

DATE : 08 MAY 2019

DAY : Wednesday

**DENR**

**IN THE NEWS**

**Strategic Communication and Initiative Service**



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## Phl metal production seen to rise this year

By **LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON**

The government expects the country's metal output to recover this year as mining firms try to produce more to make up for lost time.

Environment Undersecretary Analiza Teh said there is generally a positive outlook for the industry after the government lifted the suspension order on several mining companies.

"They have to make up for their losses especially during the time they did not operate," Teh told **The STAR**.

"We partially granted

their motions for reconsideration and now these mining companies are showing that they are instituting remedial measures so they can start operating again," she added.

In terms of value, metals production increased by 10 percent to P122 billion last year.

However, in terms of quantity, major metal commodities posted declines.

Direct shipping of nickel ore and mixed nickel-cobalt sulfides fell four percent to 25.9 million dry metric tons (DMT).



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# NEW THREAT IN WPS: GARBAGE

NEWS / A6



**FLOATING LAB** Scientists and researchers from the Marine Science Institute of the University of the Philippines set up their laboratory equipment for their April 22-May 5 expedition to the West Philippine Sea aboard the RV Kasarinlan, the first research vessel launched by the university in nearly 50 years.

—PHOTO COURTESY OF DEO FLORENCE ONDA OF UP MARINE SCIENCE INSTITUTE



# New threat spreading in West Philippine Sea: Garbage

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**By Jheset O. Enano**  
@JhesetEnanoINQ

When a team of young marine scientists sailed to the Kalayaan Island Group in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) to study its biodiversity, they came across an unwanted ocean traveler: man-made garbage.

As pods of dolphins racing against a stunning sunset welcomed the expedition led by the University of the Philippines' Marine Science Institute (UP MSI) last month, the sight of plastic waste and other floating garbage stole the beauty of the pristine waters.

The 74-member "Protect WPS" expedition, or Predicting Responses between Ocean Transport and Ecological Connectivity of Threatened ecosystems in WPS, left Manila on April 22 and returned last Sunday, after nearly two weeks in the open waters.

The mission aimed to look at the "connectivity" of the ecosystems in the WPS, the local name for the waters within the country's 370-kilometer exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the South China Sea, and its impact on Luzon and Palawan province, particularly on fisheries.

## Trash on sandbar

While previous studies had shown how fish eggs and larvae could travel to other parts of the country, the discovery of plastic pollutants was evidence that the connection among the marine ecosystems was indeed strong—not only in terms of ocean life but also between human litter and the health of the seas.

"Those are things that you wouldn't expect to be there," said Deo Florence Onda, the team's chief scientist. "We have

such a rich biodiversity in the area, but you also have this problem, this threat that accumulates over time."

This problem was spotted not only floating in the open sea, but also washed ashore on several sandbars in nearby reefs.

The trash that had accumulated in the middle of a sandbar on Kota (Loaita) Island was like a growing mound of garbage.

A boat sailing from the nearest city, Puerto Princesa in Palawan, would take over a day to reach this islet. The distance and travel time gave the re-

searchers an idea of how much and how far man-made waste are covering parts of our EEZ.

"For a place [as far away] as that, we wouldn't expect anything like this," said Kevin Labrador, a graduate student who volunteered to join the expedition. "We were really taken aback."

## Labels from 3 countries

The researchers saw plastic bottles, cigarette packs, discarded fishing equipment, rubber slippers and even fluorescent lamps. Labels from the bottles showed that these had come from the Philippines, Vietnam and China.

The team collected at least five crates of trash from the area for further study.

Onda said the dried biofilms that clothed the garbage meant that these had been on the water for a long time. Aside from the danger of being eaten by marine mammals like whales and dolphins, the garbage could carry pathogenic invasive species that could affect the local biodiversity of where they might settle, he said.

"It really indicates that the problem is transboundary," he

said. "Even if it's already far away, our activities still impact these ecosystems."

During the two-week expedition, the chief scientist noted how human activity continued to affect the biodiversity in the disputed waters. The Philippines, China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei have overlapping maritime and territorial claims in the South China Sea, which includes the WPS.

## Signs of cyanide fishing

Wilfred John Santiañez, an assistant professor of UP MSI



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**OCEAN LITTER** During a recent marine science expedition, researchers from the University of the Philippines found plastic bottles, sachets, cigarette packs and fluorescent lamps, among other garbage, on sandbars in the Kalayaan Island Group, areas in the South China Sea claimed by Manila.

—PHOTOS COURTESY OF DEO FLORENCE ONDA AND KEVIN LABRADOR OF UP MARINE SCIENCE INSTITUTE



who was also with the team, said the reefs in the Kalayaan Island Group had also suffered from other threats.

Craters observed at certain reefs indicated cyanide fishing. Pounded corals were also seen. Bleached corals near Pag-asa (Thitu) Island, the largest of nine isles and shoals occupied by Filipinos in the Kalayaan group, may have been caused by the warming ocean waters, worsened by climate change.

The "recruits," or juvenile corals that the team saw would take time to fully mature, Onda said. The fastest-growing, he noted, would gain only 1 centimeter per year.

He said continuous human activity, such as the Chinese government's island-building, could have an impact on the fragile reefs and the ecosystem in the WPS.

"You cannot exclude these activities, but we still do not know at this point its direct influence and its extent," he said.

The team did not experience anything untoward during their voyage. They noted the presence of several fishing vessels from Vietnam and China and saw the structures built at Chinese-controlled Zamora (Subi) Reef.

As the government eyes the Kalayaan Island Group as the next marine protected area, and with the recent Supreme Court decision issuing a writ of kalikasan for some of its parts, Onda expects the results of their study would greatly contribute to effective management of that marine environment.

"It would be difficult to protect and craft policy and management plans if we don't know what is in there and what we are protecting and managing," he said. INQ



# Canada to shoulder cost of shipping back trash

By ALEXIS ROMERO

The Canadian government is committed to shouldering all the costs to ship out 69 containers of waste languishing in the Philippines for the past six years, foreign affairs and environment of-

officials reported during a Cabinet meeting on Monday.

The Philippines will also no longer accept garbage from any country, President Duterte said, two weeks after he demanded that the Canadian government take back the waste that arrived

in the country in 2013.

Duterte made the remark during a Cabinet meeting at Malacañang, according to presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo.

"The President is firm that we are not garbage collectors, thus

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he ordered that the Philippines will no longer accept any waste from any country," Panelo said in a statement issued yesterday.

A non-profit environment group welcomed the assurance made by the Canadian government to cover the expenses for the return of the garbage to where it came from.

"Being the state of export, Canada has the legal, moral and financial responsibility to take back the trash as well as ensure just reparation for the pollution caused by this illegal waste trafficking," Aileen Lucero, national coordinator of EcoWaste Coalition, said.

Panelo questioned how the containers of garbage entered the Philippines.

"He directed the Bureau of Customs (BOC) not to accept anymore," Panelo said, referring to Duterte.

Duterte has given Canada until May 15 to act on the garbage.

Late last month, Duterte directed the BOC to return to Canada the waste as he accused the Canadian government of turning the country into a dumpsite.

Duterte even threatened to declare war with Canada if the garbage is not shipped out sooner.

Panelo downplayed the President's threat, saying it was a mere "figure of speech."

More than 50 containers of garbage were reportedly imported by Valenzuela-based Chronic Plastics Inc. from Canada in 2013.

Canada has expressed willingness to take back the garbage and created a working group to address the matter.

## Delay

While the Philippines is ready to return the garbage by

May 15, Ottawa's bureaucratic red tape may still delay the shipment of the trash back to its country of origin, the BOC said.

In a report to Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III, Customs Commissioner Rey Leonardo Guerrero said it might take weeks for the Canadian government to process the return of the garbage.

"Despite the Philippines' readiness to re-export the waste, the Canadian government said it might take weeks for them to arrange the necessary documents from their end and that they might not meet the May 15 deadline," Guerrero told Dominguez.

He said the Canadian government needed to secure the necessary import permits and to bid the fumigation services for the containers, which it has agreed to pay.

Guerrero said the Philippine government has secured all the requirements in preparation for the return of the garbage to Canada.

From April 30 to May 6, the Philippine Interagency Committee (IAC) and representatives from the Canadian government conducted a series of meetings to facilitate the re-exportation of the waste back to its country of origin.

Both parties agreed that the Philippines would shoulder the costs of inspection to determine the seaworthiness of the containers.

Canada will shoulder the costs of fumigation and transfer services.

Guerrero said the shipping lines tasked to transport the waste – Zim Line, CMA-CGM and Maersk – have conducted a seaworthiness check on the containers.

The shipping firms reported that all 69 containers are seaworthy. One of the containers

needed to be secured with a flat rack container as it has been infested with termites.

## Clarify

Meanwhile, EcoWaste Coalition has asked the BOC to clarify how eight of the 103 containers of Canadian garbage were disposed of.

EcoWaste said they were informed that the contents of 26 of these vans were dumped at the Metro Clark landfill in Capas, Tarlac.

Data obtained by EcoWaste Coalition from the BOC showed that Chronic Inc. exported 103 container vans in several batches to two Philippine-based companies, Chronic Plastic and Live Green Enterprise, from 2013 to 2014.

The BOC said of the 103 containers, 34 were disposed of locally, including the 26 dumped in Tarlac in 2015.

The group wanted to know the whereabouts of the eight containers.

"We want to know what happened to the Canadian waste loaded in the eight containers. Authorities need to tell the public when, where and how the waste was disposed of, and who paid for their disposal. We, the people, have the right to know," Lucero said.

Of the 69 remaining containers, two are at the Manila International Container Terminal and 67 at the Subic Bay International Terminal Corp., according to the BOC.

The Basel Convention on the control of transboundary movements of hazardous wastes and their disposal, which lists Canada and the Philippines among the state parties, stipulates that parties should not oppose, hinder or prevent the return of the waste to the state of export. – With Mary Grace Padin, Rhodina Villanueva



## PRRD gives Canada until May 15 to retrieve its toxic garbage

By **GENALYN D. KABILING**  
and **CHINO S. LEYCO**

Canada is willing to pay for the shipping cost of decaying garbage back to its country as the Philippines moved to ban trash imports, Malacañang announced

Tuesday.

President Duterte has given Canada until May 15 to retrieve its garbage after deciding the country will no longer accept trash imports during a Cabinet meeting Monday at the Palace, Presidential Spokesman Salva- ▶4

## PRRD gives Canada...

◀1

Manila in 2013 and 2014. Thirty-four of the containers were already disposed. According to news reports, charges have been filed against the importer, broker and other individuals involved in bringing the shipment of trash to the Philippines.

A letter sent by Canada's Assistant Deputy Minister for Global Affairs Donald Bobiash and Associate Assistant Deputy Minister Helen Ryan to DENR Undersecretary Juan Miguel Cuna last April 24 confirmed the Canadian government's commitment to "cover the costs of, and make the necessary arrangements to bring the waste materials contained in the 69 containers that remain in the Ports of Subic and Manila back to Canada, and to manage their disposal in Canada."

On May 3, the two sides agreed that the DENR will shoulder the costs of inspection to determine the seaworthiness of the containers of wastes, while Canada will shoulder the costs of fumigation and the transfer/trucking services.

The environmental group EcoWaste Coalition welcomed the assurance of the Canadian government to pay for the shipping cost of the garbage. (With a report from Chito A. Chavez)

dor Panelo said.

"On the issue of garbage from Canada, the DFA (Department of Foreign Affairs) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources noted that the Canadian government is committed to shoulder all the expenses to ship out all the 69 waste containers," Panelo said.

"The President gave May 15 as the deadline. If they cannot get that, then we will be shipping them out and throw into the shores or beach of Canada," he said in a later Palace press briefing.

Panelo noted that Canada appeared willing to get back its garbage following the statement made by the President. "From what I gather, kukunin daw nila kasi may nag-report doon (they will get the trash because someone reported it)," he said.

And to prevent the country from becoming a trash dumpsite, Panelo announced that the President has directed the Bureau of Customs not to allow the entry of garbage imports into the country.

"The President is firm that we are not garbage collectors, thus he ordered that the Philippines will no

longer accept any waste from any country," he said.

### Preparing to ship out

Customs Commissioner Rey Leonardo Guerrero said all requirements and preparations on the part of the Philippine government have already been met to facilitate the re-export of 69 container vans containing wastes back to Canada by May 15.

However, despite the Philippine government's readiness to re-export the wastes, the Canadian government informed that it might take weeks for them to arrange the necessary documents from their end and that they might not meet the May 15 deadline," Guerrero said in his report to Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez.

Guerrero said the Canadian documents pertain to import permits and the bidding of fumigation services for the containers, which Canada has agreed to pay. The Canadian government said these documents could take "a couple of weeks" to process.

The 69 container vans were what remained of the 103 container vans of garbage from Canada that were dumped in the ports of Subic and



# Canada's red tape delaying trash reexport, says BOC chief

By Ben O. de Vera,  
Julie M. Aurelio  
and Dona Z. Pazzibugan  
@Team\_Inquirer

If not for the bureaucratic red tape in Canada, the Philippines could have shipped the remaining 69 containers of trash languishing in two of the country's ports by the middle of this month, the Department of Finance (DOF) said on Tuesday.

Citing the recent report of Customs Commissioner Rey Leonardo Guerrero to Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III, the DOF said "all requirements and preparations on the part of the Philippine government have already been met to facilitate the reexport of the wastes back to Canada."

The Bureau of Customs (BOC) is an attached agency of the DOF.

Facing a May 15 DOF-imposed deadline to return the garbage, Guerrero met with the country's interagency committee and Canada's representatives to inspect the freight containers at the Manila International Container Port and the Port of Subic.

"[The three shipping lines] reported that all 69 containers are considered seaworthy, with one [needing] to be secured

with a flat rack container ... because it has already been infested by termites," the BOC chief said after their inspection on May 3 to 6.

But the Canadian government said it might take weeks for them to arrange the necessary documents, Guerrero said, adding that Canada was willing to shoulder the costs of shipping the containers of garbage back to its shores. INQ





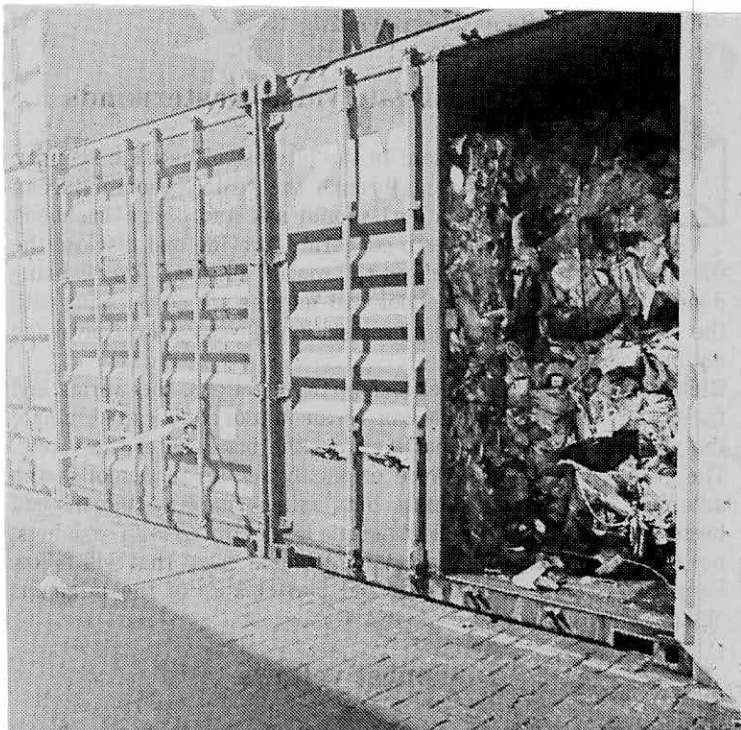
## Garbage return on Canada's bill

By **Mario J. Mallari**  
and **Kristina Maralit**

Canada will shoulder the expenses to ship back 69 container vans of garbage shipped to the Philippines as recyclable plastic materials from Ottawa.

Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. confirmed this

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SEVERAL of Canada's trash in storage.

## Garbage return on Canada's bill

All the expenses to ship out all the 69 waste containers will be shouldered by Canada

**From page 1**

yesterday as he echoed the pronouncements by presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo reiterating the Canadian government's commitment to get back its trash.

"All the expenses to ship out all the 69 waste containers," said Locsin, confirming Panelo's statement that Canada has committed to the DFA and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Locsin also said the Philippine government is now negotiating with the International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI) to minimize, if not write off totally, the storage fees that will be charged to the

government.

"We have asked ICTSI to waive or at least give a huge discount for the cost of storage," said Locsin.

"We will shoulder at a huge discount from ICTSI the container storage costs," he also stated.

Locsin cited the prompt response by the Canadian embassy on the matter.

"Thanks to the Canadian ambassador's prompt response to the President's demarche if you want to call it that," said Locsin.

Late last month, President Rodrigo Duterte threatened to declare war against Canada if it fails to get back container vans of garbage shipped into the Philippines.

From 2013 to 2014, a total of

103 container vans from Canada reportedly arrived in batches at the Port of Manila.

The garbage was initially declared to contain only plastic scraps. However, it was found to have non-recyclable plastics, household wastes and used adult diapers.

### **The President is firm that we are not garbage collectors.**

During his visit to the Philippines to attend the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Summit in 2017, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau vowed to cooperate with the Philippine government in resolving the issue.

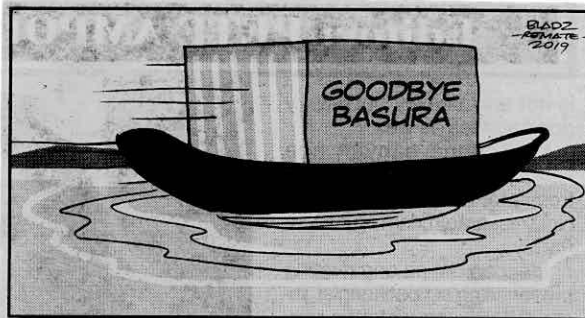
Meanwhile, Panelo said President Duterte made a firm stand that the country will no longer allow to be a dumping ground of other countries' garbage.

"The President is firm that we are not garbage collectors, thus he ordered that the Philippines will no longer accept any waste from any country," stated the official.

Mr. Duterte on 22 April gave an ultimatum to the Canadian government to take back trash shipped from Ottawa almost five years ago or else risk starting a "war."

The Canadian Embassy in Manila said its government "is strongly committed to collaborating with the government of the Philippines in resolving this issue and is aware of the court decision ordering the importer to ship the material back to Canada" and that a joint technical working group is examining the matter "with a view to a timely resolution."

The deadline set for the reshipment of the containers is on 15 May.



## EDITORIAL

### **NATAUHAN DIN ANG CANADA SA BASURA**

NATAUHAN din ang bansang Canada at kukunin na nito ang mga basurang itinambak sa Pilipinas noon pang 2013-2014.

Nasa 103 container vans ang magkaka-hiwalay na ipinarating sa pier ng Maynila at naglalaman ng mga plastik na bumuo ng 30 porsyento lamang at 70% ang ibang mga basura gaya ng mga gamit nang diaper, papel, electronic parts, pangkusina at iba pa.

May mga kasamang nabubulok na umalingasaw kaya inalis ang mga ito at inilagak sa Tarlac landfill habang ang iba ay dinala sa Subic Bay Freeport.

Ayon sa mga awtoridad ng Canada, ang pamahalaan nila ang papasan ng lahat ng gastusin sa pagpapabalik ng mga basura ngunit tila hindi buo ang pasya dahil nasa 69 lang ang gagastusan nila.

Isang tanong: Paano ang 32 container van na kasama ng mga basura?

Matatandaang umayaw ang Canada sa pagpapabalik ng mga basura dahil hindi umano transaksyon ng pamahalaan nila iyon at sa kalaunan, inirason ang kawalan nila ng batas sa pagpapabalik ng basurang itinapon nila sa ibang bansa at hindi paglalaan ng pondo para sa pagpapabalik.

Uminit ang problema sa naturang basura makaraang sabihin ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na sapilitang ibabalik nito ang basura sa Canada, gusto man ng mga ito o hindi at sa lalong madaling panahon.

Inaasahan namang maaalis na ang basura bago magtapos ang buwang ito.



## Canada, sagot ang shipment ng basura pabalik

Nina GENALYN D. KABILING at CHITO A. CHAVEZ

Handa ang Canada na sagutin ang bayarin sa shipment ng tone-toneladang nabubulok na basura pabalik sa kanilang bansa habang kumilos ang Pilipinas para ipagbawal ang trash imports, ipinahayag ng Malacañang kahapon.

Binigyan ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang Canada ng hanggang Mayo 15 para kunin ang basura nito matapos magdesisyon na hindi na tatanggap ang bansa ng trash imports, sa Cabinet meeting sa Palasyo nitong Lunes, ayon kay Spokesman Salvador Panelo.

"On the issue of garbage from Canada, the DFA (Department of Foreign Affairs) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources noted that the Canadian government is committed to shoulder all the expenses to ship out all the 69 waste containers,"

ani Panelo.

"The President gave May 15 as the deadline. If they cannot get that, then we will be shipping them out and throw into the shores or beach of Canada," aniya sa press briefing sa Palasyo kalaunan.

Sinabi ni Panelo na tila handa naman ang Canada na kunin pabalik ang basura nito kasunod ng mga pahayag ng Pangulo. "From what I gather, kukunin daw nila kasi may nag-report doon," aniya.

### TRASH IMPORT BAN

At para maiwasan na maging tapunan ng basura ang bansa, ipinahayag ni Panelo na inatasan ng Pangulo ang Bureau of Customs na huwag nang pahintulutan ang pagpasok ng garbage imports sa bansa.

"The President is firm that we are not

garbage collectors, thus he ordered that the Philippines will no longer accept any waste from any country," aniya.

Ikinalugod naman ng environmental group EcoWaste Coalition ang pagtitiyak ng gobyerno ng Canada na babayaran nito ang re-export ng basurang matagal nang nabubulok sa Pilipinas simula noong 2013 pabalik sa kanilang bansa.

"We welcome Canada's assurance that it will bear all the necessary expenses toward the removal of their garbage out of the Philippines," sinabi ni Aileen Lucero, National Coordinator, EcoWaste Coalition.

Sinabi ni Lucero na inaabangan nila ang "joyful day when the unlawful waste imports are finally sent back for environmentally-sound disposal in Canada."



## Canada sasagutin ang gastos sa basura

Sasagutin ng Canadian government ang gastosin sa pagpapabalik ng mga basurang itinambak sa Pilipinas.

Ayon kay Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo, ito ang iniulat ng DFA at DENR sa ginanap na cabinet meeting kamakalawa.

Iniutos din ni Pangulong Duterte na hindi na dapat papasukin sa bansa ang anumang garbage shipments mula sa ibang bansa.

Magugunita na nagbanta si Pangulong Duterte na kapag hindi kaagad kinuha ng Canada ang kanilang itinambak na basura ay itatapon niya ito sa mga beaches ng Canada.

Nasa 103 containers ng basura mula Canada ang dumating sa Pilipinas noong 2013 hanggang 2014 kung saan ay nasa 26 containers nito ang ibinaon sa Tarlac landfill. (*Rudy Andal*)



## Total ban sa imported basura

MATAPOS mairita sa tone-toneladang basura na tinapon ng Canada sa Pilipinas, ipinag-utos ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang ban sa shipment ng basura mula sa ibang bansa.

Ayon kay Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo, ibinigay ng Pangulo ang order sa miting ng kanyang Gabinete sa Malacañang nitong Lunes ng gabi, Mayo 7.

Nanindigan ang Pangulo na ang Pilipinas ay hindi bagsakan ng basura.

"The President is firm that we are not garbage collectors, thus he ordered that the Philippines will no longer accept any waste from any country," saad ni Panelo.

Samantala, mayroon na lamang hanggang May 15 ang gobyerno ng Canada para hakutin pabalik sa kanilang bansa ang mga itinapong basura sa Pilipinas.

Ayon kay Panelo, nag-commit na ang gobyerno ng Canada na babalikatin ang lahat ng gastusin sa pagpapaalis sa lahat ng 69 na containers na naglalaman ng basura.

"The DFA and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) noted that the Canadian government is committed to shoulder all the expenses to ship out all the 69 waste containers," ani Panelo.

Mahigit 100 containers ng basura ang dumating sa bansa mula sa Canada simula noong 2013 at 2014. (Aileen Taliping)



Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS  
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# MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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EDITORIAL

CARTOON

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## Erap's team eyes dev't of Manila Zoo

By **RIA FERNANDEZ**

The team Legacy led by reelectionist Manila Mayor Joseph "Erap" Estrada is eyeing the conversion of the Manila Zoo into a grand botanical garden and a world's first vertical animal park.

Under its proposed urban renewal vision dubbed as "Sulong Maynila" city plan, four hectares of the zoo will house beautiful plants and flowers.

Meanwhile, the first vertical zoo in the world will rise on the remaining one hectare.

In this way, the animals will be better taken care of, the city plan said.

Moreover, the zoo's new design will facilitate proper management of waste and water system.

The Manila Zoo has been ordered closed by Estrada since late January this year to give way to the assessment and study after Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu called out its management for being a major pollutant of Manila Bay due to lack of Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP).



**SAY MO  
ATTORNEY?**



**By ATTY. PERSIDA  
RUEDA-ACOSTA**  
KGG. na Chief Acosta,

May batas nga bang nilalabag ang isang bahay kapag dumidiretso ang kanilang sewerage system patungo sa ilog? Lubos na gumagaling, Charlotte

Dear Charlotte,

Para sa inyong kaalaman, ang batas na sumasaklaw sa inyong sitwasyon ay ang Talata (a), Sekyon 27, Chapter 5 ng The Philippine Water Act of 2004, kung saan nakasaad ang mga sumusunod:

“SECTION 27. Prohibited Acts – The fol-

**Sewerage system ng bahay na dumidiretso patungo sa ilog**

lowing acts are hereby prohibited:

(a) Discharging, depositing or causing to be deposited material of any kind directly or indirectly into the water bodies or along the margins of any surface water, where, the same shall be liable to be washed into such surface water, either by tide action or by storm, floods or otherwise, which could cause water pollution or impede natural flow in the water body.” [Binigyan-diin]

Malinaw sa nabanggit na ipinagbabawal ang sinuman na direktang mag-discharge o magtapon ng kanilang waste material patungo sa ilog. Kaugnay nito, ang sinumang gumawa nito ay maaaring pagmultahin ng hukuman at utusang iwasto ang kanilang sewerage system.

Nawa ay nasagot namin ang iyong mga

katanungan. Nais namin ipaalala sa inyo na ang opinyon na ito ay nakabase sa inyong mga naisalaysay sa inyong liham at sa pagkalkaintindi namin dito. Maaaring maiba ang opinyon kung mayroong karagdagang impormasyon na ibibigay. Mas mainam kung personal kayong sasangguni sa isang abogado.

Maraming salamat sa inyong patuloy na pagtitiwala.

Ang inyong Lingkod Bayan,

**DR. PERSIDA V.  
RUEDA-ACOSTA,  
DSD**

**Punong Mananang-  
gol Pambayan  
Paunawa:**

Isangguni ang iba pa ninyong usaping legal sa aming opisina sa *address* na nakasaad sa pitak na ito o kaya ipadala ang inyong katanungan sa aming e-mail *address*: [pao\\_executive@yahoo.com](mailto:pao_executive@yahoo.com) o tumawag sa PAO hot-

line: (02) 426-2801; 426-2450; 426-2987; o 929-9436 local 106 o 107 *during office hours* at local 159 *after office hours*.

Ang mga serbisyong legal ng PAO gaya ng *legal advice, court representation*, pagsasagawa ng dokumento, notaryo at iba pa ay libre at walang bayad mula sa kliyente ng PAO sang-ayon sa R.A. 9406 (PAO Law). Sang-ayon din sa nasabing batas, ang katunggali o kalaban sa kaso na matatalo ang magbabayad ng *attorney's fee* sa PAO para ideposito sa *National Treasury*. Maaaring isumbong kay Chief Acosta ang sinumang *public attorney* o empleyado ng PAO na manghilingi o tatanggap ng salapi mula sa kliyente ng PAO sa *address* na ito: 5th Floor, DOJ Agencies Building, NIA Road corner East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City, 1104



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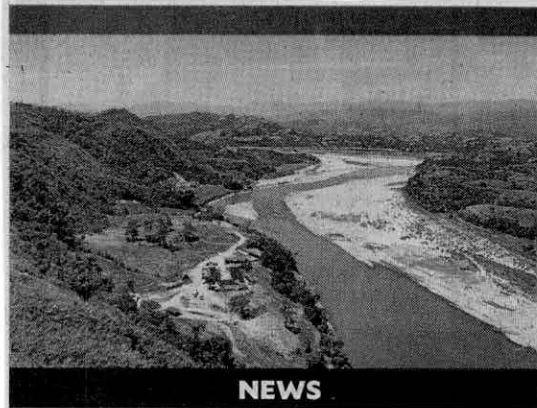


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## IP body tells NIA: Stop Chico project

The National Commission on Indigenous Peoples has called on the National Irrigation Administration and its Chinese contractor to suspend work on the Chico River Pump Irrigation Project. The NCIP says the NIA has not been issued a certificate that shows the clans in Kalinga province whose lands have been purchased for the project have given it their free, prior and informed consent. —STORY BY KARLSTON LAPNITEN

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# NIA asked to halt Chico project; IP body cites lack of tribes' consent

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By **Karlston Lapniten**  
@InqNational

BAGUIO CITY—Work on the Chinese-financed Chico River Pump Irrigation Project should be suspended because the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) and its Chinese contractor have not been issued a certification that they obtained the consent of affected tribes in Kalinga province, a committee of the Cordillera Regional Development Council (RDC) said on Tuesday.

"In order not to aggravate the situation, work needs to be stopped," said Sumanghal Sagga, legal affairs director of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP).

Workers of China CAMC Engineering Co. have begun constructing 143 kilometers of diversion tunnels and lateral canals that would channel water from the Chico River to 7,500 hectares of rice farms in the towns of Tuao and Piat in Cagayan province and 1,170 ha of farms in Pinukpuk town, Kalinga.

But the NIA proceeded with the project even without a certificate precondition (CP), said Roland Calde, Cordillera director of the NCIP, at a meeting in the Cordillera office of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda).

### Informed consent

The CP would indicate that the government project re-

ceived the free, prior and informed consent of clans in Kalinga whose lands have been purchased for the project.

Calde heads the RDC committee on indigenous concerns, which reviewed the P4.373-billion Chico irrigation project that was developed and is being overseen by the NIA regional office in Cagayan Valley.

The tunnels are being put together along riverside communities in Pinukpuk and Tuao.

In a letter on May 3, the NCIP directed the NIA to suspend the project following reports of earth-moving there, Calde said. NIA representatives, who attended the Neda regional meeting, denied receiving the letter.

Earlier, on March 19, the Cordillera RDC passed a resolution addressed to the NIA and urging the agency to suspend the project.

### Deal with families

During the meeting, the NIA said construction of the pump system began in September 2018, or two months after the agency drew up a memorandum of agreement with Kalinga families on compensation and the use of their lands.

It admitted that it did not have the CP when it started the work, reasoning that the project was the "clamor of the people" there.

Calde said it could not process the document immediately because the NIA had submitted



**CHANNELING WATER** The site of the Chico River Pump Irrigation Project in Kalinga province. Proponents say more than 7,500 hectares of rice farms in Cagayan province and 1,170 ha in Kalinga stand to benefit from the Chinese-funded irrigation system. —PHOTO COURTESY OF CORDILLERA PEOPLES ALLIANCE

details about its compensation agreement with the Kalinga families only on April 22.

But NCIP Commissioner Gaspar Cayat said the NIA should comply with the process since any violation would backfire on the government.

"We need to fix the mess now in order to directly address the issues raised by our constituents," Cayat said.

### Not good excuse

The NIA claims that it had not received any of the letters from the Cordillera RDC "was not a good excuse," he added.

The NCIP is scheduled to deliberate on the Chico project's CP from May 22 to 25.

The committee also tackled resolutions passed by the RDC and the Kalinga local government, which sought to widen the Chico project's coverage by adding farms in Kalinga's Rizal town.

Federico Ordinario, a technical staff member of NIA Cagayan Valley, shot down the proposal, saying his agency would need more machines to pump water to the elevated farms of Kalinga.

### Protest rally

The 175-km-long Chico River has its headwaters in Mountain Province, also in the Cordillera region. It empties into Cagayan.

Outside Neda's Cordillera



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**IN THE KNOW: NCIP's certification precondition**

Under Republic Act No. 8371, or the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997, no concession, license, lease or agreement shall be issued by any government agency without a certification precondition (CP) from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP).

The NCIP is mandated to protect and promote the interest and well-being of indigenous cultural communities/indigenous peoples (ICCs/IPs) "with due regard to their beliefs, customs, traditions and institutions."

Among NCIP's powers is "to issue appropriate certification as a precondition to the grant of permit, lease, grant, or any other similar authority for the disposition, utilization, management and appropriation by any private individual, corporate entity or any government agency, corporation or subdivision thereof on any part or portion of the ancestral domain taking into consideration the consensus approval of the ICCs/IPs concerned."

The certification precondition states that free, prior and in-

formed consent (FPIC) has been obtained from the concerned IPs.

When the consent of the community is obtained, the terms and conditions agreed upon shall be stated in a memorandum of agreement to be executed between and among the ICC/IPs (represented by elders/leaders or their alternates who have been identified during the validation and authorized by the community to sign), the applicant/proponent, the NCIP, and any other party that may be necessarily involved.

The signing of the MOA shall be done within the affected ancestral domain by those duly authorized, during a general assembly called for the purpose, after its contents is fully read aloud and explained by the FPIC team, and understood and affirmed by the community. —INQUIRER RESEARCH

Sources: Official Gazette, NCIP Administrative Order No. 3 series of 2012, revised guidelines on free and prior informed consent and other related processes

office, around 20 members of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance staged a rally to protest the Chico project.

All farmers need irrigation, but it should not be financed by an allegedly onerous loan from China Eximbank, which has been questioned before the

Supreme Court, said Joan Ngayaan, a Kalinga resident.

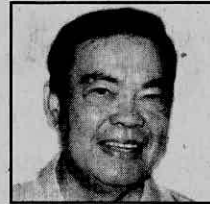
Ngayaan is a daughter of the late Daniel Ngayaan, who disappeared after leading the opposition against the Chico dam projects during the Marcos regime.

—WITH A REPORT FROM KIMBERLIE QUITASOL INQ



FEATURE

# Coming soon: A waterless world



By **EDDIE ILARDE**

**L**ET'S consider the drama behind the statistics on water, the simplest chemical compound of two parts hydrogen joined to one part oxygen – fresh and saline. Without fresh water, in one to three days, we die. Water, like sunshine and air, is a “free good” from Nature, perhaps the reason why we use, abuse, and misuse it with abandon, forgetting that it is a “finite resource” and can be exhausted.

Now, let's reconsider the exigency behind these facts: Water covers 71 percent of the Earth's surface, but more than 95 percent of it is salty; only 2 percent is fresh but mostly frozen, leaving only 1 percent accessible for human use – and 70 percent of that is used in agriculture! These are reasons why people should end the abuse and mismanagement of this precious gift – in homes and elsewhere on the ground. Because of man's folly, fresh water has become precariously scarce worldwide, and if not alleviated can start a “water war” among the people – among nations – in the not-too-distant future. In 2009 in the US, Georgia nearly came to a protracted quarrel with Alabama and Florida for the fresh water of Lake Lanier. Until now here are pocket hostilities among communities in some parts of the world, each claiming ownership of water sources in their area. In this country, the “water sellers” should be aware that in a similar bad and ugly situation, they might contend with bad and ugly riots of poor and exploited thirsty “water buyers.”

Due to global warming, the oceans are getting deeper due to melting massive icebergs in the North and South Poles while fresh water lakes and rivers on land are drying up; the bad news is those icebergs are fresh water, melting not on land but on salty seas. Some years back, there was an attempt to transport massive icebergs in large tankers for melting in big reservoirs to replenish fresh water pumped-up from dwindling water sources. That creative

but difficult and expensive process can be revived, depending on existing conditions and the courage to plunge into something formidable and expensive.

This country has more than 400 rivers and 100 lakes – all fresh water sources but most are now biologically dead. The water crisis is here and now but it is never too late to clean them up and manage how much water is still salvageable to alleviate the critical situation we face. The most valid suggestion is desalinization or desalination, the production of fresh water from salty water from the ocean. The science and technology of desalination only started in the middle 50s and though expensive has been found to the most practical, especially in the arid countries of the Middle East. Today there are more than 4,000 desalting plants producing almost all the water needs of 150 countries with more than 350 million people. More plants are being set-up today due to the fast-underground aquifers are also dwindling.

We do not know of any desalting plant in this country, being rich in fresh water above the ground which sadly is now laden with filth and poison dumped by mindless people and business establishments. We have a Department of Science and Technology with capable people who can design and set-up land-based desalting machines. Being new in this technology, our Department of Foreign Affairs may solicit the help of friendly Middle East countries in this regard – how to set it up and who knows, might even donate even second-hand machines to start us off with the resuscitated clean sea water of Manila Bay.

A waterless world is coming soon! Being “forewarned is to be fore-armed!”

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*(Eddie Ilarde is a former Senator, an author and independent Radio-TV host and producer. During this incumbency as Congressman more than 50 years ago, he investigated 27 inland waterways in the country for pollution and abuse.)*



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# Party-list group seeks to plant 10 M trees

By PAOLO ROMERO

CALAMBA, Laguna – Luntiang Pilipinas party-list launched on Monday a campaign to plant 10 million trees as part of a nationwide greening effort and to help improve the country's environment.

Luntian first nominee Michael Ubac said the party-list group does not only aim to win a seat in Congress but also to make the Philippines green again.

"We lose around 47,000 hectares of forest cover each year. If we do not do anything to reverse this trend, these losses will have tragic consequences for our country's biodiversity, water security and disaster prevention efforts," Ubac said.

The launch was marked with the planting of fruit-bearing trees such as cacao, coffee, *atis*, *santol*, mango and *sampaloc* at the Calamba City Hall grounds and various parts of the city.

The event was attended by Senate President Vicente Sotto III and Senators Nancy Binay, Sonny Angara and Paolo Benigno Aquino IV.

Sen. Cynthia Villar was represented by her daughter Camille, while Sen. Aquilino Pimentel III sent his wife Kathryna.

Calamba Mayor Justin Marc Chipeco and other local officials hosted the event.

The launch coincided with several other activities of the group like the Luntian Green Rider bike ride from Batangas City to Laguna.

Ubac said that at present the country has less than a third of the forest cover it used to have at the turn of the 20th century.

"From 21 million hectares of forests in 1900, we are now left with less than seven million hectares. This cannot be allowed to be left unchecked. Only by working together, by rallying Filipinos

and our leaders to this cause, will we be able to reverse the tide."

Sen. Loren Legarda, founder of Luntiang Pilipinas movement, said the challenge is doable if everyone gets involved.

Legarda said that when she launched the movement in 1998 with the aim of growing trees and establishing forest parks nationwide, they wanted to show that with simple acts, such as planting a tree and letting it grow, Filipinos can protect the Earth and ensure our survival.

"The 10-million trees challenge should be easy for us because if each Filipino does his or her share, we would have a hundred million trees and thousands of thriving forest parks in our country," Legarda said.

Luntiang Pilipinas has planted and grew two million trees in 33 provinces, 28 cities and 84 municipalities across the country.

The group's platform is founded on its four pillars: greening (forest parks, mangrove growing and *gulayan sa paaralan*); solid waste management; coastal and marine resource management; and disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

Luntian party-list is vying to be the first green party in the House. It has been endorsed by the Senate President and Aksyon Demokratiko, the party founded by the late senator Raul Roco.



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## Ecowaste asks schools to remain non-partisan

By Joel E. Zurbano

ENVIRONMENTALIST group Ecowaste Coalition on Tuesday asked school officials to remove illegal campaign materials at polling places and maintain non-partisan this coming May 13 elections.

"We appeal to concerned school principals to ensure that the entire school premises, including the frontage, fences, walls and sidewalks, are free of election propaganda materials," said Ecowaste national coordinator Aileen Lucero.

"As littering is a common environmental offense during the election day, we urge schools to post visible signage that will remind voters not to litter sample ballots or 'kodigo' at the school premises," she said.

To promote compliance to the rules on lawful election propaganda, the group urged all agencies deputized by the Commis-

sion on Elections to intensify the removal of oversized and misplaced election campaign posters.

"To encourage respect for the rule of law, we urge agencies authorized by the Comelec to conduct nonstop removal operations of posters and other campaign materials that are oversized or displayed in forbidden places," Lucero said.

"Despite repeated warning, we find lots of campaign materials nailed or stapled on trees, or hanging in lamp posts, bridges, waiting sheds and other inappropriate places," she said.

Among the agencies designated by the Comelec for the purpose of dismantling unlawful campaign materials are the Departments of Environment and Natural Resources, Interior and Local Government, Public Works and Highways, and Transportation, the Metro Manila Development Authority, and the Philippine National Police.