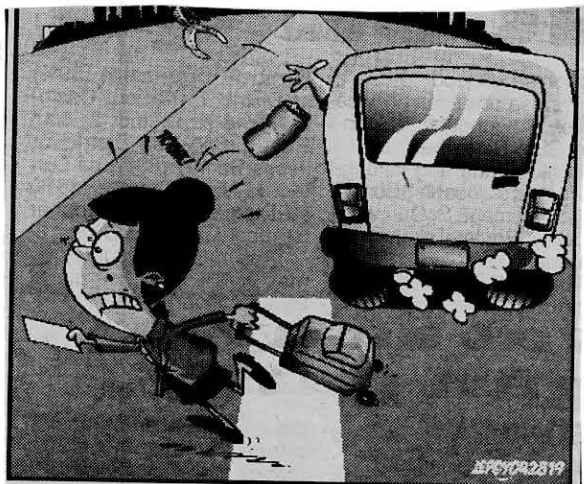
BACKER  
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

28 APR 2019

DATE



## Editorial

### Tapon dito, tapon doon ng basura

**H**ANGGANG ngayon, marami pa ring Pilipino ang walang disiplina sa pagtatapon ng kanilang basura. Kahit ang mga nasa sasakyan, itinatapon sa labas ng bintana ang kanilang basura – balat ng mani, wrapper ng hamburger, paper cup ng French fries, plastic cup ng softdrinks at iba pa.

Tapon dito, tapon doon ang ginagawa. Nagpapakita ng kawalan ng disiplina at kamangmangan sa epektong dulot ng basura sa kapaligiran. Hindi kaya nila alam (o nagtatanga-tangahan lang) na nasisira ang likas na yaman at panganib na rin sa mga lamandagat ang basura. Pati mga balyena, namamatay dahil sa mga kinaing plastic na basura.

Nitong nakaraang Mahal na Araw, nakita na naman ang kawalan ng disiplina nang maraming nagbisita Iglesia. Sa bawat simbahan na kanilang bisita, nag-iwan sila ng basura. Pawang mga plastic na supot ng pinaglagyan ng softdrink at tubig ang iniwang basura. Bukod sa plastic, nag-iwan din ng mga paper cup at styro na pinaglagyan ng kanin at ulam. Mayroon ding cup ng noodles at sachet ng kape.

Pinakamaraming basurang iniwan sa isang grotto sa San Jose del Monte, Bulacan. Sa paligid ng grotto ay makikita ang tambak ng basura. Sobrang dumi ng paligid na para bang hindi bahay ng Diyos ang lugar. Malayung-malayo sa dating tanawin ang grotto noong hindi pa dumarating ang mga nagbisita Iglesia. Ipinakita ang kawalan ng disiplina at kamangmangan ng mga nagtungo sa grotto.

Ilang linggo na ang nakararaan, nag-viral naman sa social media ang isang van na tumatakbo sa boundary ng Mandaluyong at Makati na hinabol ng isang German cyclist. Bitbit ng cyclist ang isang plastic ng basura na itinatapon ng mga sakay ng van. Nang abutan ng dayuhan ang van na naipit sa trapik, kinatok niya ang pinto at nang buksan, ibinigay niya ang basura sa driver. Hindi na nakapangatwiran ang driver sapagkat napag-isip-isip marahil na mali ang ginawa nilang pagtatapon ng basura.

Maraming Pilipino ngayon ang walang disiplina sa pagtatapon ng kanilang basura. Hindi na nakapagtataka kung dumating ang panahon na pawang basura ang makikita sa kalsada, simbahan, parke at iba pang lugar. At nakakahiya na mga dayuhan pa ang nagmamalasakit at nagpapamukha sa mga walang disiplina na huwag tapon dito, tapon doon ng basura.



## DENR: Iulat ang wildlife trafficking

**H**INIKAYAT ni Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu ang publiko na ipagbigay-alam sa kagawaran ang mga insidente ng wildlife trafficking sa bansa, upang agarang matugunan ang krimen.

"If you know of any illegal wildlife trade, we enjoin you to inform us so we can act decisively and fast," panawagan ni Cimatu sa publiko sa selebrasyon ngayong 2019 ng DENR ng taunang Earth Day sa Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center sa Quezon City nitong Miyerkules.

Sa kanyang panawagan, binigyang-diin ng Kalihim ang mga pag-aaral na nagsasabing libu-libong uri ng hayop ang nanganganib nang maubos.

Iniulat ng World Wide Fund for Nature ang mahigit 50 porsiyentong pagbaba ng populasyon ng mammal, ibon, amphibians, at reptiles sa buong mundo sa nakalipas na 40 taon.

"We will never condone illegal wildlife trade as this will definitely lead to extinction of species," ani Cimatu.

Ipinanawagan din ng nasabing hakbangin ang tema ngayong taon ng Earth Day, "Protect our species", na layuning isulong ang kamalayan hinggil sa lumalaking tyansa na maubos at tuluyang maglaho ang iba't ibang uri ng hayop sa mundo, pagpapaiting sa mga hakbangin sa proteksiyon ng mga species, pagsusulong ng pangangalaga sa lahat ng hayop, at pagtataguyod ng pangangalaga sa pamamagitan ng indibiduwal na aksiyon, tulad ng paghinto sa paggamit ng pesticide.

Sa pahayag ng DENR, ang Pilipinas ay itinuturing na isang "mega-diverse" na bansa kung saan matatagpuan ang nasa mahigit 52,177 uri ng hayop. Mahigit kalahati sa bilang na ito ay matatagpuan lang sa bansa.

Gayunman, ayon sa kagawaran, ikinokonsidera ang Pilipinas bilang isang "biodiversity hotspot" dahil sa patuloy na pagpasok ng bansa sa "alarming rate of species destruction" dahil sa over-exploitation, deforestation, land degradation, climate change, polusyon at iba pa.

Muling inihayag ni Cimatu na magpapatuloy ang DENR sa pagbabantay sa mga aktibidad sa buong bansa upang protektahan ang mga species at ang kanilang mga tahanan.

"Vigilance is the order of the day," aniya.

Nitong nakaraang buwan, iginawad ng DENR ang Wildlife Law Enforcement Award sa 44 na tauhan ng Bureau of Customs, National Bureau of Investigation, Philippine National Police, Department of Agriculture, at sa probinsiya ng Cebu para sa tulong ng mga ito sa mga regulasyon at pagpapatupad ng batas na may kinalaman sa wildlife.

Ayon sa DENR, ang aksiyon ng iba't ibang ahensiya ay mahalaga lalo na dahil ang wildlife trafficking ay isang multi-million-dollar activity na kinasasangkutan ng ilegal na kalakalan sa mga border ng bansa.

"We will never let our guard down against animal poachers and traffickers," giit ni Cimatu.





**RICH BIODIVERSITY IN PH SURFING CAPITAL**

# 3 CRICKET SPECIES—INCLUDING 'MUTE' VARIETY— -DISCOVERED ON SIARGAO ISLAND

1/2

**By Bong S. Sarmiento**  
@inqmindanao

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Three new cricket species, including one considered “mute” in contrast to its noisy cousins, were recently discovered in Mindanao’s Siargao Island by a team of local and international researchers.

Dr. Theresa Mundita Lim, executive director of the Asean Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), on Saturday said the discovery in Del Carmen town on Siargao Island, the country’s surfing capital, proved that the Philippines hosts a rich biodiversity and that thousands of species have remained undiscovered and unidentified.

“It also demonstrates that the Philippines is a critically important haven for biodiversity,” said Lim, a former official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The researchers came across the unique *Paranisitra flavofacia*, which does not produce sound like other typical crickets.

The two other finds were the bark cricket (*Endodrelanva siargaensis*) and the sword-tailed cricket (*Trigonidium solis*), Lim said.

The team credited with the discovery includes Sheryl Yap and Jessica Barbecho of the Uni-

versity of the Philippines Los Baños, and their counterparts from the Russian Academy of Sciences, National University of Singapore, and Muséum National d’Histoire Naturelle in France.

### Ecosystem balance

The insects were discovered during biodiversity surveys conducted last year on Siargao Island in Surigao del Norte province.

According to the ACB, crickets help maintain the balance of the ecosystem. They renew soil minerals and decompose plant materials, thus contributing to the soil’s richness, which in turn ensures good habitats for plants and trees.

Field crickets consume the seeds of weed species that may

be invasive in garden ecosystems. They are also food for other animals, including humans, the ACB said.

In a 2013 report, the United

Nations Food and Agriculture Organization said current farming and food production practices are unsustainable but that edible insects, such as crickets, are a viable, untapped resource that can help meet the food demands of the world’s expanding population.

### Smart, appropriate decisions

The new species discoveries led Lim to encourage the youth to take up courses in biology or taxonomy. “Many of our species may be disappearing before we even know they exist. We need taxonomists to identify them. We can’t conserve what we don’t know,” she said.

Knowing the country’s species will enable conservation policy and decision-makers to make smart and appropriate decisions and strategies on how to conserve what is left of our biodiversity, Lim added.

Scientists have estimated that more than 90 percent of the

world’s species have yet to be discovered.

In 2011, the Philippine Biodiversity Expedition discovered some 300 new species that included deep-sea armored corals, ornate sea pens, new sea urchins and sea stars, a shrimp-eating swell shark, over 50 colorful new sea slugs, as well as insects and spiders.

### Remarkable biodiversity

The expedition was led by scientists from the California Academy of Sciences, with two dozen of their colleagues from the Philippines.

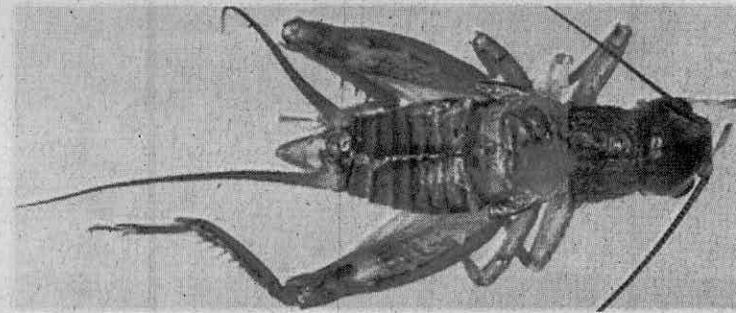
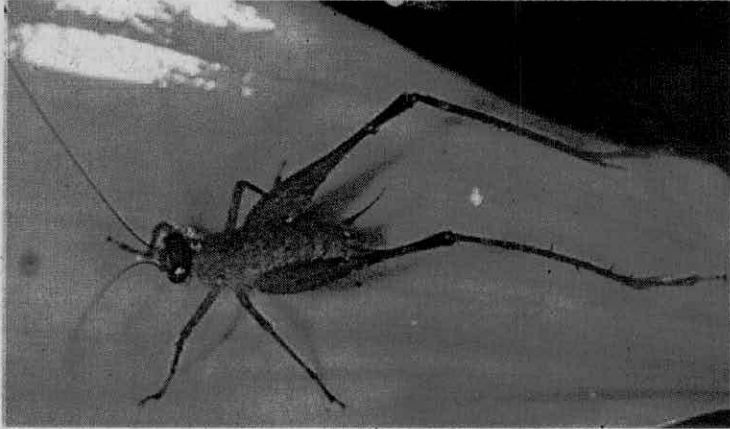
Dr. Terrence Gosliner, dean of Science and Research Collections at the California Academy of Sciences and leader of the 2011 Philippine Biodiversity Expedition, described the country’s biodiversity as “remarkable.”

“Biodiversity in the Philippines is still relatively unknown, and we found new species during nearly every dive and hike as we surveyed the country’s reefs, rainforests and the ocean floor,” he said.

Gosliner said the species lists and distribution maps that they had created during the expedition will help to inform decisions on future conservation and ensure the survival of the country’s remarkable biodiversity. INQ



2/2



**NO GARDEN VARIETY** The mute *Paranisitra flavofacia* (top left) is among the three cricket species discovered on Siargao Island by a team of local and international researchers. The other two cricket species are the *Trigonidium solis* (top right), and the *Endodreelanva siargaoensis* (above). —PHOTOS FROM UPLB MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY



Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS  
SINCE 1800

# MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

12  
PAGE

UPPER  
LOWER

PAGE 1  
STORY

BANNER  
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

28 APR 2019

DATE

# PH may seek China's help in protecting marine resources

By **GENALYN D. KABILING**

**B**EIJING – The Philippines may invite China and other nations to help protect the rich natural resources in the West Philippine Sea amid plans to declare the region as a marine protected area.

National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr. has recommended to President Duterte the establishment of the marine protection zone, including Pag-asa Island, to safeguard the environment and limit fishing activities in the country's maritime domain.

Esperon, speaking to reporters in Beijing, affirmed the President was open to the idea that is similar to the proclamation of a portion of the Philip-

pine Rise as a marine protected area.

"We are studying the creation of the declaration of some marine protected areas. We did this in the Philippine Rise and so we can, I think we can do it also in the West Philippine Sea. That's after all our maritime domain, within our exclusive economic zone," he said.

"A marine protected area gives you choices whether there should be no fishing at all or no exploitation of resources or it could be managed that way we protect the environment, we sustain the environment so it's a good activity that where we can join all other, we can invite nations to join us," he added.

Asked how the government intends to manage the resources in the territory, Esperon maintained that human activ-

ity could be restricted to preserve the marine habitat and species.

"Manage – you allow some harvesting, you have to impose some off season times and some restrictions, less restrictions," he said.

Esperon explained that the Philippines does not need to get the consent of China since the West Philippine Sea is within the country's maritime domain.

"If they wish, they can join us. We have, UP has a marine laboratory in Pag-asa. We can do that. In fact that should be good for the whole of South China Sea – fisheries agreement, marine agreement all over," he added.

Asked if the Philippines can turn away other countries in the marine protected area, Esperon said: "That's

what we intend to do or invite them to take care of the area also."

Esperon earlier announced the government was mulling on the declaration of Pag-asa Island and Ayungin Shoal in the West Philippine Sea as marine protected areas. The government seeks institutionalize and promote efforts towards environmental and marine biodiversity protection within the resource-rich West Philippine Sea, he added.

The proposal was made after the

government expressed concern over the alleged presence of Chinese vessels near Pag-asa Island as well as poaching of giant clams in the Panatag Shoal.

The West Philippine Sea issue was among the concerns raised by President Duterte during his meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing last Thursday. Duterte and Xi agreed to address the issue through bilateral negotiations but it should affect cooperation between the two countries.



# PH may invite other nations in new tack to assert sea claim

By Doris Dumlao-Abadilla  
@Philbizwatcher

BEIJING—The Philippines may declare parts of the West Philippine Sea as marine protected areas (MPAs) and it would invite other countries to support this initiative, a security official said on Saturday.

“A marine protected area gives you choices whether there should be no fishing at all, or no exploitation of resources, or it could be managed. That way, we protect the environment, we sustain the environment,” National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr. told Philippine media on the sidelines of the Belt and Road Forum in Beijing.

“We can invite (other) nations to join us,” he added.

Earlier in the week, Esperon said in a statement the government was looking at the possibility of declaring Pag-asa (Thitu) Island and Ayungin (Second Thomas) Shoal as MPAs to institutionalize and promote efforts for environmental and marine protection in the resource-rich waters.

In declaring a marine protected area, the Philippines would be exercising its maritime rights without signaling aggression toward China, an emerging infrastructure-building ally but a rival maritime claimant.

Esperon told reporters, however, that the Philippines didn't need China's consent as the declaration would cover only areas within its exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

“That's within our maritime domain. If they wish, they can join us,” he said. “In fact, that should be good for the whole of South China Sea (if we can

have) fisheries agreement, marine agreement all over.”

West Philippine Sea is the local name of the waters within the Philippines' 370-kilometer EEZ in the South China Sea. Many islands and features in the disputed waters are claimed by the Philippines, including Pag-asa, the largest of nine islands and reefs occupied by Filipinos.

## No guarantee

Declaring an MPA in the disputed waters may not be so easy, according to Jay Batongbacal, director of the University of the Philippines Institute for Maritime Affairs and the Law of the Sea.

“In theory,” Batongbacal said, “it is an exercise of jurisdiction and it takes a high moral ground in seeking to preserve the marine environment in the area.”

“In reality, it will not work in our favor unless all other parties also take similar action of declaring the area as protected,” he said. “We may be limiting ourselves in the area, while others, especially China, can do whatever they want.”

Batongbacal said there was no guarantee that declaring Pag-asa a protected area would change the situation since China had already built islands on reefs claimed by the Philippines.

“Since we are restricting our activities, that might even give the other side more leeway to do what they want,” said the maritime affairs expert. “The reality is that all parties, especially the dominant party that is China, is basically doing everything it can to explore and exploit the resources as fast as it can.”

Beijing continues to ignore the 2016 ruling of the international



Hermogenes Esperon Jr.

arbitral tribunal in favor of the Philippines that invalidated China's sweeping claims over nearly the entire South China Sea.

Tension rose recently after hundreds of Chinese maritime militia vessels swarmed around Pag-asa and Chinese fishermen harvested endangered giant clams at Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal.

But while China continues to ignore the arbitral ruling, President Duterte and China's President Xi Jinping maintained their warm relations.

## Four levels

“They have their position (on the maritime claims), we have our position, but despite that, we manage the differing positions and we continue to have trade relations, economic relations, cultural, tourism and what have you—just like two sovereign nations would do,” Esperon said. “We don't even have to talk about positions. We just have to talk about the resources that we have there.”

He said there were four levels of marine protected areas ranging from the “no-touch” to the managed resources.

A scuba diver who plants

corals himself, Esperon is leaning toward controlled resource management rather than an absolute prohibition. Managing an MPA means that while harvesting is allowed, there will be an off-season at certain times of the year.

## Scientific validation

Dr. Theresa Mundita Lim, executive director of the Asean Centre for Biodiversity, said an area that would be declared protected must first undergo scientific validation.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources will create a protected area management plan and a board that would be responsible for this plan, she said.

The plan would then be submitted to the President for approval, and then forwarded to Congress for the proclamation.

Several marine ecosystems had already been declared protected under the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Act. These include the Tubbataha Reef National Park and Apo Reef Natural Park, which were declared “no-take” zones. There are over 370 MPAs across the country.

The plan to declare Pag-asa a protected area may trigger discussion between different claimants about protecting the rich hub of biodiversity in the disputed waters, said Oceana Philippines vice president Gloria Estenzo Ramos.

“This is most welcome for environmental advocates,” Ramos said. “This is not a guarantee but let us hope that all parties concerned will understand the protection needed in this area.” —WITH A REPORT FROM JHES-

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₱8  
PAGE

UPPER  
 LOWER

PAGE 1  
STORY

BANNER  
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

28 APR 2019

DATE

A 'MASSIVE' CALL TO ACTION

## CCP's art installation serves as visual reminder on Earth Day

**T**HE Cultural Center of the Philippines brings back its massive Earth Day outdoor installation to spark talks anew on what can be done regarding plastic pollution.

Dubbed "The Cry of the Dead Whale," the installation was unveiled at the CCP Front Lawn and will be a visual reminder until May 26.

For the reworking of the Dead Whale, a new element was added — a dead baby whale inside the belly of its mother. A representation of the millennials, the generation that will inherit the future of oceans, it is both a statement and a question directed at the target audience.

It aims to jumpstart discussions on whether generations to come would still get to enjoy or experience the wonders of the ocean.

Specifically, it wants people to ask questions such as, "Will our marine ani-

mals, particularly our whale, go extinct soon?" or "Will our grandsons and granddaughters ever get to know living sea creatures?" or "What can I do?" or "Am I ready to give up plastic?" or "Where can I start?"

It can be remembered that a supposed 'dead whale' was seen on the shores of Naic, Cavite on May 11, 2017, which was in fact an art installation. What looked like a dead whale from afar was really made of plastic waste up close.

The Philippines ranks third in the

What looks like a dead whale from afar is actually an art installation made of plastic waste up close.

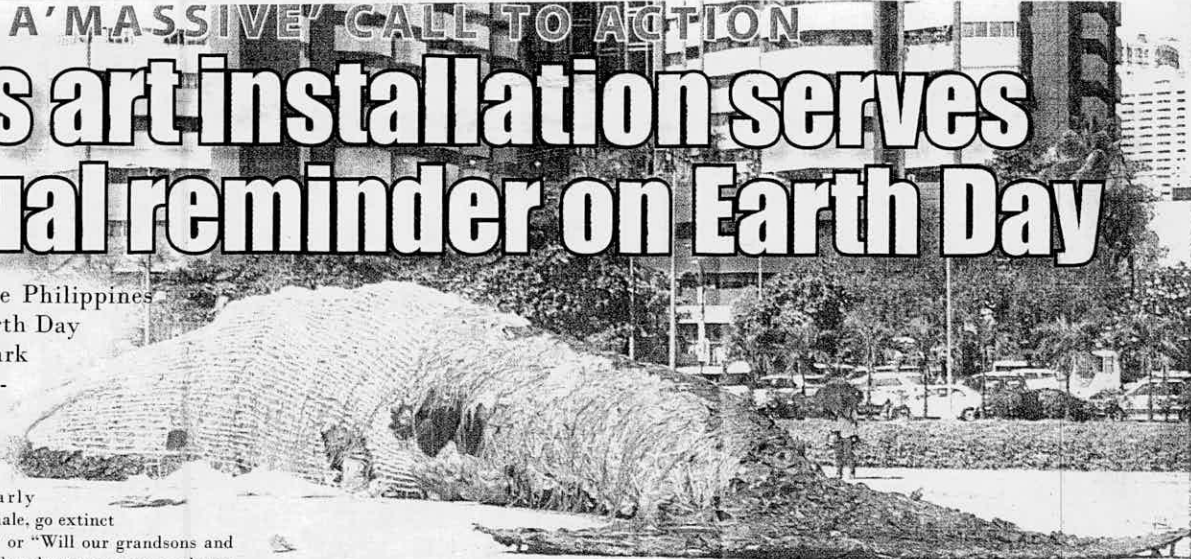
list of countries with the most plastic wastes going into the oceans. To address the issue, and with a very limited budget, the strategy taken was a disruptive, monumental execution that effectively spread the message on the worsening case of plastic pollution. The sculpture was unveiled on the shores of one of the most polluted water bodies in

the country — the Manila Bay.

The original Dead Whale installation in Cavite, a collaboration between a non-governmental environmental organization and Dentsu Jayme Syfu led by Creative Director Biboy Royong, was displayed for only three days and was dismantled immediately to prevent

the plastic waste used from going into the ocean.

Hence, mounting the Dead Whale for a longer period of time will give more people a chance to experience what it might feel like to encounter, or be confronted by a decomposing whale victimized by the increasing presence of plastic in the oceans.





## 'CONSERVE WATER, SAVE ANGAT DAM'

THE National Water Resources Board on Saturday urged the 12 million water consumers of Angat Dam to conserve at least four liters or one gallon of water a day as the dam's water supply was expected to hit below operating level this weekend.

"We start with one gallon," NWRB executive director Sevillo David said in an interview on Super Radyo dzBB, heard nationwide.

The NWRB is the leading government agency for the water sector in the Philippines, regarding water resources and potable water; it is conferred with policy-making, regulatory and quasi-judicial functions within the government.

David said that if all the Angat Dam water consumers—by his count 12 million people—conserved four liters a day, the savings would be equivalent to 48 million liters daily.

The NWRB reported on Friday that Angat's water level was at the 180.73-meter mark.

Given the rate of decline in the last two months, it would hit below 180 meters this weekend, and by end-May it is projected to hit the 170-meter level.

Angat Dam supplies 96 percent of Metro Manila's tap water needs.

Apart from conservation, David said the government should also adjust allocation, activate deep wells, and conduct cloud seeding operations as contingency measures to keep the water supply in check amid the effects of the weak El Niño which may last until the end of the year.

**Turn to A2**

Meranwhile, Angat Dam will retain its irrigation water allocation of 10 cubic meters per second (cms) in May, even if its dipping water level breaches the minimum operating level (MOL) of 180 meters before that month.

This is to ensure the availability of irrigation water for rice farms in Angat's service areas in Bulacan and Pampanga provinces that have not yet harvested their crops, NWRB engineer Bea Soriano said Friday.

"Those plants still need water before harvest time," Soriano said.

Despite the irrigation allocation, Angat Dam's water quota for Metro Manila in May will still be 48 cms, the same as in April, she said.

Soriano made the assurance as hydrologists of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration expect Angat Dam's water level to dip below the MOL this weekend.

Angat's 6 a.m. water level on Friday already dipped to 180.73 meters, 6.2 meters lower than the desired 186.93 meters for the day, PAGASA hydrologist Jason Bausa said, noting that the dam's water level has been dipping this week by an average 0.50 meters. **With PNA**



## DILG Takbo Para sa Kalikasan today

**By JUN I. LEGASPI**  
**AS the government's plight for a cleaner and safer Manila Bay continues, around 20,000 runners will join a fun run led by the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) today to rally strengthened calls for actions over the bay's rehabilitation.**

DILG Secretary Eduardo M. Año says the fun run, dubbed "DILG Takbo Para sa Kalikasan", aims to advocate for rehabilitation of coastal areas and preservation of Philippine Clean Water and other natural resources.

"Through this activity, we hope that we will be able to gain the support and cooperation of all stakeholders for 'The Modern Battle of Manila Bay'. Inumpisahan natin ang kampanyang ito kaya ipagpatuloy na natin hanggang

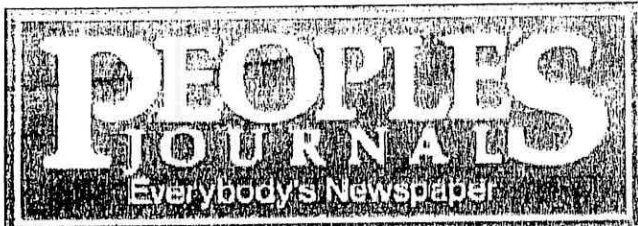
sa tuloy-tuloy nang maging malinis at maganda ang Manila Bay," says Año.

The fun run, which covers a 3-kilometer route along Roxas Boulevard, will commence at 4 a.m. at the Burnham Green, Rizal Park in Manila.

With the big number of

participants expected to attend, Año hopes the fun run will increase awareness among the public to elicit positive changes for the environment in their respective communities, highlighting consistency as a key in meeting the DILG's goals for the drive.

"Inumpisahan natin ang 'laban' sa Manila Bay pero hindi dito nagtatapos ang ating laban para sa kalikasan. Umpisahan natin ang kampanya para pangalagaan ang kapaligiran sa ating sari-sariling komunidad," he says.



28 APR 2019

DATE

## DILG leads 'Takbo' for saving earth today

AS the government's drive for a cleaner and safer Manila Bay continues, around 20,000 runners will join a fun run led by the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) today to rally support for the bay's rehabilitation.

DILG Secretary Eduardo M. Año said the fun run dubbed "DILG Takbo Para sa Kalikasan," advocates for rehabilitation of coastal areas and preservation of Philippine Clean Water and other natural resources.

"Through this activity, we hope that we will be able to gain the support and cooperation of all stakeholders for 'The Modern Battle of Manila Bay'. Inumpisahan natin ang kampanyang ito kaya ipagpatuloy na natin hanggang sa tuluy-tuloy nang maging malinis at maganda ang Manila Bay," says Año.

The fun run, which covers a 3-kilometer route along Roxas Boulevard, will commence at 4 a.m. at the Burnham Green, Rizal Park in Manila.

With the big number of participants expected to attend, Año hopes the fun run will increase awareness among the public to elicit positive changes for the environment in their respective communities, highlighting consistency as a key in meeting the DILG's goals for the drive.

"Inumpisahan natin ang 'laban' sa Manila Bay pero hindi dito nagtatapos ang ating laban para sa kalikasan. Umpisahan natin ang kampanya para pangalagaan ang kapaligiran sa ating sari-sariling komunidad," Año said.

Año, Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority chairman Danny Lim, Atty. Joel Lina, and the presidents of the fun run partners Coca-Cola Philippines and Holcim Philippines are expected to grace the event. **Jun I. Legaspi**





# Ex-loggers make amends to nature

1/2

Local, foreign tourists flock to an upland farm

in Palawan run by former enemies of the environment

**By Frinston Lim**  
@flimINQ

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Former enemies of the environment are now working to preserve nature in a 10-hectare upland farm, a 20-minute drive away from this bustling tourist hub.

Yamang Bukid Farm in Barangay Bacungan is drawing local and foreign tourists due to its barrio-inspired landscape where various herbal and ornamental plants are grown and farm animals are raised.

It is tucked away between hills once made barren by “kaingin” (slash and burn) and tree cutting.

A virtual paradise for nature lovers of all ages and stripes, Yamang Bukid Farm is an emerging farm tourism destination in the Philippines’ frontier province of Palawan, seeking to restore the balance between the environment and the communities around it.

Well-contoured hillsides are turned verdant by neat rows of or-

ganically grown vegetables. “We even have all the crops mentioned in ‘Bahay Kubo’ plus ampalaya (bitter gourd),” farm manager Hezir Rabaya told the Inquirer.

The farm boasts of rich and diverse species of herbs, shrubs and trees with Instagrammable views of sunflower and globe amaranth (*Gomphrena globosa*) gardens. It also has more than 1,000 insulin plants (*Chamaecostus cuspidatus*), ashitaba, stevia and other medicinal and edible herbs.

With University of the Philippines-educated agricultural experts as consultants, the once barren hillsides in Bacungan’s Kandis III were transformed into a vibrant and idyllic farming haven.

Even as the farm is located some 15 kilometers from the city center via a well-paved winding road, the farm has been gaining attention from tourists, drawing hundreds of local and foreign visitors, especially during weekends.

Yamang Bukid Farm started as



Farmers harvest vegetables at Yamang Bukid Farm.

a small, private place for turmeric production barely two years ago.

“We did not intend it to become a tourist destination. Because we had so much time, we bought a small parcel of land to be planted with the herbs and vegetables,” according to farm owner

Rene Maduro. “Then we added the flowers and people started coming until it evolved into this.”

When the farm started in August 2017, local residents who were then subsisting on the destructive kaingin farming and earning cash by cutting trees for charcoal and



lumber, were hired as workers.

"Some were even sued or jailed for illegal logging," said village councilor Daniel Anjan, a Yakan who left his hometown in Mindanao's Basilan over two decades ago for a peaceful life in the western Philippine province. He married a local woman in Bacungan and became the only Muslim official in the predominantly Catholic village of some 3,000 residents.

"We prioritized the hiring of former illegal loggers so they can have new, decent jobs," added Anjan, the farm's general manager.

Maduro, whose Baguio City-based turmeric tea products are gaining popularity in the healthy products industry, said Yamang Bukid farm is their effort to "save Mother Earth by stopping illegal logging" in Bacungan and in Puerto Princesa.

Of the farm's 180 employees, Maduro said some 95 percent were former tree cutters.

Among them is Retchel Tesado, a 33-year old mother of four who had been a "mag-uuling" (charcoal maker) and logger for 16 years, or nearly half her life.

Together with her husband Sonny, 37, Retchel would earn about P8,000 in three weeks or less.

"We did not really mind then if our livelihood killed even young trees. My family needed to live, too," Tesado, who helps in the flower gardens and at the workers' mess hall, said during a break during the workers' practice of a zumba performance for an upcoming farm event. Now, the couple gets at least P16,000 per month as farm hands.

Edelrico Tabal, a UP-educated doctor of agronomy, said scientifically sound farming practices were applied in turning the farm from a mere shrub-covered upland area into a thriving ecosystem of rich biodiversity.

**B4**

2/2

## EX-LOGGERS MAKE AMENDS TO NATURE

**FROM B1**

"When we started developing the farm, we found numerous species of butterflies and bees not endemic in the area. Because the plants are pesticide-free, there's an ecosystem balance and many organisms thrived," Tabal, one of the farm's consultants, said.

For the agronomist, the organic way of farming also helped local farmers under-

stand and adopt the practice.

Accredited by the Department of Tourism as a farm tourism destination in Palawan, Yamang Bukid Farm gives visitors a chance to unwind, breathe the flower-perfumed air and experience how to live in an unspoiled rural setting.

For gastronomical pleasure, the farm has a restaurant where one can order dishes out of native chicken.

Its House of Kakanin churns out local delicacies such as the "suman sa bulo," or "sumbulo," glutinous rice cake cooked inside a bamboo, a popular "pasalubong."

Greeting guests is the farm's "I love Yamang Bukid" marker on the side of the road opposite the line of stalls selling the company's herbal products, trinkets and yes, "malunggay" ice cream.

Adding to the farm's draw is

its novel way of not collecting entrance fees.

"We want to give everyone, regardless of economic status, the chance to visit and tour the farm," said Maduro, the owner, adding the farm's high-valued herbal plants and other income streams are at least more than enough to cover its overhead. "This is also in line with our principle of doing business with a heart," he added. INQ



28 APR 2019

DATE

## Dep't of Disaster Resilience, ipinaaapura

Sa gitna ng nararanasang El Niño at sa serye ng lindol sa bansa ngayon, nakiusap si Albay Rep. Joey Salceda sa Senado na agarang ipasa ang bersiyon nito ng kanyang Department of Disaster Resilience (DDR) bill, dahil kailangang-kailangan nang maging ganap na batas ang nasabing panukala.

Nakiusap ang kongresista sa Mataas na Kapulungan na ipasa ang House Bill 6075 (DDR bill) pagkatapos ng eleksiyon sa Mayo 13, o bago matapos ang kasalukuyang sesyon ng Kongreso.

Si Salceda ang pangunahing

may-akda ng DDR bill sa Kamara, na matatandaang paulit-ulit nang hiniling ni Pangulong Duterte na maitatag ang nasabing kagawaran na tututok sa pagtugon sa iba't ibang kalamidad.

Taong 2018 pa naipasa sa Kamara ang panukala, pero nakabimbin pa ang bersiyon nito sa Senado dahil walang chairperson ang Senate Committee on Climate Change, na binitawan ni Sen. Loren Legarda kaugnay ng kandidatura ng huli para sa isang lokal na posisyon.

Dahil dito, hiniling ng kongresista kay Senate President

Tito Sotto na magtalaga na ng bagong mamumuno sa nasabing komite.

Core component ang Office of Civil Defense, isasailim sa DDR ang National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), Climate Change Commission, Geo-Hazard Assessment and Engineering Geology Section ng Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), Health Emergency Management Bureau ng DoH, Disaster Response Assistance and Management Bureau ng DSWD, at Bureau of Fire Protection ng DILG, habang attached agencies naman ang PAGASA at Phivolcs.



The Philippines would have the highest number of people suffering hunger in the Southeast Asia and Pacific Region in the years leading to 2030, data from a global food policy think tank showed.

# HUNGER

## IN A CLIMATE-CHALLENGED LAND

IN this October 2, 2010, file photo, children jostle one another to get free porridge at the Bataan Shipping and Engineering Co. (Baseco) Compound in Tondo, Manila. AP/PAT ROQUE

BY JASPER EMMANUEL Y. ARCALAS

**C**LIMATE change will cause the number of Filipinos suffering from hunger to rise by 10 percent from 12.1 million to 13.4 million by 2030, according to the International Food Policy Research Institute (Ifpri).

In its 2019 Global Food Policy Report, Ifpri projected that the number of Filipinos who could experience hunger under climate change would eventually fall to 13.3 million by 2050.

But without climate change, Ifpri projected that the number of Filipinos suffering from hunger would still moderately increase to 12.2 million in 2030 before declining to 11 million in 2050.

Nonetheless, in both scenarios the Philippines would have the highest number of people suffering hunger in the Southeast Asia and Pacific Region, Ifpri data showed.

Under the Global Climate Index, the Philippines together with Vietnam, Myanmar and Thailand are the countries most affected by extreme weather events in the past two decades, according to the report.

These weather disturbances include prolonged drought and "unusual" heavy rainy season that caused millions in crop losses, with "vulnerable subsistence" farmers suffering the most, it added.

Despite climate change, Ifpri projected that the Philippines' aggregate food output would still expand in 2030 and 2050 at a rate better than some of its Southeast Asian peers.

With the climate-change scenario, the country's food output by 2030 would reach an index value of 1.31 and would further rise by 2050 to 1.65.

Without climate change, Philippine aggregate food output would increase to 1.33 by 2030 and to 1.68 by 2050.

Ifpri pegged the base index at 1.00 in 2010.

SEE "HUNGER," A2



P-2

# Hunger...

CONTINUED FROM A1

"In fact...the Philippines is projected to grow somewhat more slowly than the average for Southeast Asia and the Pacific; it is still a healthy rate of growth, and runs ahead of Thailand and Vietnam," Ifpri Research Fellow Timothy Thomas told the BUSINESSMIRROR in an e-mail interview.

The projections, Thomas explained, suggest that the Philippines would not be able to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2, which is meant to eradicate hunger by 2030.

Ifpri made the projections through its IMPACT model, which explores changes in prices, land and water use, greenhouse-gas emissions, and other socioeconomic and environmental indicators.

## Restrictive policies

THE report pointed out that food security policies adopted by the Philippines, Indonesia, China and Malaysia that have focused on self-sufficiency and price stabilization have resulted in higher domestic prices of the staple, making it unaffordable to poor people.

"For low-income households, the current high prices caused by restrictive trade policies have clear negative impacts on food security," the report added.

The report cited the case of the Philippines in 2018, when domestic rice prices soared to record levels, which saw poor Filipinos scrambling to buy the staple as government stocks were wiped out.

The report added that the impact of the country's rice trade lib-

eralization law on food security, agricultural transformation and hunger remains to be seen this year and in the short term.

Nonetheless, Thomas said some of the negative impacts of climate change on the Philippines "warrant attention of the government," such as hiking investments in the agriculture sector to help farmers, especially small-holders who are among the poorest in the country.

"Expanded irrigation will help in some cases. Developing heat-tolerant varieties is also important, especially for maize," he said.

"And special care needs to be taken for Luzon, which is likely to have greater negative effects of climate change than Visayas or Mindanao," he added.