

DATE : 29 MAY 2019

DAY : Wednesday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



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500 bagong pisang pawikan pinawalan ng DENR sa Saranggani Bay

Pinangunahan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang pagpapakawala sa 528 bagong pisang pawikan na Olive ridley sa Saranggani Bay, Barangay Lumasal, Maasim, Saranggani. Tinagubilinan naman ni DENR Region

12 Executive Director Mip B. Tamora ang mga residenteng naninirahan malapit sa karagatan na tumulong sa pangangalaga at pagbibigay ng proteksiyon sa coastal areas at maging responsable sa pagtatapon ng kanilang mga basura.

Aniya, bandang

pinawalan ng mga pawikan sa Maasim ang kabuhay ng mga ito sa karagatan.

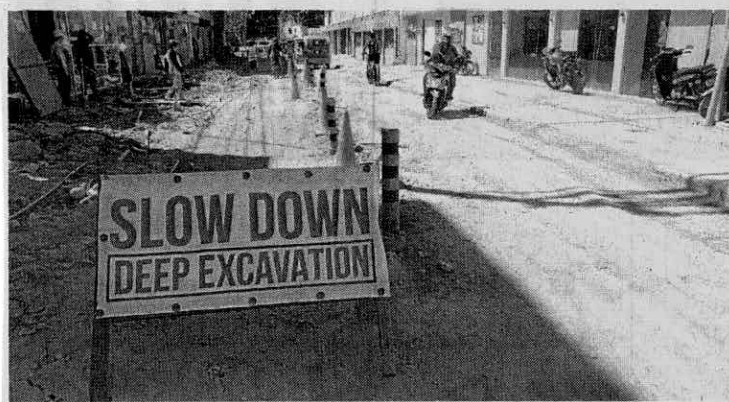
Ang naturang bilang ng Olive ridley ay napisa sa Maasim Pawikan Hatchery sa bayan ng Maasim, lumalabas pa na ito ang pinakamalaking bilang ng mga napisang itlog simula nang itatag ito noong 2015.

Ang Olive ridley na kilala rin sa tawag na Pacific ridley ay pangalawa sa maliit na pawikan at isa rin ito sa lahi ng mga sea turtles na marami sa karagatan. Kadalasan itong makikita sa maiinit na lugar tulad ng Pacific at Indian Ocean.

Samantala, bagama't marami ang bilang ng mga ito, ang sinumang mahuhuling nanghuhuli at pumapatay nito ay papatawan ng parusang paglabag sa Republic Act 9147 na kilala ring Philippine Wildlife Resources Protection and Conservation Act. (Angie dela Cruz)

SOLVING 'NITTY-GRITTY DETAILS'

DENR VOWS TO FIX BORACAY FLOODING; REHAB WORK '90 PERCENT' COMPLETE



ROADWORK Road construction and drainage system upgrade are ongoing along portions of the main road in Boracay, more than six months after the resort island in Aklan province reopened to tourists. —NESTOR P. BURGOS JR.

Despite the flooding in some areas in Boracay over the weekend, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) assured that it was on track in completing infrastructure work in the resort island in line with the massive rehabilitation program that the agency launched last year.

Adequate

Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said issues that caused the floods following a four-hour downpour last week were "nitty-gritty details" that needed to be fixed.

"We have already completed 90 percent of the work in Boracay, so there are still some areas where work needs to be done," Antiporda said in a telephone interview on Monday night. "But rest assured that the quality of our work there is adequate."

He said orders had already been issued to address the flooding, particularly near the D'Mall commercial complex and Ambassador Hotel in Station 1.

"The area of the Ambassador [Hotel] is really low, so we are still going to construct a drainage outfall going to Wet-

land 2 so water will flow there," he said.

The area near D'Mall, meanwhile, was flooded after inlets were clogged by silt and other materials from an ongoing construction of speed tables, or flat-topped speed humps.

"Basically everything is going as planned, but there are some issues that we still need to address," Antiporda said.

State of island rehab

Boracay residents were displeased after several sections of the resort island were inundated over the weekend, raising

questions on the state of its rehabilitation. The six-month closure and cleanup of the island has been the oft-mentioned source of pride of the Duterte administration, which it claimed showcased the government's political will and care for the environment.

But the shutdown of the island, once described by President Duterte as a "cesspool," had also adversely affected thousands of workers and residents dependent on tourism, while questions on the overall plan for the island had also been raised. —JHESSET O. ENANO INQ



Probe of delayed Aeta relocation sought

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Pampanga Gov. Lilia Pineda on Monday warned that she would ask the Senate to investigate the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) after the agency failed to get a relocation site for Aeta families living in landslide-prone villages in the province.

Pineda issued the warning during an interagency meeting here to discuss the status of the planned relocation site for 300 Aeta families who could be dis-

placed by landslides after the 6.1-magnitude earthquake on April 22.

In the meeting, she said it was difficult to look for relocation sites in ancestral lands due to encroachments that the NCIP had reportedly allowed. •

“The ancestral domains are so big but we still have to buy lands for relocation sites. You in the NCIP allowed people to have titles in the ancestral lands [after the Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act was passed into law

in 1997],” Pineda said.

Noel Lacadin, chief geologist of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) in Central Luzon, earlier recommended that Sitio Tagak at Barangay Nabuklod in Floridablanca town and Barangay Diaz in Porac town be considered “no habitation” zones.

Both villages are within the 10-kilometer radius of Mt. Pinatubo, which last erupted on June 15, 1991. The eruption came a year after a strong quake hit northern Luzon in July 1990.

Ronaldo Daquioag, NCIP director in Central Luzon, said properties inside ancestral domains that were titled before 1997 were segregated from certificate of ancestral domain title (CADT) areas.

Highly prone to landslides

After segregation, the Porac CADT was reduced from 18,000 hectares to 16,000 ha while the Floridablanca CADT shrank from 8,000 ha to 5,000 ha, Daquioag said.

But safe areas became mini-

mal as hazards mapping by the MGB showed many lands to be highly prone to landslides.

Daquioag said Aetas and private landowners could file complaints if the lands were titled to individuals after 1997 or if their ownership was questioned for fraud.

But Roy Serrano, an Aeta representative in the Floridablanca town council, said their request to verify the ownership of lands in the town’s CADT has been pending with

the NCIP since August 2018.

Nabuklod Aetas have declined a plan to use a hectare in Sitio Balindalag as relocation site because the land hosts a cemetery.

In Porac, where the risk of landslides is severe, Pineda said the provincial government would buy a 3-ha lot at Sitio Pasbul in the lower hills.

A plan to build a model Aeta community has been proposed there using donations. —TONETTE

OREJAS INQ



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NWRB to reduce Metro's domestic water allocation starting June 1

By **ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ**

With the El Niño still expected to persist in the next few months, the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) will be reducing Metro Manila's domestic water allocation coming from Angat Dam starting June 1.

Based on the Philippine Atmo-

spheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration's (PAGASA) monitoring of major dams in Luzon, the water level at Angat Dam in Bulacan has further declined to 169.88 meters on Tuesday from 170.19 meters last Monday.

It is significantly lower than Angat Dam's 212-meter **▶10**

NWRB to reduce...

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normal high water level and 180-meter minimum dam operating level.

NWRB Executive Director Sevilla David Jr. said water allocation for irrigation will remain suspended.

David said there will be a slight adjustment in water allocation for Metro Manila's domestic needs.

From 48 cubic meters per second (cms) in May, water allocation coming from Angat Dam will be reduced to 46 cms starting June 1, he explained.

The water allocation is split 60-40 to water concessionaires Maynilad and Manila Water, respectively.

David pointed out that the reduced water allocation "will not have any significant impact on Metro Manila households."

NWRB suspended the allocation of water for the irrigation requirements of farmlands in Bulacan and Pampanga from Angat Dam last May 16 to conserve water and reduce the water level decline in the Angat reservoir.

Angat Dam also supplies about 96 percent of Metro Manila's domestic water needs. This will be the first time this year that the NWRB will be reducing the allocation of water for domestic supply.



Water supply sa Metro, babawasan

Ni ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ

Ngayong inaasahang mararamdaman ang El Niño hanggang sa mga susunod na buwan, babawasan ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) ang tubig na isinu-supply ng Angat Dam sa Metro Manila simula sa Sabado, Hunyo 1.

Batay sa monitoring ng Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) sa mga pangunahing dam sa Luzon, bumaba pa ang water level sa Angat Dam sa Bulacan sa 169.88 metro kahapon, mula sa 170.19 metro nitong Lunes.

Lubhang mababa na ito kumpara sa normal high water level ng Angat na 212 metro, at sa 180-metrong minimum dam operating level.

Sinabi rin ni NWRB Executive Director Seville David Jr. na mananatiling suspendido ang alokasyon ng dam para sa irigasyon.

Ayon kay David, mula sa 48 cubic meters per second (cms) ngayong Mayo, ang alokasyon ng

tubig sa Metro Manila mula sa Angat Dam ay babawasan sa 46 cms simula sa Sabado.

Ang alokasyon ng tubig ay hinati sa 60-40 para sa mga consumer ng Maynilad at Manila Water, ayon sa pagkakasunod.

Nilinaw naman ni David na ang pagbabawas ng supply ng tubig "will

not have any significant impact for Metro Manila households", na 96% ay umaasa sa Angat Dam.

Ito ang unang beses ngayong taon na nagbawas ang NWRB ng water supply sa Metro Manila, makaraang suspendihin ang patubig sa mga taniman sa Bulacan at Pampanga simula nitong Mayo 16.



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AN INDICATOR OF THRIVING FORESTS

PH PANGOLIN TRADE CAN MAKE PALAWAN A 'LOST FRONTIER'

By Jhesset O. Enano
@JhessetEnanoINQ

Often called the "last ecological frontier" because of its rich biodiversity, Palawan province may soon become a "lost frontier," if threats to the Philippine pangolin remain unabated

The scaly mammal is an indicator that the Palawan forests are still thriving, said Nelson Devanadera, executive director of the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD).

"If we lose this indicator ... we can be the lost frontier," he said.

Palawan, the biggest province in the country, is home to many endemic but endangered flora and fauna, including the Philippine pangolin, one of eight species in the world.

Most trafficked

But the high demand for its meat and scales in Asian markets, including China and Vietnam, has made the pangolin among the most trafficked mammal in the world. Poaching, hunting and illegal trade continue to threaten its population.

Devanadera admitted that

the illegal wildlife trade in the province is "alarming."

"Criminals are working faster than us," he said. "While we have the technology and intelligence at hand, [criminals] do much better because they consider the trade as both business and survival."

'Think like criminals'

The official added: "I think we should think like criminals as well and consider what's in their mind."

Poverty, a major driving factor in the illegal trade, should also

be addressed, Devanadera said.

"We cannot just have environmental education programs when people are hungry," he said. "We have to show them opportunities, offer alternatives and provide them the right information."

PCSD, Devanadera said, is currently working with the wildlife protection group Katala Foundation and the USAID's Protect Wildlife project to study the population of the Philippine pangolin, its habitat and threats to it, to come up with policies for its conservation. INQ



Hundreds of volunteers support SM's cleanup drive

OVER 500 volunteers took part in SM's recent Cleanup Drive to show support for the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program as they dredged the stretch of the Central Park of SM by the BAY, Mall of Asia Complex in Pasay City.

The volunteers began the Cleanup Drive as early as six o'clock in the morning, and were able to gather over 1,820 kilograms of garbage. Through this green initiative, the public is made aware of the importance of keeping waterways such as rivers, beaches and bays, clean and free from litter and commercial refuse.

"We are very grateful that more and more people from different communities around us are joining this activity. Through the years, even expats, tourists, and backpackers participate. We believe that the whole world knows that the Philippines is widely-recognized for having a rich biodiversity in marine life. Because of this, we are committed to stay consistent to make sure more people know about it and what it means for us and our future," said Perkin So, Senior Assistant Vice President for Operations of SM Mall of Asia.

In attendance at the quarterly Cleanup Drive were representatives from Pasay City Environment Office (PCENRO), non-government organizations, members of the surrounding local community, local interest groups such as running and Frisbee teams, and employee volunteers from SM.

"Environmental issues are visible everywhere. Today's Cleanup Drive, participated in by hundreds of people from different walks of life, signifies a pressing need to care and respect the environment. Our coming together here today is an affirmation of our commitment to be responsible members of the community," said Liza B. Silerio, Program Director of the SM Cares Program on Environment and Sustainability.

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DILG, DENR, Coca-Cola join forces for World Without Waste

THE Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and Coca-Cola Philippines have partnered for a three-kilometer run that aims to raise awareness on the government's efforts to protect the environment.

The fun run, dubbed "Takbo para sa Kalikasan" in Support of the Battle for Manila Bay toward a World Without Waste" took an estimated 5,000 runners from government agencies and partners, along the stretch of Roxas Boulevard fronting the famed Manila Bay.

"Through this fun run, the DILG, along with other partner agencies involved in the 'Battle for Manila Bay', hopes to gather support and appreciation among the runners and their families, towards helping sustain the on-going clean-up and rehabilitation of the bay," said DILG Assistant Secretary Marjorie Jalosjos.

"Every used plastic bottle that will be collected will be used and turned into the country's first benches made of 100% recycled PET bottles. This is a simple demonstration of the countless possibilities that we can do with recyclable plastic. It is unacceptable for us at Coca-Cola that our packaging ends up in places where they shouldn't be, and part of our thrust is to collect and recycle the equivalent of every single bottle and can we produce by 2030 — a vision of a



As co-presenter of Takbo para sa Kalikasan, Coca-Cola Philippines President and General Manager Winn Everhart speaks about the future of recyclable plastic and the company's vision of a World Without Waste.

World Without Waste," said Winn Everhart, Coca-Cola Philippines president and general manager.

In 2018, Coca-Cola announced an ambitious goal of collecting and recycling the equivalent of every single bottle or can they sell by 2030 to help solve the world's packaging problem. This goal is the centerpiece of the company's World Without Waste vision.

"Putting the vision of a World Without Waste into action is something that can be done working hand-in-hand with like-minded individuals and equally passionate partners such as DILG, DENR, and PCW. We know that we have a responsibility to help ensure that we continuously create a positive impact, and that our actions inspire others to create new solutions for future generations. Investing not only in our packaging, but also in our community, the recycling industry, and our planet is what the future of a World Without Waste

looks like for us," Everhart added.

Aside from providing hydration to the runners, to make the "Battle for Manila Bay" run one of the cleanest fun run events in the country, Coca-Cola Philippines provided 45 bins along the race course where runners can throw their used PET bottles, while the City of Manila provided 50 bins for other waste.

Coca-Cola Philippines will then turn over the collected PET bottles to its recycling partner that will convert the plastics into benches to be installed along Roxas Boulevard, to create awareness and appreciation for the Battle for Manila Bay clean-up and rehabilitation efforts. As part of its global commitment for the environment, Coca-Cola intends to use an average of 50% recycled content in its PET bottles and aluminum cans, partner with relevant organizations to intensify its collection and recycling efforts, and use 100 percent recyclable materials in all its packaging.



Locsin: Trash shipped back to Canada tomorrow

By PIA LEE-BRAGO

The tons of garbage from Canada illegally dumped in the Philippines will be shipped back to the North American country tomorrow, Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. said.

"And on this day the foreign garbage imported by native idiots became good and ready to go," Locsin posted on Twitter yesterday.

In a tweet on Monday, the secretary said they were just waiting for documents and "routine permission" from China for transshipment of the trash

to Canada.

He noted that all shipping containers with garbage were "cleaned."

"Anybody gets in the way one way or another, I will screw you dry. Don't provoke me," Locsin warned.

"I am having problems with fellow officials hungry to emigrate to Canada so want to keep friendly relations at the expense of defying Duterte and keeping Canadian garbage here," he said in another tweet without naming the officials.

"If our officials had done

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Locsin From Page 1

something about it, Canadian garbage would have been long returned to sender," he further said.

Locsin said Duterte pushed the "right button" in ordering the return of garbage to Canada even without anyone advising him.

Asked by a netizen where the garbage will be dumped,

he replied: "I actually don't give two f**ks where that garbage was gonna go. All I know is it is ready to go. Anyone throw a monkey wrench and I will burn his village."

He also thanked International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI) chairman Enrique Razon for "picking up our part of the tab."

The secretary said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Canadian Ambassador John Holmes and Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland must be credited for their cooperative effort and "everyone who had nothing to do with legally letting the garbage in the first place then never lifting a finger to get it out."

In his earlier tweet, Locsin said Canada was not bullying the Philippines as it was fully

cooperating in shipping back the garbage.

"They're not bullying us; they're fully cooperating in taking back the garbage pronto," he said.

The government recently ordered officials to refrain from issuing travel authorities for official foreign trips to Canada due to the garbage row following the recall of the Philippine ambassador and consuls general to Canada.



Canadian trash to be shipped back on May 30 – Locsin

By **ROY MABASA**

All the 69 containers containing wastes shipped to Manila about six years ago will be sailing back to Canada on May 30 via China.

Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. made this disclosure in a tweet posted on Monday night.

After undergoing fumigation process in Subic, Locsin said the tons of garbage are "ready to go" and just waiting for documentation procedures and a go

signal from China prior to their shipment back to Canada.

"All containers containing garbage cleaned and ready to go. Waiting for a couple of documents and routine permission from China for transshipment to Canada. Departure is May 30," Locsin said on Twitter.

Locsin also issued a warning to those who will cause delay in shipping back the trash to Canada: "Anybody gets in the way one way or another, I will screw you dry. Don't provoke me." **►9**

Canadian trash to...

The tons of Canadian wastes, which were shipped to the Philippines in between 2013 and 2014, have triggered unprecedented diplomatic actions from the Philippines after President Rodrigo Duterte imposed a May 15 deadline for Ottawa to immediately haul the remaining 69 garbage-filled containers back

to its port.

The Canadian government missed the deadline, prompting the Department of Foreign Affairs to recall Ambassador Petronila Garcia and several other consuls posted in Canada.

Last week, Malacanang issued a memorandum barring Philippine of-

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ficials from traveling to Canada in line with the Duterte administration's policy of diminishing ties with Ottawa over the garbage issue.

Malacanang stated that the memorandum was meant to emphasize the seriousness of the Philippines' demands in relation to the containers of garbage that were "unlawfully" shipped to the Philippines.

Malaysia replicates PH

PORT KLANG, Malaysia — Malaysia says it will send back some 3,000 metric tons (330 tons) of non-recyclable plastic waste to countries including the US, UK, Canada, and Australia in a move to avoid becoming a dumping ground for rich nations.

Environment Minister Yeo Bee Yin says 60 containers stacked with contaminated waste were smuggled in to illegal processing facilities in Malaysia. She

said Tuesday that 10 containers will be shipped back within two weeks as she showed reporters contents of the waste at a port outside Kuala Lumpur.

The waste that was displayed included cables from the UK, contaminated milk cartons from Australia and compact discs from Bangladesh. Also shown were electronic and household waste from the US, Canada, Japan, Saudi Arabia, and China. (With AP)



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UNWANTED TRASH

MALAYSIA TO SEND TONS OF PLASTIC WASTE BACK TO COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysia will send as much as 3,000 tons of plastic waste back to the countries it came from, the environment minister said on Tuesday, the latest Asian country to reject rich countries' rubbish.

Malaysia last year became the world's main destination for plastic waste after China banned its import, disrupting the flow of more than 7 million tons of trash a year.

Dozens of recycling factories have cropped up in Malaysia, many without operating licenses, and communities have complained of environmental problems.



RUBBISH Yeo Bee Yin, Malaysia's minister of environment, shows a sample of plastic waste on Tuesday. —AFP

Yeo Bee Yin, Minister of Energy, Technology, Science, Environment and Climate Change, said 60 containers of trash that had been imported illegally

would be sent back.

"These containers were illegally brought into the country under false declaration and other offenses which clearly vi-

olate our environmental law," Yeo told reporters, after inspecting the shipments at Port Klang, a town on the outskirts of the capital.

President Rodrigo Duterte last week ordered his government to hire a private shipping company to send 69 containers of garbage back to Canada and leave them within its territorial waters if it refuses to accept them.

Canada says the waste, exported to the Philippines between 2013 and 2014, was a commercial transaction done without government consent.

—REUTERS



Not all is waste



Dinah S. Ventura

The garbage problem is still stinking up our atmosphere.

What do we do about it?

I am thinking that bluster and bullying won't work. The more we rain threats, the more we get sunk in a load of other garbage.

Ever heard of the saying: if life gives you lemons, make lemonade? I am not saying we should meekly take the trash shipments and get on with life.

Far from it. Sometimes, you just have to roll with it.

**“
Other countries are able to recycle their waste without damage to the environment. Singapore has shown that garbage can be turned into landfill that is safe for the environment.**

Every problem has many sides. In this case, one side is about laws being broken and that deserves decisive action like sending back Canada's trash after years of namby-pamby promises from that country.

Another side is about dealing with what is there (or here) because wishing it gone won't make it go away.

Those recent shipments from Australia, for example, should give our Filipino inventors an idea that garbage can be a source of fuel.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said the shipments intercepted in Misamis Oriental were “not garbage” but rather “a source of fuel.”

According to CNN, the Environmental Management Bureau of the DENR shared last week documents that showed, “The shipments from Australia are processed engineered fuel (PEF) used in cement production.”

Unlike the Canadian shipments of household detritus, including adult diapers, the products from Australia are said to “have undergone processing” before shipment.

It was the company Holcim Philippines Inc. that imported the PEF, said to be “comprised mainly of industrial and commercial recyclable materials such as plastics, cardboard, paper, textile, waste timber and other inert materials.”

A further check by the Bureau of Customs revealed it contained “shredded municipal wastes,” such as scrap plastic, cellophane, wrappers, textile, stones and soil among others.”

In other words, these were “acceptable waste” though at first there was a question on whether the shipments were “accurately and truthfully declared.”

With the DENR affirming it to be safe and commensurate with the standards under environmental laws on imported goods, well then, there shouldn't be any more wranglings on trash-dumping in this case.

It should also bring our attention to the further uses of waste materials that we may have been ignoring.

Other countries are able to recycle their waste without damage to the environment. Singapore has shown that garbage can be turned into landfill that is safe for the environment.

A team of students from the University of the Philippines-Diliman's Institute of Civil Engineering also showed that it is possible to create durable yet environment-friendly cement, which won for it in an international championship among other schools.

The group grabbed the trophy in the Eco-concrete Competition held in Quebec, Canada last April. Their invention “used locally abundant Diliman tuff as partial replacement to cement and waste glass in making an environmentally friendly concrete,” goes the description.

Such a product could be very useful in our developing nation where “Build, Build, Build” is at a frenzy.

If our government devoted more energy into efforts like this, where technology and inventiveness are harnessed toward creating safe and sustainable products for use in our country, perhaps we would not be constantly complaining about the detritus of our times.



No hard stuff

SIARGAO, Surigao del Norte – This place is almost spotless. It is one of the many heavens the Philippines has, an escape for the many expats and local and foreign tourists, whatever kind of life they wanted to set themselves free from.

This place is nearly garbage-free. Its waters are clear blue and clean. And even with the influx of visitors lately, said to have been spurred by a recent movie which depicted love and more about the island life and its people's effort to keep their surroundings clean, Siargao remains immaculate.

The locals, however, are asking themselves if they can hold on to this kind of life for long. New resorts keep sprouting up, restaurant kitchens brew soups day and night, and the uncapping of beer bottles make music beats for the crowd's din of pleasure and happiness.

Siargao is a paradise as Boracay once was. But its people do not want overdevelopment. Just enough, they say.

Commercialism – or too much of it – choked Boracay. It should not happen here, the locals agree. And they contribute to keep this place pristine as possible.

Time constraints foiled this rubbernecker's attempt to set up an interview with Siargao's local government leaders. I should have inquired about their model in keeping the island trash-free. But what I saw and from what the locals told me provided a glimpse of their practices which we should emulate.

The spirit of *bayanihan* is also alive here. Residents donate time and resources to keep the island clean. One of the organizations that make this happen is the Siargao Environmental Awareness Council. Its members deserve pats on the back.

All bars, restaurants and shacks have ditched the use of plastic. They use metal straws, which can be reused for generations, the ones this very simple act is trying to save now.

Plastic bags are non-existent in the public market. Meat and fish are wrapped in paper. People bring their own reusable bags.

Homes practice segregation of their wastes.

These are very simple duties we cannot seem



Aldrin Cardona



to follow. And yet we complain about the trash we see everywhere.

We revolted against Canada's waste, which made it to our shores, and rightly so. This debate is almost over now with the Canadian government rattled by ours to take back its rubbish.

Environmental groups and non-government organizations took this opportunity to expose even more trash importations as countries used unscrupulous brokers in cahoots with Customs officials and employees.

Corruption is still the big issue that wraps all these transactions.

From the listing for business permits to dealings for importation, grease money flows to slide these corrupt transactions. Most of these go unnoticed, the Canadian trash was just too plenty not to have been seen.

A group now alleges another small batch of rubbish just came in as a "test case" for another big batch of trash. But there seems to be a hidden issue to this.

Not all foreign garbage is evil. A local cement manufacturer admitted to importing garbage from foreign countries for use as bio-fuel. Its ash is later used as a component for cement. No residue is wasted.

This is the closest technology we have to compare with Singapore, which burns wastes for its ash, which is then used to fill land it is badly lacking.

We do not have this technology yet, but there are other ways to lessen the impact of garbage to our surroundings.

If the people of Siargao can do it, there is no reason why we can't.



PH to return Canada trash on May 30

By **ROY MABASA**

All the 69 containers containing wastes shipped to Manila about six years ago will be sailing back to Canada on May 30 via China.

Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. made this disclosure in a tweet posted on Monday night.

After undergoing fumigation process in Subic, Locsin said the tons of garbage is "ready to go" and just waiting for documentation procedures and a go signal from China prior to its shipment back to Canada.

"ALL CONTAINERS CONTAINING GARBAGE CLEANED AND READY TO GO. WAITING FOR A COUPLE OF DOCUMENTS AND ROUTINE PERMISSION FROM CHINA FOR TRANSHIPMENT TO CANADA. DEPARTURE IS MAY 30," Locsin said in his social media post.

Locsin also issued a warning to those who will cause a delay in shipping back the trash to Canada: "Anybody gets in the way one way or another, I will screw you dry. Don't provoke me."

The tons of Canadian wastes, which were shipped to the Philippines in between 2013 and 2014, have triggered unprecedented diplomatic actions from the Philippines after President Rodrigo Duterte imposed a May 15 deadline for Ottawa to immediately haul the remaining 69 garbage-filled containers back to its port.

However, the Canadian government missed the deadline prompting the Department of Foreign Affairs to recall Ambassador Petronila Garcia and several other consuls posted in Canada.

Last week, Malacañang issued a memorandum barring Philippine officials from traveling to Canada in line with the Duterte administration's policy of diminishing ties with Ottawa over the garbage issue.

Malacañang stated that the memorandum was meant to emphasize the seriousness of the Philippines' demands in relation to the containers of garbage that were "unlawfully" shipped to the Philippines.



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EDITOR: Boyet Jad

PING: BASURA NG 'PINAS

KUNG si Senador Panfilo 'Ping' Lacson ang nakaupong kalihim ng Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), hindi lang niya ibabalik sa Canada ang basurang itinapon sa Pilipinas kundi sasamahan niya ito ng basurang nanggaling sa ating bansa.

Binanggit ito ni Lacson matapos ihayag ni DFA Secretary Teodoro

'Teddy Boy' Locsin, Jr. na ibibiyaha na sa Canada ang tone-toneladang basura bukas, Mayo 30.

Ayon sa senador, bilib siya sa tapang ni Locsin pero kung siya ang nasa posisyon nito ay daragdagan pa niya ng basura mula sa bansa ang ipapadala sa Canada.

"Teddy Boy Locsin:

call it political will, resourcefulness, motor-mouth, makulit, tigasulo, barumbado, etc. The guy puts his money where his mouth is. Canadian garbage is sailing back to Canada. If I were him, I'd fill up all available space with Philippines garbage," saad ni Lacson.

Una nang sinabi ni Lacson na dapat ding

itapon sa dagat ang nasa likod ng pagpasok ng tone-toneladang basura sa bansa.

Ito ay nang unang suportahan ni Lacson ang aksyon ni Locsin na pauwiin ang mga ambassador at consul sa Canada nang mabigo ang Ottawa na bawin ang basura hanggang sa ibinigay na deadline noong Mayo 15.

ulco / Twitter: @bjadulco

MIYERKOLES / MAYO 29, 2019

ITAPON SA CANADA!

"National dignity is part and parcel of diplomacy. Allowing Canada to dump their toxic garbage here is submitting to their arrogance and misplaced superiority," diin ni Lacson.

Sa isang tweet nitong Martes, inanunsyo ni Locsin na tuloy na ang biyahe ng basura patungong Canada ngayong Huwebes.

"All containers containing garbage were cleaned and ready to go. Waiting for a couple of documents and routine permission from China for transshipment to Canada. Departure is Mayo 30. Anybody gets in the way one way or another, I will screw you dry. Don't provoke me" diin ni Locsin.

Sumailalim na sa fumigation ang 70 container ng basura at ang prosesong ito ay sinaksihan ng mga opisyal ng Canada.

Ang mga basura ay pinadala sa Pilipinas ng Chronic, Inc., isang kompanya na nakabase sa Ontario, Canada mula 2013 hanggang 2014. **(Dang Samson-Garcia)**



Mga responsable sa tone-toneladang basura mula Canada, talupan!

HINDI raw magiging sunud-sunuran sa Palasyo, partikular kay Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte. Ito ang pahayag ng mga bagong senador, kamakailan. Hindi raw magiging “rubber stamp” ang Senado, pero nang magpakuha ng litrato ang 12 senador, sampu sa kanila ang ipinakita kung saan sila kaalyado sa pamamagitan ng ‘Duterte fist bump’. Sina Sen. Grace Poe at Sen. Nancy Binay lamang ang hindi gumawa ng “kamao na tatak Duterte”.

Kahit isa ay walang nakapasok mula sa oposisyon. Ang malusog na demokrasya ay nangailangan ng oposisyon para maging balanse ang pagbantay sa isa’t isa, pero sa ngayon, iilan lang

ang mga tunay na oposisyon. Halos karamihan ay kaalyado ng pangulo o kilalang kasangga nito. Ngayon pa lang ay pinag-uusapan na ang pagbabalik ng parusang kamatayan o death penalty at ipinipilit din ang Pederalismo.

Kung magkakaroon pa ng maayos na diskusyon sa mga isyung ito, mukhang hindi na magaganap ang hindi pagiging sunud-sunuran sa Palasyo dahil tila alam na agad nila ang kanilang mga gustong isulong sa Senado kahit hindi pa tuluyang nakauupo.

□□□

Sa wakas, mukhang matutuloy na ang pagbabalik ng tone-toneladang basura sa Canada. Ilang taon din itong hindi maaksiyunan dahil sa kung anuanong dahilan. Hindi tinanggap ni Pangulong Duterte ang plano ng Canada na pabalikin ang mga basura sa katapusan ng Hunyo kaya inaak-

siyunan na raw ito.

Pero, hindi lang ang Canada ang nagtapon ng basura sa bansa. Kamakailan, may dumating din na mga basura mula Australia at Hong Kong. Ano kaya ang naisip ng mga karatig-bansa para magpadala ng kanilang basura? Pero, ang pinakakuwestiyunable, sino ang nagbigay-pahintulot na tumanggap ng basura? Ang alam natin, bawal magpadala ng basura ang anumang bansa kahit saan sa mundo maliban na lang kung hinihingi para magamit sa recycling.

Ang problema, ang mga basura ay hindi recyclable materials at tunay na nakasama sa kalikasan. Dapat itong imbestigahan, lalo na ang mga responsable sa pagtanggap nito, gayundin, ang mga tauhan ng Bureau of Customs (BOC), ang ahensiya kung saan unang ibinabagsak ang mga ‘tone-toneladang basura’ ng ibang bansa.

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Editorial

Pakikipaggyera sa mga bansang nagtatapon ng basura

NAGBANTA si President Duterte na gigiyerahin ang Canada kapag hindi kinuha ang dinala nilang basura sa bansa noong 2013. Bagama't sabi ni Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo na "bulaklak lamang ng dila" ng Presidente ang bantang giyera laban sa Canada, may malalim itong kahulugan na puwedeng mangyari kung lagi ngang pagtatapunan ng basura nang mayayamang bansa ang mga mahihirap na bansa kabilang ang Pilipinas. Kailangang umalma at lumaban ang mga bansang pinagtatapunan ng basura. Huwag matakot kung ang nakataya na ay ang pagkakasakit ng mamamayan at pagkasira ng kapaligiran dahil sa mga basurang toxic na galing sa mayayamang bansa.

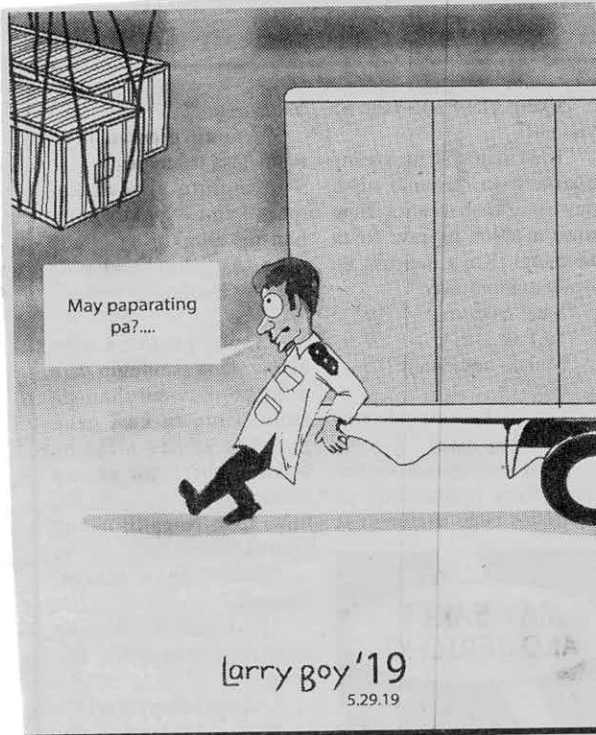
Sa isang report, hindi lamang pala ang Pilipinas ang

nakatanggap ng mga basura mula sa mga mayayamang bansa kundi maging ang Malaysia at Indonesia. Ayon sa report, daang container van ng basura na kinabibilangan ng hospital at household wastes ang dinadala sa Malaysia at Indonesia. Hindi naman binanggit kung saang bansa nanggaling ang mga imported na basura.

Ang Pilipinas ay naging suki na para pagtapunan ng basura mula pa noong 2013 at magpahanggang ngayon. Umaabot sa 106 container van ng basura ang ipinadala ng Canada noong 2013 at 2014 at hanggang ngayon ay nasa bansa pa. Sabi, kukunin na raw ng Canada pero malabo pa kaya nagpasya si President Duterte na ang Pilipinas na ang gumastos para maibalik ang basura na kinabibilangan ng toxic wastes. Karamihan sa container ng basura ay tinapon na sa Tarlac.

Hindi lamang ang Canada ang nagtapon ng basura kundi pati na rin ang Australia at Hong Kong. Ang basura ng dalawang bansa ay dinala sa isang port sa Mindanao. Sabi ang basura ng Australia ay gagamitin daw ng isang cement company pero itinanggi naman ito ng kompanya. Nagdala rin ng basura ang South Korea pero nagkusa silang ibalik sa kanilang bansa.

Mas maganda kung magkakaisa ang mga bansa sa South East Asia na labanan ang mga bansang mayayaman na paboritong magtapon ng basura. Magdeklara ng giyera laban sa kanila gaya ng ginawa ni Duterte. Huwag pumayag na pagtambakan ng basura!

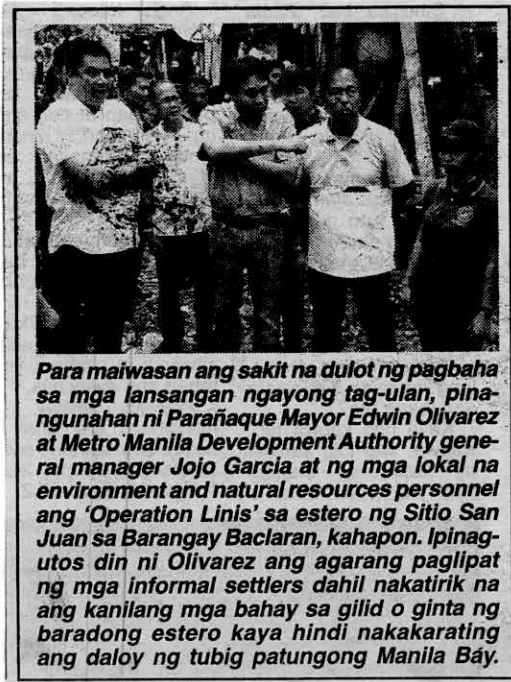




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**Para maiwasan ang sakit na dulot ng pagbaha sa mga lansangan ngayong tag-ulan, pina-
ngunahan ni Parañaque Mayor Edwin Olivarez at Metro Manila Development Authority general manager Jojo Garcia at ng mga lokal na environment and natural resources personnel ang 'Operation Linis' sa estero ng Sitio San Juan sa Barangay Baclaran, kahapon. Ipinag-
utos din ni Olivarez ang agarang paglipat ng mga informal settlers dahil nakatirik na ang kanilang mga bahay sa gilid o ginta ng baradong estero kaya hindi nakakarating ang daloy ng tubig patungong Manila Báy.**



Bio-wastes from 7 Bulacan hospitals pose hazard: COA

BY PETER TABINGO

GOVERNMENT auditors have warned of public health hazards posed by uncollected and improperly stored biological waste from seven public hospitals in Bulacan.

The warning was included in the 2018 audit report on the provincial government of Bulacan released by the Commission on Audit last May 23.

“Hazardous and infectious wastes generated by seven district hospitals were not regularly collected from six months to one year, thus exposed hospital patients, health workers, and the general public to the danger of human wastes, infectious diseases, and other toxic wastes,” the audit team said.

Based on the COA report, the Bulacan Medical Center, Rogaciano M. Mercado Memorial Hospital, and Emilio G. Perez

Memorial District Hospital were red-flagged for improper bagging and storage and piling up several months’ worth of uncollected hospital waste.

On the other hand, the Baliuag District Hospital, San Miguel District Hospital, and Calumpit District Hospital were credited for their efforts to implement an organized handling and storage of hospital wastes but non-collection for at least six months is stretching their systems to the limit.

The Gregorio Del Pilar District Hospital earned praise for its “organized disposal of hospital waste” in color-coded bags (yellow for bio-hazards and black for regular trash).

However, auditors noted the lack of a suitable space for temporary storage as the bags were simply stacked on the second-floor balcony of the hospital building.

The COA pinned the blame on

the provincial government for improperly assigning responsibilities over the Solid Waste Management to the General Services Office (GSO) rather than to the Bulacan Environmental and Natural Resources Office (BENRO).

Responding to the audit findings, the provincial government said the BENRO has already initiated consultations with Pollution Control Officers of each hospital to undertake quick steps to address the problem for the protection of its constituents.

“As a result, oversight on the quality assurance process on overall solid waste management was not effectively discharged as the latter Office performed mainly quarrying and revenue generation activities. No specific department or office was charged with solid waste and hospital waste management,” it pointed out.

Unless promptly addressed,

the COA warned that the growing pile of hospital waste could cause the spread of infectious diseases particularly for those who are regularly exposed like hospital workers, patients and residents in the immediate vicinity.

“Inquiry revealed that as late as February 2019, the permit of Cleanway, the province’s service provider on hauling of hospital wastes was still pending approval with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources hence the delay,” the COA added.

It reminded the provincial government that prevailing conditions in the district hospitals are in violation of several laws and regulations including RA 8749 or the Clean Air Act, RA 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, and the Department of Health Manual on Health Care Management.



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MMDA: Squatters, buildings occupy 50% of MM waterways

By EVELYN MACAIRAN

An official of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority has pointed to informal settlers and encroachment of buildings for occupying an estimated 350-kilometer stretch of *esteros* and other waterways in Metro Manila, making it difficult for the MMDA to implement clean-up activities.

In an interview with "The Chiefs" on Signal TV's *One News*, MMDA Flood Control and Sewerage Management

director Baltazar Melgar said about 50 percent or 350 kilometers of the *esteros* and other waterways cannot be accessed by their maintenance equipment because of informal settlers and encroachment of infrastructure such as buildings.

Melgar said about 273 national waterways, composed mainly of *esteros*, creeks, rivers and floodways, have three-meter easements, totaling 700 kilometers.

He admitted, though, that their maintenance equipment is unable to reach all of these areas because of obstructions,

mainly the informal settlers and establishments that have encroached on the waterways.

At present, Metro Manila has 62 pumping stations that Melgar says are all working. But he says waterways leading to the pumping stations "are problematic because they are clogged."

"In the natural waterways in some areas, there are informal settlers that constrict the flow of water toward the pumping station. Also, during the operation of our

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pumping station, we encounter garbage so we cannot fully operate our pumps," he added.

In each pumping station, the MMDA has around five to eight pumps, but the agency could not maximize the use of its pumps because of the presence of garbage.

Melgar emphasized that these pumping stations are vital in the flood mitigation program.

"They are not only used during the rainy season but even during the dry season since some parts of the metropolis, particularly in areas in Camanava (Cavite, Malabon, Navotas, Valenzuela) and areas along Laguna Lake, Manila Bay and Pasig River, experience flood even during high tide," he said.

The MMDA official explained that the topography of some areas is only "a bit high from sea level."

"So, during similar occurrence of high tide and heavy rainfall, we need to pump out from the land-side to Manila Bay," he said.

Despite the mitigating measures and flood control projects being undertaken by the government, Metro Manila is not spared from flooding because the "rainfall intensity is more than enough of the capacity of the waterways" and "the

rainfall is so strong that the waterways overflow," according to Melgar.

Part of the government's masterplan is to build a dam upstream to temporarily store the rainfall coming from Montalban, Rizal so it would not cascade down to Marikina City and contribute to the flooding.

Meanwhile, Department of Public Works and Highways-National Capital Region (NCR) director Ador Canlas said even if it is not yet the rainy season, the agency has already reactivated its disaster teams in nine district offices in the NCR.

But in order for the national masterplan to succeed in addressing the flood problem in Metro Manila, the participation of local government units (LGUs) is "very vital."

Canlas admitted that putting up the engineering aspect of the masterplan is the easier part of their job.

"It is the social and political aspect of the plan that is more difficult to resolve," he said. "We really need the support and cooperation of the LGUs in enforcing the laws."

Melgar added that LGUs need to address the problem of informal settlers, many of whom throw their garbage into the waterways and their shanties obstruct the flow of water.



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Clear the waterways

After the water shortages come the rains and floods. The torrential monsoons

are not yet upon us, but thunderstorms and sudden downpours are increasing, spawning flash floods and snarling traffic.

The official start of the rainy season usually coincides with the traditional school opening. In recent weeks, officials of various agencies have given assurance that they are ready for the onset of the rainy season.

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority has assured the public that all its water pumping stations are fully operational. Dredging of waterways is an ongoing program of the Department of Public Works and Highways. In Metro Manila, what is slowing down such flood control measures, according to DPWH and MMDA officials, is garbage clogging waterways.

The officials said garbage collection and dredging operations are hampered by the proliferation of informal settlers along the banks of waterways, as well as the encroachment of buildings and even private

EDITORIAL

residences on creeks and canals.

Clearing waterways of all types of obstructions requires the full cooperation of local government units. DPWH and MMDA officials, however, have noted that LGU executives often neglect their duty because informal settlements are sources of votes, while some of the owners of private properties blocking waterways may have political connections.

With the midterm elections over, perhaps there can be progress in efforts to permanently clear waterways of all illegal structures. Some of the newly elected mayors in Metro Manila have promised to build in-city vertical housing to provide viable relocation sites for squatters who will be evicted from the banks of waterways.

Such projects will take time. While waiting for these relocation sites to be completed, LGUs must do more to assist national agencies in cleaning up waterways. When the floods come, local executives who lack the political will to clean up will see their constituents suffer the most.



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RESCUED - Authorities release the three dolphins back to the sea after it got stranded in Hinigaran town in Negros Occidental last week. (F. Tingson Photo)

3 stranded dolphins rescued in Negros Occ.

By **GLAZYL MASCULINO**

BACOLOD CITY - Three pygmy killer whales were rescued after they were stranded in the waters of Barangay Gargato in Hinigaran, Negros Occidental, last May 24.

According to Lumba Project, a website about the critically endangered Irrawaddy dolphins found in Bago and Pulupandan areas in the province, the pygmy killer whales are very social animals and are sometimes associated

with other oceanic dolphins such as melon-headed whales, killer whales, pilot whales, false killer whales, and Risso's dolphins called as blackfish. This is a first record for this species in Guimaras Strait.

They were released back to the sea, after authorities checked them.

Two of them got stranded again in the neighboring city of Kabankalan, but they were unharmed.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), Bantay Dagat, and Bantay Katunggan of Kabankalan

City responded and released them back to the sea.

Authorities are calling on coastal residents in southern Negros to report to authorities if the animals are stranded again.



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One million species face extinction – UN

We can no longer
continue to destroy the
diversity of life

By Elmer N. Manuel

The United Nations (UN) recently revealed that nearly one million species risk becoming extinct within decades, while current efforts to conserve the earth's resources will likely fail without radical action.

In its report into the impact of humans on nature, UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay said that its findings put the world "on notice."

"Following the adoption of this historic report, no one will be able to claim that they did not know," the head of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization said. "We can no longer continue to destroy the diversity of life. This is our responsibility towards future generations."

Highlighting the universal importance of biodiversity - the diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems - Azoulay said that protecting it "is as vital as fighting climate change".

Presented to more than 130 government delegations for their approval at UNESCO headquarters, the report features the work of 400 experts from at least 50 countries, coordinated by the Bonn-based Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

In addition to providing exhaustive insights on the state of nature, ecosystems and how nature underpins all human activity, the study also discusses progress on key international goals, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

The report also examines five main drivers of "unprecedented" biodiversity and ecosystem change over the past 50 years, identifying them as changes in land and sea use; direct exploitation of organisms; climate change, pollution and invasion of alien species.





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STILL AT CRITICAL MARK

RAINS FAIL TO RAISE WATER LEVEL AT ANGAT DAM

CITY OF MALOLOS—Despite the rains since Sunday, the water elevation in Angat Dam, which supplies more than 90 percent of the water needs of Metro Manila, has remained at a critical level, according to dam operators.

On Tuesday, the elevation dropped to 169.88 meters above sea level (masl), and was

far below the normal high level of 210-214 masl.

On Sunday, the elevation was at 170.45 masl, down from the 172 masl a week ago.

Officials manning the now privatized Angat hydroelectric power plant said it would take a strong typhoon to raise the dam elevation. The lowest water elevation in the dam was at 157.57

masl recorded on July 13, 2010.

Angat Dam's elevation is critically low when it is at 160.00 masl.

The water level in Bustos Dam, which catches water released by Angat Dam for irrigation, was at 14.50 masl on Tuesday, down from its spilling level of 17.50 masl.

The dam is also a source of

water for Metro Manila and for irrigation of more than 25,000 hectares of rice farms in 17 towns in Bulacan province and four towns in Pampanga province.

The National Irrigation Administration stopped the release of irrigation water to these farms on May 16 to give priority to the water needs of Metro Manila.

—CARMELA REYES-ESTROPE INQ

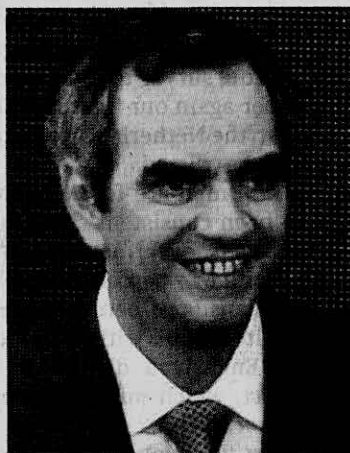
RAZON-VIOLAGO JOINT VENTURE

WAWA WATER PROJECT SEEN TO EASE WATER SUPPLY WOES BY 2021

By Ronnel W. Domingo
@RonWDomingoINQ

The water crisis which recently plagued Metro Manila and neighboring provinces could be a thing of the past two years from now after the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System approved the Wawa Bulk Water Supply Project which will start commercial operations by 2021.

The Wawa project is a joint venture between Enrique Razon's Prime Infra and businessman Oscar Violago's San Lorenzo Ruiz Builders Group (SLRB).



Enrique Razon

The Razon-led joint venture has stepped up its development work to ensure water supply delivery of 80 million liters per day (MLD) by 2021 and over 500 MLD by 2025.

Work with concessionaire

"We thank the decisive leadership of MWSS for the approval of the project," said Razon, chair and chief executive of Prime Infra. "We assure them of our commitment to help in solving the current water crisis."

"We are excited to working with their concessionaire in ad-

ressing this potentially recurring problem," Razon said in a statement, referring to Manila Water Co. Inc. which is the off-taker or customer of the Wawa project.

The Wawa dam in Rizal province used to be the primary source of water of Metro Manila before the Angat dam in Bulacan was built.

According to Guillaume Lucci, Prime Infra president and chief operating officer, said the company looks forward to finalizing the remaining issues related to the Wawa project—includ-

ing on the ongoing review of the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel (OGCC) and the MWSS-Regulatory Office to accelerate project execution, "considering the criticality of delivering the much-needed water supply in the East Zone (concession area)."

Over 20 years of work

Lucci said the Wawa project was the culmination of over 20 years of development work by SLRB in addition to over two years of cooperation with Prime Infra.

SLRB president and chief ex-

ecutive Anthony Jude Violago said all the issues that caused the project's delay were now water under the bridge that "will now flow to Metro Manila residents, solving the current water problems."

The joint-venture partners reiterated MWSS statements that the impact of the Wawa project on water rates was expected to be "very minimal."

They said the total cost of the project would be cost-effective compared to other water source options because of the strategic location, in Rizal where Manila Water is already operating. INQ



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Wawa bulk water deal awaits more regulatory approvals

By **MADELAINE B. MIRAFLOR**

After getting the green light from the Board of Trustees of Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), the Wawa Bulk Water Supply Project proposal of port magnate Enrique Razon and businessman Oscar Violago is still short of two more regulatory approvals before it can proceed.

The Wawa Bulk Water Supply project will be done under a private off take arrangement between WawaJVCO and Manila Water Company, Inc.

WawaJVCO is the joint venture company of Razon's Prime Infra and Violago's San Lorenzo Ruiz Builders and Developers Group (SLRBD).

In a statement, Guillaume Lucci, Prime Infra president and COO, said the company now looks forward to finalizing the "remaining issues" on the on-going review of the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel (OGCC) and the MWSS-Regulatory Office to accelerate project's execution.

The Wawa Bulk Water Supply

project is expected to provide at least 80 million litres per day (MLD) to the East Zone concession starting year 2021 and up to 500 MLD by year 2025.

While Prime Infra didn't disclose the project cost, the company said that the tariff impact of Wawa Bulk Water Supply project is expected to be very minimal since the total systems cost of the project will be cost-effective compared to other water source options because of the strategic location of the water supply source within the east zone concession.

The approval of MWSS Board of Trustees on the project comes with the resolution of the long-standing legal issues between the MWSS and Violago, which has prevented for over 10 years the implementation of the bulk water supply project.

Violago, who is involved in the construction of hydropower plants, began proposing to convert Wawa Watershed in Montalban, Rizal into a dam in the early 1990s. In 1993, he claimed he obtained the water rights to develop the Wawa Dam Project but MWSS and the National Water Resources Board

(NWRB) still won't allow him to push through with it.

He even claimed that Manila Water "wants to grab" the project from him.

In a statement, SLRB President and CEO Anthony Jude C. Violago thanked the MWSS Board and their partners for "finding a win-win conclusion to this project."

"After 20 years, my father's vision will finally come to fruition. This is now all water under the bridge, which will now flow to Metro Manila residents, solving the current water problems," the younger Violago said.

The Wawa Bulk Water Supply project is one of the medium-term projects MWSS brought to the table after Manila Water's water shortage issue sparked public outrage in March.

To recall, as Metro Manila's major dams run out of water a few months ago, Manila Water had to implement low to no water supply interruption, affecting 1.2 million of its customers.

Because of that, Manila Water faced multiple fines, including a self-imposed penalty. All in all, the issue costed the Ayala-led company nearly ₱2 billion.



'Perennial MM water crisis resolved in 2 years'

The perennial water shortage in Metro Manila and areas to its eastern borders may be fully resolved in two years, according to proponents of a new water project.

The assurance comes on the heels of the approval by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) of the Wawa Bulk Water Supply Project, a joint venture between businessmen Enrique Razon's Prime Infra and Oscar Violago's San Lorenzo Ruiz Builders Group (SLRB).

With the green light from the MWSS, Razon assured the public that the project will be fast-tracked so at least 80 million liters of water a day will be available by 2021 for areas serviced by Manila Water.

"We thank the decisive leadership of MWSS for the approval of the project and assure them of our commitment to help in solving the current water crisis," Razon, chairman of Prime Infra, said.

The project will tap water from the Wawa Dam in Rizal province to add supply to Manila Water's concession areas. Up to 500 million liters a day are expected to be added to the supply by 2025. It will raise Manila

Water's supply by 30 percent.

Wawa Dam was the primary water source of Metro Manila before Angat Dam was built.

The Razon-led venture is prepared to invest up to P20 billion for the project to ensure water-supply security over the medium- and long-term.

"Our project is one of the fastest and most sustainable ways to solve this current water crisis. If we don't act now, this will be a recurring problem," Razon said.

SLRB president and chief executive officer Anthony Jude Violago thanked the MWSS, Manila Water and Razon for hammering out a "win-win formula" to the much-delayed project.

The project had been in the works for 20 years, including two years of joint development work between Razon and Violago.

"After 20 years, my father's vision will finally come to fruition. Water will now flow to Metro Manila residents, solving the current water problems," the younger Violago said.

MWSS chairman Franklin Demonteverde and administrator Reynaldo Velasco announced the

agency's approval of the joint venture on May 23. The approval was made in two separate board meetings on May 9 and May 22.

The MWSS and the Office of the Government Corporate Council (OGCC) are finalizing the remaining issues on the project.

"We look forward to finalizing the remaining issues on the ongoing review of the OGCC and the MWSS-Regulatory Office to accelerate project execution, considering the criticality of delivering the much-needed water supply in the east zone," Prime Infra president and chief operating officer Guillaume Lucci said.

Securing water supply is one of the cornerstones of his administration, and the Wawa bulk water supply project is a critical and integral part of the vision, according to Velasco.

"It is among the priority initiatives committed to President Duterte in addressing the current water supply deficit, which government resources cannot afford, and this is the reason why a private sector-led development

of bulk supply of water was sought," he said in a statement.

The tariff impact of the Wawa bulk water supply project is expected to be very minimal since the total systems cost of the project will be cost-effective compared to other water source options because of the strategic location of the water supply source within the east zone concession.