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# DENR

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## #nationataglance

CORDILLERA ADMINISTRATIVE REGION: BAGUIO CITY

### 7 years after closure order

THE 5.2-hectare Irian open dumpsite in Baguio City has been confirmed to be still operating despite a closure order issued by the National Solid Waste Management Commission in 2012. During a visit to the site last week, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Unit Concerns Benny D. Antiporda (right photo) directed the Environmental Management Bureau in the Cordillera Administrative Region to immediately issue a cease and desist order (CDO) to the Baguio City government. Mr. Antiporda said the CDO will be issued pending explanation of non-compliance to the closure order and the submission of a Safe Closure and Rehabilitation Plan as required under Republic Act No. 9003, the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.



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# Rehab of Baguio's Balili River sought

By Rio N. Araja

**T**HE Department of Environment and Natural Resources is eyeing the rehabilitation of Balili River in Baguio City, which it said was worse than Manila Bay.

Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Unit Concerns Benny Antiporda said the river has a high coliform level that is even worse than that of the Manila Bay.

He, along with the other officials from the central office, inspected the city's 33-year-old sewerage treatment

plant as part of the planned rehabilitation of the country's summer capital.

Antiporda said he was alarmed after finding out that the Balili River, to which the treated waters of the sewerage treatment plant drains, has severely deteriorated.

Data from the DENR's Environ-

mental Management Bureau in the Cordillera Administrative Region showed that the river's fecal coliform level was at 1.6 trillion most probable number per 100 milliliters (mpn/100ml).

"This is far worse than Manila Bay which holds a record of 35 million mpn/100ml," Antiporda said.

Earlier, the DENR ordered the temporary closure of Irisan dump, also in Baguio City, after finding out during a surprise inspection it was operating as an open dump, which is a violation of Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.



## Baguio Balili River rehab isusunod ng DENR

**MATAPOS** ang pagpapasara sa Irisan dumpsite, kinokonsidera ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources ang rehabilitasyon sa Baguio City's Balili River na ang lebel ng coliform ay mas masahol pa sa Manila Bay.

Itinugon ng DENR ang kanyang atensyon sa Balili River matapos mag-inspeksyon ang mga opisyal ng DENR sa pangunguna ni Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and LGU Concerns Benny D. Antiporda sa may 33-taong Sewerage Treatment Plant ng lungsod bilang bahagi ng isinagawang

rehabilitation sa itinuturing na summer capital ng bansa.

Naalarna ang grupo ni Antiporda matapos makita ang Balili River na ang STP na naglilinis sana ng tubig sa ilog ay sobra nang luma.

Ayon sa data mula sa DENR Environmental Management Bureau sa Cordillera Administrative Region ay nagpapakita na ang fecal coliform level ng ilog ay nasa 1.6 trillion na tinatayang ang number per 100 milliliters (mpn/100ml).

"This is far worse than Manila Bay which holds a record of 35 million mpn/100ml," ani pa ni Antiporda.

Nabatid pa sa ulat na base sa DENR Administrative Order 2016-08 ang tanggap na fecal coliform level para sa Class A rivers gaya ng Balili River ay dapat lang ay 4 mpn/100ml.

Ayon pa sa DENR ang STP ay nagsimulang maging opera-

syunal nitong 1986 at dinisenyo para mag-treat ng 8,500 cubic meters (cu.m) per day. Sa kasalukuyan ang pasilidad ay naglilinis ng 6,500 cbm/day at umabot pa sa 12,000 cu.m/day sa panahon ng tag-ulan.

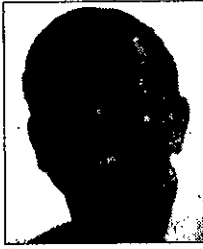
Nitong nakalipas na Oktubre 2018 ang DENR ay inaprubahan ang compliance action plan para sa STP pursuant sa DAO 2016-08. Ang CAP ay nirebisa at inaprubahan nitong nakalipas na Abril at may validity hanggang Disyembre 2022.

Nauna rito, iniutos ng DENR ang pansamantalang pagpapasara sa Irisan dumpsite matapos makita sa isinagawang sorpresang inspeksyon na isinagawa ng grupo ni Usec. Antiporda na nag-ooperate ito bilang open dumpsite na mahigpit na ipinagbabawal sa ilalim ng Republic Act 9003 o ang Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000. **SANTI CELARIO**

## CTALK CITO BELTRAN

### Baguio: An urban Lazarus

Millions of Filipinos who love Baguio City formerly known as the City of Pines have long mourned the slow decay or death of the country's "Summer Capital." They often say "Sayang" or "What a loss" referring to one of the country's top tourist attractions. There was a time when Baguio City's biggest problem was having too many tourists. But today, that is hardly the case. What Baguio City has too much of are: air polluting PUVs, too many houses, too much construction that violate building code, too much garbage, and too much conflict of interest or vested interest at the expense of this once beautiful and historic city. Compared to the city you walked in the '60s to '70s most who dare to visit Baguio now limit their activities to the Camp John Hay premises, the Loakan area because the over commercialization and "illegal" urbanization of Baguio City has rendered it practically dead.



But beginning today, there is hope that Baguio City might just be able to become the equivalent of an Urban Lazarus that could rise from the grave or grave state that it's in. A new mayor steps into City hall today namely Mayor Benjamin "Benjie" Magalong who made a name for himself in the Philippine National Police as head of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) as well as the lead investigator on the Mamasapano Massacre where 44 uniformed men of the Special Action Force (SAF-44) were massacred in Mindanao. Weeks after winning the election, many business people and residents of Baguio City have responded positively to the entry of Magalong. People I know have said that they are going to volunteer their help and resources to Magalong because Baguio is in desperate need of resuscitation after years of neglect. Many in fact applauded the announcement of Magalong that the first official meeting of the city leaders will be held right at the Irisan Garbage Dump "so city officials can experience the stench and see the trash" that has been ignored for more than a decade".

The greatest challenge of Mayor Magalong will be making the real people of Baguio understand that it is their place and therefore they should be the first to take ownership of the problems, admit that they have been part of the problem and the resurrection and rebirth of Baguio will happen through them and not through Magalong or the millions of Filipinos who are from the lowlands but whose love for Baguio lead them to call themselves "Baguio Boys" or "Baguio girls". The situation reminded me of a time in Boracay some 25 years ago when I joined local business and property owners on the island and they were warned about selling their heritage to foreign or "Manila-based" investors and abusing the environment. The locals pushed back with a tinge of pride claiming their right to self-determination and one islander going so far as saying "We born here.

We have the right to do what we want and we will die here." Twenty five years later it took a hard line President to cleanup the mess and now he has to sort out who are the legal owners, dummy owners and dummy corporations that have turn "Paradise" into a center of commerce on white sand!

While writing this column, I tried to figure out how a "low lander" like Mayor Magalong could possibly handle the proud people of Baguio and for some strange reason the memory of another tough cop and former Baguio Councilor came to mind. He is none other than the former police chief and former councilor Bobby "Bungo" Ortega and his nom de guerre "Markang Bungo" refers to his legendary reputation of being the angel of death for hard core criminals who use to reap terror and mayhem in the streets of Baguio and nearby vicinities. The true residents of Baguio come from a proud race of warriors and they honor men and women with noble intent, who possess wisdom, who bring visions and solutions to the table with respect and more importantly one who is resolute in the presence of "warriors".

Having spent many summers and evenings with "local relations", I have learned that in Baguio City, things get done through "the tribe and their Elders" whether it is clans, barangays or business groups and especially churches. Many lowlanders don't notice it and folks in Baguio tend to take it for granted, but Baguio City probably has one of the biggest number of Christian churches in the country, they have many radio programs on radio daily, and their members form a large population of Baguio city. As Mayor, Benjie Magalong may now be the Chief among all chiefs, but he must sit down with each chief, give him the honor to lead on a specific project and let all of Baguio know that Chief so and so and his tribe is in charge of the project or the problem. By so doing the honor is given, the reputation is on the line and the challenge is made public.

If the good Mayor would allow me, just one more suggestion, on the matter, he should move heaven and earth to organize, consolidate and incorporate as many women of Baguio to be directly involved in the many redemption projects for the City. As a "Baguio Boy" Benjie Magalong would know that in Baguio, the men talk but the women lead, the women push, they'll even nag, but they get more things done than most men. In the Ilocano nation, the power is with the woman!

As for all of us Low Landers who Love Baguio, try to help out through social media, word of mouth prayers or volunteerism. Join tree-planting projects, give money or create a fund or start up your own project to help restore Baguio City so we can pass on the legacy to the next generation. If Mayor Magalong gets to read this piece: Please count me in!

\* \* \*

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# Manila Standard

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## Bambang opens P65-m sanitary landfill

BAMBANG, Nueva Vizcaya—The local government in this town recently inaugurated its new P65-million sanitary landfill in barangay Aliaga here.

Lawyer Antonio Abawag, Department of Environment and Natural Resources Regional Executive Director for Cagayan Valley, represented Secretary Roy Cimatu and led the inauguration of the engineered waste management facility, touted as the first of its kind in the region.

He also extended the praise and appreciation of Cimatu to the LGU of Bambang to address the garbage situation in the municipality.

“Whether we like it or not, garbage will always be with us and its volume will increase correspondingly as the population grows, hence, we need a right place to dispose our garbage in a proper manner without any risk to public health,” Abawag said.

Quoting Cimatu’s message, Abawag also reminded local officials to exert conscious effort to change the culture of insensitivity and indiscretion among the people.

“Conceiving and enforcing ways to keep our surrounding clean will be futile as long as some people and entities remain thoughtless and wanton in the disposal of their wastes,” he added.

Abawag also expressed optimism that municipalities will follow suit in properly managing solid wastes for a clean environment.

He also reported that river and estero cleanups are now regularly conducted by the DENR with the stakeholders.

For his part, Bambang outgoing mayor, lawyer Flaviano Balgos Jr., said waste segregation should start at source for the facility to last.

He also challenged the incoming administration to be forward-looking and always consider the future of the children as he emphasized that the government is serious in the enforcement of environmental laws.

To ensure the protection of public health and environment, the local government units are mandated to be primarily responsible in the implementation and enforcement of Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management of 2000 within their respective jurisdictions.

It likewise mandates the LGUs to construct, operate and maintain waste disposal site.



# Ifugao's 'muyong', stakeholders' support key to a clean, healthy river

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA [@jonlmayuga](#)

**A**S severe water-supply shortage grips Metro Manila with the water level at Angat Dam reaching critical level, the importance of finding and securing new and reliable freshwater sources are highlighted anew.

Maynilad Water Services Inc. and Manila Water Co., the two private water concessionaires of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, are already drawing water from the Laguna de Bay, the country's largest freshwater lake, to augment the water supply from Angat Dam.

Recognizing the threat of water scarcity, Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu has called on Metro Manila water consumers to conserve and practice rainwater harvesting for nonessential water uses like washing cars, watering plants and flushing toilets.

Some of the major programs of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) aim to provide a lasting solution to the perennial water-supply shortage affecting the National Capital Region every summer, which is compounded currently by the El Niño phenomenon, or the so-called dry spell.

## 'Clean water' programs

THE DENR has an Adopt-an-Estero/River Program, which aims to rehabilitate some of the country's dirtiest rivers, with the hope of restoring them to their pristine state, at best, or at least, for the ecosystem to continue to support life.

Under the Clean Water Act, the DENR also seeks to declare Water Quality Management Areas all over the country and implement a strict management regime that will ensure the sustainable use of water in identified water bodies, depending on their water quality.

An island archipelago comprising of 7,641 islands and islets, the country is endowed with 18 major river basins, 421 rivers and 79 natural lakes.

Thus, the importance of rivers as a freshwater source cannot be over-emphasized. It is the life vein of the planet. Without rivers, the forest, including all wildlife, will not survive. Rivers are important for human survival, as the water it provides are used for irrigation, to grow food and raise livestock.

Protecting and conserving rivers are a global concern. The Sustainable Development Goals No. 6 on Clean Water and Sanitation highlights the need to protect and restore water-related ecosystems, such as forests, mountains, wetlands and rivers, if we are to mitigate water scarcity.

## Rivers for Life: Lamut River

ON its 32nd anniversary on June 14, the DENR announced the first Rivers for Life Awards winners.

Launched last year, Rivers, which stands for Recognizing Individuals/Institutions Towards Vibrant and Enhanced Rivers, is a nationwide search

for the cleanest rivers to give recognition to individuals and institutions for their efforts to protect and conserve the country's rivers.

The Lamut River in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) was adjudged as the country's cleanest river when it bagged the first prize in the Rivers for Life Awards, while the Calbayog and Manaba rivers in Samar and Bohol, respectively, bagged the second and third prize. Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu handed the awards.

## Ifugao's 'muyong' system

ONE of the primary rivers in the province of Ifugao, Lamut River's water comes from watersheds sustained through the *muyong* system, a traditional knowledge system and practice of the indigenous people of Ifugao.

Various literature has been written about *muyong*. Moises Butic, then-OIC of the Ifugao Provincial Environment and Natural Resources (Penro), and Robert Nidlo, assistant professor in Silviculture at the Department of Forestry in Ifugao State College of Agriculture and Forestry, said in a paper that *muyong* "gained international recognition as an ideal forest management strategy that is, deeply ingrained in the culture of the Ifugao people." Silviculture is the process of tending, harvesting and regenerating a forest.

*Muyong* can also be viewed from different perspectives, either as a forest conservation strategy, a watershed rehabilitation technique, a farming system or an assistant natural regeneration strategy.



I Ifugao's "Muyong" Stakeholders' Support Key to a clean, healthy River

### Traditional forest management

THE paper, titled "Muyong forest of Ifugao: Assisted natural regeneration in traditional forest management," concluded that indigenous forest management systems, such as the Ifugao's *muyong*, could be very good tools in promoting forest development and watershed management, including agriculture.

As an assisted natural regeneration strategy, the *muyong* system uses agroforestry and multiple cropping, enrichment planting and protection to enhance diversity, efficient silvicultural systems characterized by thinning, cleaning, pruning and salvage cutting of trees to enhance the growth and development of natural stands.

Harvesting of timber crops is highly selective by nature, and seasonal, except in extreme cases where wood is urgently needed, and with whole tree harvesting and good wood utilization practice.

### Multiple-use river

A 41.82-KILOMETER river with nine tributaries, the Lamut River covers the towns of Asipulo, Kiangan and Lamut in Ifugao.

Its water drains to the Magat River Irrigation System on the boundaries of Alfonso Lista in Ifugao and Ramon in Isabela. Lamut River's water has four primary purposes—irrigation, domestic, industrial and hydroelectric.

The DENR CAR has sustained partnership with various stakeholders for the benefit of the river and communities that share the river.

From March to April, readings from water samples obtained from three water quality monitoring stations along the river revealed that biochemical oxygen demand is consistently 1 milligram per liter, which means it can sustain aquatic life and ecosystem.

In terms of dissolved oxygen, readings reveal above-minimum standard for Class C Freshwater, which is 5 milligram per liter.

### Solid-waste management

TO ensure that Lamut River is kept clean and healthy, the municipality of Lamut strictly implements the scheduled collection of garbage, especially in the town's central business districts and surrounding barangays.

On the other hand, Municipal Ordinance 3 requires all households to have their own backyard compost pits, hence, only nonbiodegradable waste are left out for collection and disposal.

Ordinances against littering, throwing and dumping of garbage were also enacted by the municipality.

Also, policies at the municipal and barangay levels, such as disposal of recyclable wastes, were implemented.

The municipality has also signed a memorandum of agreement with a local junk shop in Santiago, Isabela, for proper disposal of recyclable waste.

The DENR-CAR, meanwhile, collaborated with the government of Lamut for the construction of engineered sanitary landfill with a materials-recovery facility (MRF) for proper waste segregation.

Each barangay in Lamut is also required to have its own MRF and is mandated to strictly monitor and implement various environmental laws, particularly the Clean Water Act and the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act.

### Community support, cooperation

FLORENCIO PACIO, the Community Environment and Natural Resources officer for Lamut, attributed the pristine state of the river partly to the time-tested *muyong* system.

However, he said the cooperation of the communities, was key to the river's bagging the first-ever Rivers for Life Award.

"Since the Rivers for Life [award] was announced, we sought the cooperation of the communities. Through the LGU, we conducted information,

education and communication [campaign], and told them about Lamut River as our entry. The communities were a big help because, after that, regular cleanups were conducted with the help of the communities" he said in mixed Filipino and English.

Pacio said the Lamut model will likely be implemented in rehabilitating other rivers in Ifugao and the rest of CAR.

"The Rivers for Life [award] was a big help, and our experience in Lamut encouraged us to enhance our efforts in other areas," he added.

### Every Filipino's responsibility

CIMATU said the award aims to raise public awareness on the need to protect and conserve the country's rivers as the lifeblood of the Earth.

"We aim to tap concerted action to protect the country's rivers from degradation and pollution, and ensure their suitability, sustainability and further improvement," the DENR chief said during a brief speech.

Cash prizes of P100,000, P75,000 and P50,000 were given to the first, second and third prize winners, respectively.

"Rivers and creeks drain to bigger waterbodies and affect their condition. This is similar with Pasig River, which drains to Manila Bay. Thus, ensuring the cleanliness of rivers is among our top priorities," he said.

For his part, Environment Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units concerns Benny D. Antiporda said the Rivers for Life Awards is the DENR's eye-opener for all Filipinos to bear in mind that the conservation and protection of the country's rivers are the responsibility of every Filipino.

"After all, the rivers are the lifeblood of the Earth," Antiporda said.

The award, he said, is also a great opportunity to work with different stakeholders to prevent further pollution and degradation of rivers in our country.

"The key here are collaboration and support toward a common goal: clean and healthy rivers for us and the next generations. The Rivers for Life reminds us that it's not too late for every Filipino to have access to clean water," he added.

**“The Rivers for Life [award] was a big help, and our experience in Lamut encouraged us to enhance our efforts in other areas.”—PACIO**





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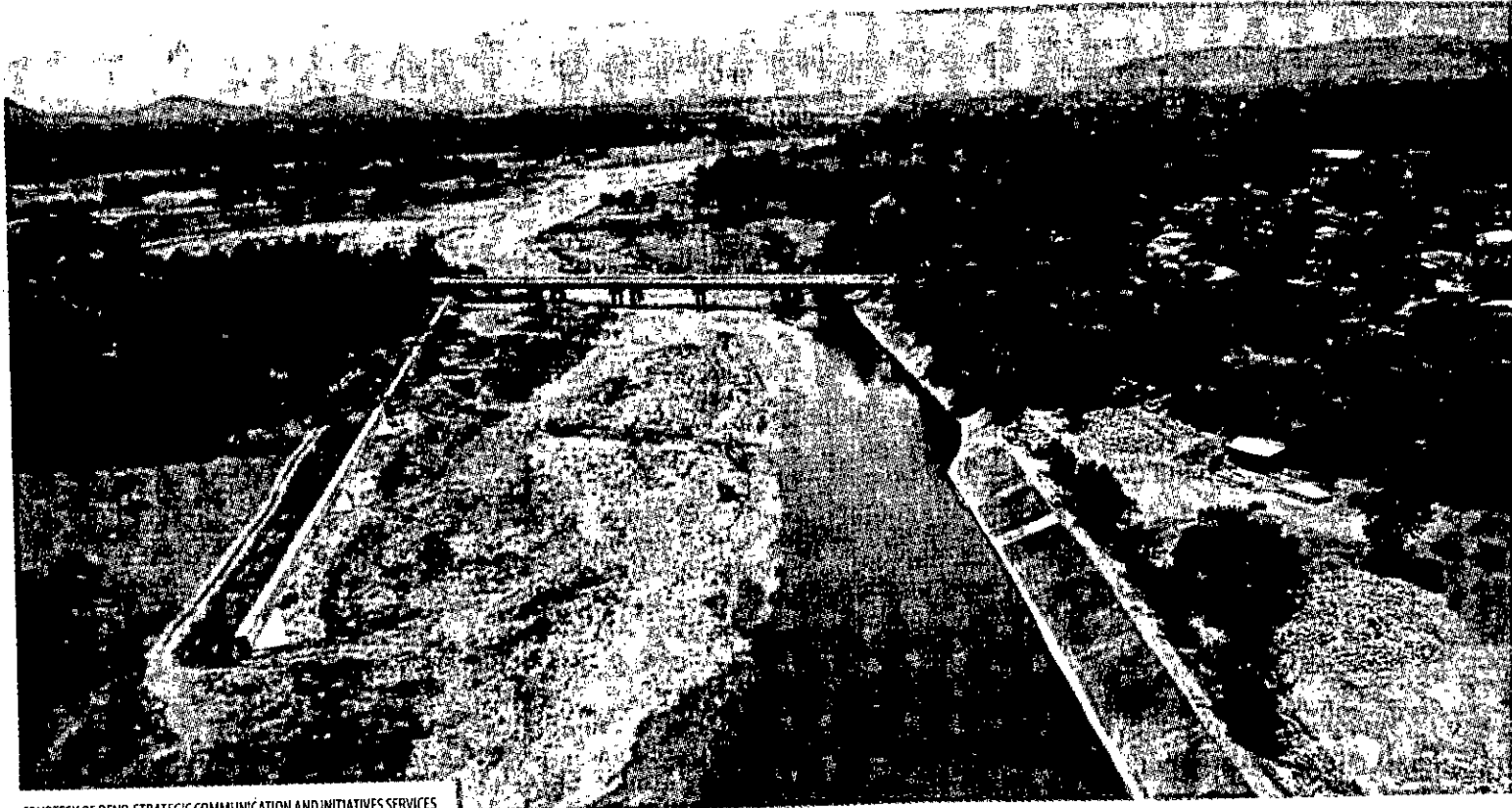
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*A broader look at today's business*

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**NO REASON YET TO REJOICE**

# ANGAT DAM WATER UP SLIGHTLY

**By Jhesset O. Enano**  
@JhessetEnanoINQ

Following weeks of consistent decrease, the water level in Angat Dam slightly went up on Sunday, all thanks to the heavy monsoon rains in the past few days.

Residents reeling from a water shortage across Metro Manila and nearby provinces, however, should not yet fully rejoice as the gradual rise or fall

of the water level in the next few weeks would depend on the weather systems that will affect the southwest monsoon or "habagat," according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa).

As of 6 a.m. on Sunday, the elevation at Angat was recorded at 158.64 meters above sea level (masl), up by 0.68 from the previous day. It marked the first time

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**STILL FAR FROM RELIEF** It rained for several days but only a slight increase of 0.68 meter was reported on Sunday in the water level of Angat Dam, the main source of water for Metro Manila. Sunday's reading of 158.64 meters above sea level was still below the critical level of 160. —GRIG C. MONTEGRANDE

## ANGAT DAM WATER UP SLIGHTLY

### FROM A1

that the water level rose after it breached the critical level of 160 masl on June 20.

Pagasa hydrologist Richard Orendain said the continuous heavy rains over the dam's watershed had contributed to the increase.

The watershed is part of the Sierra Madre Mountain Range, near the boundary of Quezon and Rizal provinces, where it rained heavily in the past few days.

"By Monday, even if there is no rainfall, we can expect that the water level will still increase as the water from the mountains will take some time to travel to the watershed," Orendain told the Inquirer.

### Tropical Depression 'Egay'

The rain showers are caused by the southwest monsoon enhanced by Tropical Depression "Egay," located east of the country.

While Egay is not expected to make landfall, it will still bring monsoon rains to Metro Manila, Calabarzon, Mimaropa and the provinces of Bataan, Pangasinan and Zambales on Monday.

As of 3 p.m. on Sunday, it was spotted 565 kilometers east of Casiguran, Aurora

province, and was moving west-northwest at 30 km per hour.

As a tropical depression, it is a weak storm, as it packs maximum sustained winds of 55 kph near the center and gustiness of up to 65 kph.

Egay is expected to exit the Philippine area of responsibility by Wednesday.

Orendain said the monsoon might weaken, which means less rain, if no other low-pressure area (LPA) would build up after Egay.

"Frankly speaking, the increase in the Angat Dam may not continue once we have a monsoon break. But if we have another LPA after Egay, then the rains may persist," he said.

### Another LPA

The state weather bureau is monitoring another LPA, this time over the West Philippine Sea.

"But it may only bring a few rain showers because it will pull the clouds toward its center, so instead of the rain falling on the western side of the country, we might even have fewer showers," Orendain said.

The new LPA may bring rains to the western section of northern and central Luzon, but only light rains to Metro Manila and the Visayas.

Due to the uncertainty over Angat Dam's water level,

Orendain advised the public to conserve water as service interruptions may continue across the metropolis and adjacent provinces.

He said the watershed needed about 370 millimeters of rainfall during a single occasion to raise it to the normal operating level of 180 masl.

The middle of July often marks the recovery period for Angat, as more and more rains begin to replenish the depleting stock.

### La Mesa Dam

Orendain noted that the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System had not yet drawn water anew from La Mesa Dam even if it had benefited from recent rains.

On Sunday, La Mesa's water level was recorded at 71.5 masl, up by 0.55 meters from the previous day. Its low critical mark is at 69 masl.

Consumers hit by the service interruptions had been patiently hoping for more rains over the watershed.

Several areas in Metro Manila and nearby provinces, such as Cavite, had been reeling from 12 to 17 hours of no water supply due to the receding water level in the dam, after the National Water Resources Board slashed the water supply to 36 cubic meters per second from the original 46 cms. INQ

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THE EXHIBIT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS  
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## Rains bring water level at Angat up slightly

By ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ

The monsoon rains have slightly increased Angat Dam's critically low water level, which have fallen consistently since the start of El Niño early this year.

Based on the monitoring of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), the water level at Angat Dam rose to 158.64 meters on Sunday, or 0.68 m higher than the 157.96 m last Saturday.

However, it is still below the 160m critical level for domestic water supply.

The National Water Resources Board (NWRB) is optimistic that the Angat watershed will continue be fed by the monsoon rains in the coming days.

Before Sunday noon, PAGASA said tropical depression "Egay," which intensified from a low pressure area last Saturday night, was at 585 kilometers east-northeast of Virac, Catanduanes.

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## Rains bring water... ◀1

It was moving at 20 kilometers per hour (kph) northwest and may not make landfall over the Philippines.

Egay however will enhance the southwest monsoon or habagat that will bring monsoon rains over Metro Manila, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, Pangasinan, Abra, Benguet, Ifugao, Kalinga, Mountain Province, Apayao, Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Tarlac, Zambales, Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon, Oriental Mindoro, Oc-

cidental Mindoro, Marinduque, Palawan, Romblon, Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes, Sorsogon, Masbate, Antique and Aklan.

Cloudy skies with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms are expected over the rest of Luzon and Visayas.



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# Water level in Angat Dam inches up

By **ROMINA CABRERA**

After months of decline, water level in Angat Dam, the primary water source of Metro Manila, has finally increased.

Data from the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) showed that water level in Angat increased slightly from Saturday's 157.96 meters to 158.65

meters yesterday.

The increase was due to Tropical Depression Egay, which is expected to bring more rains to most parts of Luzon today.

Water level in Angat dam reached the critical 160 meters on June 22, prompting the the National Water Resources Board to reduce water allocation to residents in Metro Manila.



## Angat water level rises due to rains

BY VICTOR REYES

WATER level at Angat Dam, the main source of Metro Manila's water supply, rose by .68 meter yesterday, thanks to rains brought by the southwest monsoon.

Angat had a water level of 158.64 meters as of 6 a.m. yesterday, from 157.96 meters the previous day, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

Last January, Angat had a water level of 214 meters, four meters above the normal high level, but dipped to a year-low 157.96 meters as of last Saturday due to the El Niño phenomenon.

Angat Dam's normal operating level is 180 meters that was breached on April 20. The dam registered its all-time lowest water level in July 2010, hitting 157.56 meters during a similar El Niño phenomenon.

Last Wednesday, National Water Resources Board Executive Director Seville David Jr. said the dam may register its new all-time lowest elevation "in the next couple of days or before this weekend" if the needed rains

### ANGAT

would not come.

Southwest monsoon rains, enhanced by recent tropical cyclones, came in abundance over the past several days.

Water level at La Mesa Dam in Quezon City also rose to 71.50 meters as of yesterday morning, from 70.95 meters on Saturday. But Ipo Dam's water level dipped to 100.61 meters yesterday, from 100.92 meters the previous day.

The dip in Angat's water level over the past months forced authorities to implement rotational service interruptions.

David has said they cannot bring water allocation to the normal level even if Angat regains its normal operating level of 180 meters. He said they will continue to manage water allocation to ensure consistent water requirements for the rest of the year.

Tropical depression "Egay" was estimated at 565 kms east of

Casiguran, Aurora as of 3 p.m. yesterday, with maximum sustained winds of 55 kph near the center and gustiness of up to 65 kph and moving west northwest.

Weather specialist Gener Quitlong said Egay is not expected to make landfall.

Quitlong said Egay is expected to be 545 kms east northeast east of Casiguran, Aurora this morning, 105 kms northeast of Basco, Batanes on Tuesday morning, and will be out of the Philippine Area of Responsibility on

Tuesday night or early Wednesday morning.

Quitlong said PAGASA is monitoring a shallow low pressure area located 590 kms west of Laoag City in Ilocos Norte as of 3 a.m. yesterday. Quitlong said the LPA is not expected to develop into a tropical depression but said it, along with Egay, are enhancing the southwest monsoon, bringing more rains in Metro Manila, Calabarzon, Mimaropa, and in the provinces of Pangasinan, Zambales and Bataan.



## Water level at Angat improves, but still below critical point

ANGAT DAM'S water level moved up to 158.64 meters after months of decline due to the enhanced southwest monsoon.

As of 6 a.m. Sunday, the water level in Angat dam rose 0.68 meters from 157.96 meters, based on the monitoring of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration, but this is still below the critical level of 160 meters.

PAG-ASA said that the increase was due to the southwest monsoon, which was enhanced by tropical depression Egay over the weekend.

"*Tuloy-tuloy ang pag-ulan... kasi noong previous dates, talagang lumiliit na 'yung deficit n'ya... kaya talagang pataas na s'ya kasi tuloy-tuloy nga ang pag-ulan sa* (There has been continuous rainfall... in the previous dates, the deficit has been getting smaller... it's now going up due to continuous rain in the catchment *ng* Angat," Jason Bausa, hydrologist from PAGASA, told *BusinessWorld* in a phone interview.

National Water Resources Board (NWRB) Executive Director Seville D. David, Jr., said adjustments for water allocations are yet to be determined.

"No adjustments, yet. Level (is) still below critical level. Allocation is maintained at 36 cubic meters per second (CMS)," Mr. David told *BusinessWorld* in a text message when sought for comment. — **Vincent Marfel P. Galang**

Full Story



Read the full story by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or by typing the link <[bit.ly/AngatWaterLevel](http://bit.ly/AngatWaterLevel)>



# Angat water rises a tad, but still at critical level

BY GLEE JALEA AND FRANCIS EARL CUETO

**T**HE recent monsoon rains that drenched Metro Manila and nearby provinces have slightly raised the water level of Angat Dam.

As of 6 a.m. Sunday, the water level was recorded at 158.64 meters, still below the critical level of 160 meters.

The National Water Resources Board reduced the water allocation for the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System and its concessionaires, Maynilad Water Services and Manila Water, when the reservoir hit its critical level last month.

Angat supplies 90 percent of Metro Manila's water requirement. Meanwhile, the Philippine

Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) is monitoring tropical depression "Egay," spotted 810 kilometers east of Daet, Camarines Norte, packing maximum sustained winds of 55 kilometers per hour (kph) and 65kph gusts.

According to forecaster Benison Estareja, Egay has a "very low chance" of making landfall, but it would enhance the *habagat* or southwest monsoon until Tuesday.

Heavy rains are expected in Metro Manila, Ilocos Region, Cala-

barzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon), Mimaropa (Occidental Mindoro, Oriental Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan) and the provinces of Zambales and Bataan.

Visayas and the rest of Luzon will experience scattered rains, while Mindanao will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rains.

Pagasa is also monitoring a low pressure area (LPA) west of Bataan, that may intensify into a storm.

The weather bureau expects two to three tropical cyclones to hit the Philippines in July.

According to weather specialist Ariel Rojas, these storms are likely to hit Southern, Central and Northern Luzon.

An LPA was also spotted 360 kilometers west of Central Luzon.

It has low chances of making landfall, but it might intensify into a tropical depression in the next 48 hours, Rojas added.

Monsoon rains will prevail over Metro Manila, Mimaropa, Bicol Region, Pangasinan, Zambales, Bataan, Cavite, Batangas, Antique and Aklan.

The rest of Luzon and Visayas will be cloudy with scattered rain-showers and thunderstorms.

On Monday morning, Egay is expected to be 360 kilometers east southeast of Basco, Batanes. It will exit and weaken into an LPA by Tuesday night.

Monsoon rains will persist on Monday over Metro Manila, Ilocos Region, Cordillera Administrative Region, Central Luzon, Mimaropa, Calabarzon, Bicol Region, Antique, Aklan and Western Iloilo.





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## Angat water inches up but remains low

MONSOON rains brought by tropical depression "Egay" raised the water elevation of Angat Dam, which supplies 97 percent of Metro Manila's water, the weather bureau said Sunday.

As of 6 a.m. Sunday, water level at the dam reached 158.64 meters, up from Saturday's 157.96 meters. This was still below the critical level of 160 meters, however, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration said.

The low level at the dam has led to water service interruptions in Metro Manila, where two private concessionaires are grappling with the supply shortage.

As water level reached its critical level on June 20, the National Water Resources Board reduced the water allocation for the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System and its concessionaires, Maynilad Water Services and Manila Water.

Weather forecasters said more rains were expected Sunday as Egay enhances the southwest monsoon. *Next page*

### Angat...

*From A1*

Egay sped up slight while moving over the Philippine Sea east of Northern Luzon on Sunday afternoon.

As of 4 p.m., the center of Egay was estimated at 545 kilometers east of Caisiguran, Aurora.

Packing maximum sustained winds of 55 kms per hour near the center and gustiness of up to 65 kph, it was moving west northwest at 30 kph.

While Egay is not expected to make landfall, it will continue to bring monsoon rains.

The southwest monsoon will bring light to moderate with at times heavy monsoon rains over Metro Manila, Pangasinan, Zambales, Bataan, Bulacan, Cavite, Batangas, Mindoro provinces, Romblon and Northern Palawan. **Rio N. Araja**



## Water level ng Angat Dam tumaas pero kritikal pa rin

UMANGAT ang water level sa Angat Dam dahil sa mga pag-ulan dulot ng Tropical Depression Egay.

Nitong alas-sais nang umaga Hunyo 30, nasukat ang water level ng Angat sa 158.64 meter, bahagyang mataas sa 157.96 meter level nitong Sabado, ayon sa Pagasa.

Sa kabila nito, mababa pa rin ito sa critical level na 160 meters.

Ang Angat Dam ang pangunahing pinagkukunan ng water supply ng Maynilad at Manila Water at simula nang bumaba ang lebel ng tubig doon ay pinatupad naman ng dalawang concessionaire ang mahabang water interruption sa mga consumer.

Si Egay ay naispatan sa layong 810 kilometro sa silangan ng Daet, Camarines Norte dakong alastres nang madaling-araw dala ang hancing 55 kilometer per hour.

Bagama't hindi ito inaasahang tatama sa kalupaan, pinalalakas naman nito ang hancing habagat hanggang sa araw nang Martes.

Ang mga malakas na pag-ulan ay posibleng magdulot ng pagbaha at landslide sa Metro Manila, Ilocos Region, Calabarzon, Mimaropa at mga lalawigan ng Zambales at Bataan.



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## Egay, pinalakas ang ulan sa Luzon

# WATER LEVEL SA ANGAT UMANGAT

**DAHIL** sa tuloy-tuloy na pag-ulan na inaasahan hanggang sa araw ng Martes dulot ng Bagyong Egay, nagsisimula nang umangat ang lebel ng tubig sa Angat Dam.

Mula Linggo ng umaaga, nasa 158.64-meter na ang tubig sa Angat mula sa critical level na 160

meters.

Ipinarating ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) na inaasahan ang pagtaas ng lebel sa Angat Dam pagsapit ng Hulyo matapos sabihin ng Pagasa na magkakaroon na ng normal na rainfall conditions.

Ayon naman sa Philippine Atmospheric,

Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), si Egay ay namataan sa layong 820 kilometers sa silangan ng Infanta, Quezon, o 760 kilometro sa silangan ng Casiguran, Aurora.

Kumikilos ito, pa-hilagang kanluran sa bilis na 20 kilometro bawat

oras mula sa dating 15 kilometro bawat oras.

Habang isinusulat ang balitang ito, taglay pa rin ni Egay ang maximum winds na 55 kilometro bawat oras at parehong bugso na 65 kilometro bawat oras.

Una nang iniulat ng Pagasa na maliit'ang tiyansa na tatama sa lupa ang bagyo, pero nagbabala pa rin hinggil sa mga posibilidad ng pagbaha at pagguho ng lupa sa Metro Manila, Ilocos Region, Calabarzon (Cavite-Laguna-Batangas-Rizal-Quezon), Mimaropa (Mindoro-Marinduque-Romblon-Palawan), Zambales at Bataan.

Habang ang nalalabing bahagi ng bansa ay makararanas ng bahagya hanggang sa maalap na panahon na may kasa-

namang kalat-kalat na pag-ulan.

Sa Martes ng gabi o madaling araw ng Miyerkoles ay tinatayang lalabas ng Philippine area of responsibility (PAR) ang bagyong Egay.

**BENEDICT  
ABAYGAR, JR.**



## LEVEL NG ANGAT DAM TUMAAS, 2 BAYAN LUBOG SA BAHA

**TUMAAS** na ang antas ng tubig sa Angat Dam ngunit binaha naman ang ilang bayan sa Bulacan matapos ang malalakas na pag-ulan.

Sa tala ng PAGASA, mula sa 157.96 meters kamakalawa ay umabot na sa 158.64 meters ang antas ng tubig sa dam.

Inaasahang tataas pa ang tubig sa Angat matapos pumasok ang bagyong Egay

kahapon na namataan sa 810 kilometers east sa Daet, Camarines Sur.

Bandang 3:00 ng madaling araw ay kumilos si Egay na may lakas ng hangin na 55 kilometers per hour at bug-song may lakas na 65kph.

Pahirapan sa mga motorista ang pagdaan sa Mac Arthur Highway sa Marilao at Meycauayan dahil sa ga-tuhod na tubig mula sa patuloy na pag-ulan.

Base sa ulat, ang naturang mga bayan ay catch basin o mababang lugar na pinag-iipunan ng tubig dahil na rin sa mga baradong imburnal na daluyan ng tubig patungong ilog.

Ilang barangay rin sa Bulagtas at Bulakan ang pinasok ng tubig-baha partikular sa Barangay ng Panginay at Matungao dahil sa ulan at high tide kahapon ng umaga.

**DICK MIRASOL III**



## Tubig sa Angat Dam nadagdagan

Bahagyang tumaas ang tubig sa Angat Dam matapos ang sunud-sunod na pag-ulan dulot ng moonsoon rains.

Ayon sa PAGASA, kahapon ng alas-6 ng umaga ay umakyat sa 158.64 metro ang tubig sa nasabing dam mas mataas sa 157.96 meters noong Sabado ng kaparehong oras.

Ang nasabing water level kahapon ay nantili namang nasa critical level na 160 meters na umabot simula noong

Hunyo 20 kaya nagdesisyon ang National Water Resources Board (NWRB) na magbawas ng distribusyon ng tubig sa Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage system (MWSS) at sa concessionaires nito na Maynilad at Manila Water.

Ang Angat Dam ang nagsu-suplay ng 90 por-siyentong tubig sa Metro Manila.

Inaasahan naman na patuloy na tataas ang level ng tubig sa dam dahil sa papasok

na bagyong Egay na maghahatak sa habagat.

Taglay nito ang lakas ng hanging aabot sa 55 kph at pagbugsong papalo sa 65 kph.

Inaasahang lalabas si Egay sa Philippine Area of Responsibility sa Martes ng gabi o Miyerkules ng umaga.

Kahapon ay naramdaman na ang pag-ulan sa Metro Manila, Ilocos, Mimaropa, Calabarzon, Zambales at Bataan. (Gemma Amargo-Garcia)



## Long-term water security

With floods again occurring regularly in Metro Manila, con-

### EDITORIAL

sumers are frustrated that water continues to be rationed to their households and offices. This year, the National Capital Region suffered the worst water shortage in a decade, with the two water concessionaries being slapped with stiff fines for the supply interruptions that lasted for days on end.

In Bulacan and neighboring areas, farmers are complaining that the National Water Resources Board has cut off the allocation for irrigation to ease supply disruptions in Metro Manila. The NWRB has said that Angat Dam, the principal source of water for the megacity, can be fully replenished and water supply normalized only in two months.

The water shortage has been attributed to what weather experts have described as a weak El Niño. What happens when Angat is hit by a strong El Niño?

Unreliable water supply has bedeviled Metro Manila, with its booming population, for decades. Recognizing the problem, Republic Act 9275 or the Water Quality Management Act was passed back in 2004. RA 9275 was meant to ensure

a reliable supply of safe water through the development of

new water sources. It also provided for the construction of facilities for collecting rainwater for recycling. The sites for the facilities, to be built underground by the national government, would be identified by local government units.

Nearly two decades after the enactment of the law, construction of the only new water source so far — the Kaliwa Dam in the Sierra Madres — is just getting underway. There has been zero movement in developing water catchments in flood-prone Metro Manila.

The water supply is so unreliable that households are again reviving old mechanical deep wells to extract ground water amid the shortages. There is no serious effort to promote water recycling, which is being done in several countries with limited or no freshwater sources. The technology and laws are there; all that is lacking is implementation.

The typical government response to water shortages has been ad hoc and as unpredictable as the weather. Unless this changes, Metro Manila will never have a reliable water supply.



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## Water: A problem too big



THE Philippines is an archipelagic nation with water all around. There is a 144-billion-cubic-meter supply but only about 40 percent is consumed. The rest is wasted.

These facts and figures were provided by Buhay Party-List Rep. Lito Atienza who had access to this information when he was secretary of Environment and Natural Resources. This is also the reason he said he would file a resolution in the House urging President Rodrigo Duterte to cancel the concessionaire contracts of Maynilad and Manila Water and return this service to the government.

*“Imagine the hardship of people who have to line up for this basic service.”*

In an interview over coffee, an incensed Atienza punned that if the problem of water is too big for business barons Ayalas and Pangilinan to solve, then they should give it up and let government do it.

“It is outrageous that Maynilad and Manila Water are asking for rate increases when both should be refunding consumers for non-delivery of this basic need of the Filipino people. Business tycoons

Manny V. Pangilinan and the Ayalas of Manila Water are just raking in the profits without doing their part for delivery and sewage management services.”

Atienza added that these two big companies are collecting sewage management fees from business establishments and ordinary residential consumers, but do not use them for the purpose of delivering clean, potable water. He said it was the MMDA, the City of Manila and the DENR which cleaned up the polluted Manila Bay waters. He said the two companies borrowed funds from the World Bank under sovereign guarantee for sewage management. If they default, it would be the Philippine government which will have to pay for loan default.

Where will the government get the money to pay the World Bank? From us—the people—in the form of new taxes, Atienza pointed out.

Atienza said he is not afraid of retaliation from the business tycoons as he had always been the lone voice in the House speaking up on this issue. What can they do against me? Turn off the water from my faucet? Then they will have to do that to the whole neighborhood and have more angry people up in arms, he said in answer to his own question.

No, he is not affected by the water shortage but he said in he cannot, in conscience, not feel the hardships of the people particularly in depressed areas where they have to line up to fill drums and buckets to have water for daily use.

What are the alternative sources of water supply considering the water

Turn to A5

## Water...

from A4

at Angat Dam has gone down to its lowest critical level level in 14 years? The sporadic rain in recent days failed to augment water at Angat Dam and

the prospect of more rain during El Niño season looks dim with rationing lasting up to August.

Laguna de Bay, if cleared of algae from those fish pens of the rich and powerful, could be a potential source of water. But government must have

the political will to dismantle those fish pens as we have enough fish in the West Philippine Sea to feed our people, Atienza said.

The obstacle to fishing in the West Philippine Sea is the presence of larger Chinese fishing boats, one

of which rammed a Filipino and abandoned 22 of its crew men. With the President announcing he would let the Chinese fish in our exclusive 200 mile economic zone, Filipino fishermen know that their fishing haul would not be as plenty as the Chinese

who use trawlers.

This, of course, will jack up the price of fish in the market with the price of other food commodities already high for local consumers. The only good news last week was the resignation of Agriculture Secretary Manny Pifol.



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**GOV'T INACTION**

**WATER CRISIS  
BLAMED ON  
PAST ADMIN**

The water shortage plaguing Metro Manila was the result of the inaction of the previous administration of President Benigno Aquino III and the former Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) management led by Gerardo Esquivel.

This was the conclusion reached by the House oversight committee that conducted a special hearing to look into the water crisis in the metropolis, thereby absolving the Duterte administration and the present MWSS leadership from culpability.

**Unimplemented plan**

MWSS Administrator Reynaldo Velasco said during the hearing that the Aquino administration had failed to implement a water supply master plan completed in 2012.

A University of the Philippines study conducted in 2011 had warned that as early as 2016 there would have been 57 million liters a day (MLD) deficit in supply. This deficit could balloon to 624 MLD in 2021 unless the water security infrastructure projects put in place by the present administration are vigorously pursued.

These projects include Kaliwa Dam, which was proposed in 2012, but was shelved. The project is expected to augment water supply by 600 MLD.





# Compliant Boracay hotel rooms reach 13,064

By CATHERINE TALAVERA

The number of compliant Boracay hotels continues to grow with a total of 364 accommodation establishments accredited by the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF).

In its latest bulletin, the BIATF said it has given the go signal to six more Boracay hotels.

This brings the total to 13,064 rooms.

Only accommodation establishments that have complied with the requirements of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Department of Tourism (DOT) are allowed to operate in the island destination.

Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo Puyat earlier said the BIATF would continue to accredit compliant accommodation establishments.

"More rooms will be available as we continue with Phase 2 and 3 of the Boracay rehabilitation. We are making sure the task force's requirements are complied with 100 percent," Puyat said.

The task force urged the public to avoid booking with establishments that have no permits from the DOT, DENR and DILG.

Before the island's closure in April 2018,

Boracay had roughly 15,000 to 16,000 available rooms.

The government is limiting the number of tourists in Boracay to ensure the sustainability of the island, which was reopened in October last year after it was closed for rehabilitation for six months.

A study commissioned by the DENR showed that Boracay's carrying capacity is only 55,757 people per day, including its residents. Only 19,215 tourists are allowed to be on the island at a certain time, with 6,405 tourists allowed to enter the island per day.

In a bid to ensure the carrying capacity of the island is met, the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) earlier implemented a moratorium on the addition of new charter flights to Caticlan and Kalibo.

Tourism Undersecretary and spokesperson Benito Bengzon Jr. emphasized the moratorium only applies to new applications for chartered flights.

"Ensuring that we protect the environment, all of these initiatives are in line with the objective we have kept for ourselves, both the government and the private sector," Bengzon said.

"But the challenge here is to really achieve an economic balance between such economic activity and protection of the environment," he said.



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# ISUZU TURNS OVER MODERN PUVS TO BORACAY TRANSPORT COOPERATIVE

By Manny N. de los Reyes

RESIDENTS and tourists of Boracay Island will not only get to enjoy one of the world's best beaches, they will now also get to travel around this tropical paradise in utmost comfort, convenience, and safety on board the Isuzu modern public utility vehicles (PUVs).

Isuzu Philippines Corporation (IPC), the country's leading manufacturer and distributor of commercial vehicles and trucks, turned over recently the initial two units of its modernized PUV to the Boracay Land Transport Multi-Purpose Cooperative (BLTMPC) at the cooperatives'

main terminal in Boracay Island. These two units form part of the total 15-vehicle fleet that BLTMPC has acquired from IPC.

These modernized PUVs will ply the main circumferential road that goes around the interior of the island, picking up and dropping off passengers at designated stops.

Joseph Bautista, IPC Sales Division head, described the turnover as happening at just the right time. "In the past few months, we have seen the earnest rehabilitation of Boracay Island; from its beaches toward the road network and infrastructure. And now that the island has just recently been reopened to the public, we are very happy to have

been a strategic part of this rehabilitation. With a cleaner, more organized Boracay, you will now also see Isuzu modernized PUVs servicing the island's residents and tourists."

He added that Isuzu's modern PUVs have also been designed and built in accordance to the objective of the Boracay rehabilitation efforts to make the island environmentally sustainable.

"The modernized PUVs are assembled using the Isuzu QKR77 platform which has been modified for PUV use. These are powered by the 3.0-liter 4JH1-TC CRDI diesel engine that delivers 106 Ps of power with better fuel economy. The engine is also rated Euro IV compliant, so



Officials from Isuzu Philippines Corp., led by IPC Sales Division Head Joseph Bautista, and Boracay Land Transport Multi-Purpose Cooperative, pose outside the BLTMPC office.

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it produces cleaner emissions," Mr. Bautista explained.

Yasuhiko Oyama, IPC vice-president for Sales, also lauded the Filipino mark of excellence in the construction and design of Isuzu's modern PUV: "The Isuzu QKR PUV is truly a vehicle for Filipinos made by Filipinos. As they say in the native language, *"Gawang Pilipino, para sa Pilipino."*

The Isuzu modern PUV's body has been designed and built by all-Filipino body builder and long-time partner of IPC, Almazora Motors Corporation. This Isuzu modern PUV can accommodate up to 30 passengers (seated and standing). The fully air-conditioned cabin by

Coolaire means that all passengers can travel comfortably even during the hottest summers, with enough legroom, headroom, and seat space in a Class 2 PUV.

The modern PUVs are also equipped with accessories as required by the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), such as CCTVs and dashcam, GPS tracking system, and automated electronic fare collection system. The automatic doors also face the sidewalk for safe and convenient entry and exit of passengers.

Mr. Oyama thanked BLTMPC for choosing Isuzu. "We thank the cooperative for trusting us in providing them their first fleet of modern PUVs. Undoubtedly,

Isuzu has already created a name for Filipino drivers and operators as their reliable partner. We are very proud to say that Isuzu has not only achieved another milestone but has also continued its legacy by having these Isuzu PUVs to run in Boracay's roads under the government's PUV modernization program (PUVMP)."

He encouraged other transport cooperatives across the country to already make that switch to safer, cleaner, more convenient, and more reliable modernized PUVs. "Do check out our modernized Isuzu PUVs. Inquire about their specifications and features at any IPC dealership near you."



Officials from Isuzu Philippines Corp. and Boracay Land Transport Multi-Purpose Cooperative pose for the ceremonial ribbon-cutting.



The Isuzu Modern PUV on the streets of Boracay



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## Wanted: Cleaner transport system

In Metro Manila, 88 percent of all emissions come from motor vehicles, a problem that the 20-year-old Clean Air Act has failed to curb. The Department of Transportation is aggressively pushing for the phaseout of dilapidated jeepneys and the shift to Euro-4 compliant and industry-standard vehicles. Only 3,000 of the 180,000 jeepneys have modernized. —SPECIAL REPORT BY JHESSET O. ENAÑO AND KRIXIA SUBINGSUBING

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# Challenges hound efforts for cleaner public transport to curb air pollution

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## SPECIAL REPORT

By **Jhesset O. Enano**  
and **Krixia Subingsubing**  
@Team\_Inquirer

(Last of three parts)

Like many commuters, Ashley Usman has had her fair share of harrowing experiences riding public transport.

She recalled taking two jeepney rides daily while reviewing for the engineering board exams in 2013, and braving the gauntlet of people and vehicles clogging Morayta Street at the university belt in Manila.

"During that review period, I had intense eye allergies and had to have a surgery on my left eyelid," said Usman, a chemical engineer who hails from Lanao del Norte province. "The doctor said it was due to poor air quality."

So as soon as Usman got a job in Bataan province, she decided that the metropolis was just not worth it, both for her health and safety.

"If Metro Manila's air gets better, then I'd definitely consider working there," she said. "But in just a year [of working in Bataan], I already felt the big difference ... particularly in the air quality."

With 16 cities and one town, Metro Manila is beset with issues and challenges that come with rapid urbanization, from overpopulation to unequal development. The economic growth seen in the skyscrapers and paved roads comes at a steep price: air pollution from the toxic fumes spewed by thousands of vehicles on the road.

### Clean Air Act

In Metro Manila, 88 percent of all emissions come from motor vehicles, a problem that the 20-year-old Clean Air Act, despite its best intentions, has failed to curb.

Under the 1999 law, the Department of Transportation (DOTr) is mandated to reduce emissions from motor vehicles to within acceptable guidelines. But it was only in 2017 that the agency began its aggressive push for its ambitious Public

### Utility Vehicle Modernization Program (PUVMP).

The program aims to phase out dilapidated PUVs, including jeepneys that are over 15 years old, and shift to Euro-4 compliant and industry-standard vehicles.

Studies have shown that Euro-4 gasoline is 90 percent cleaner than its Euro-2 counterpart, thanks largely to its composition, and the way Euro-4 engines are designed, said Gerry Bagtasa, head of the Atmospheric Physics Laboratory of the University of the Philippines' Institute of Environmental Science and Meteorology (UPIESM).

Martin Delgra, chair of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), acknowledged that the agency, along with the DOTr, through the Land Transportation Office (LTO), had for the longest time "fallen short of the requirements" of the Clean Air Act.

But beyond giving the PUVs a face-lift, Delgra said the PUVMP is a "radical restructuring" of the public transport system that needs a consolidation of PUV fleets and route rationalization.

Much of the woes in public

transport are rooted either in the haphazard way routes are designed, the over- or under-supply of PUVs in certain areas, or the vehicles' lack of interconnection, making it difficult to commute, Delgra said.

Resolving those problems

will enable the government to reform urban spaces and make public transport more efficient, he added.

### Sustainable transport

"The PUVMP program is not just a big help but a huge state-

ment in creating sustainable transport," Delgra said. "We are not just deploying new environment-friendly PUVs, but also trying to make them efficient."

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), as the lead department in enforcing the Clean Air Act, sees the merit in the shift to Euro-4 compliant vehicles.

"As long as we have these secondhand or dilapidated cars on the road, the efforts of the Anti-Smoke Belching Unit and even the Private Emissions Testing Centers will make no sense because the problems are already out there," said Jundy del Socorro, officer in charge of the Air Quality Management Section under the DENR Environmental Management Bureau.



But the price of modernization is steep. Drivers and operators have said that financing the jeepneys—currently pegged at between P1.6 and P2.1 million—with low government subsidy makes it difficult to afford new units.

Only some 3,000 of the 180,000 jeepneys in the country have modernized a year before the LTFRB's self-imposed 2020 deadline for transition, Delgra said.

Many jeepney operators and drivers also decry having to shoulder the blame for the pollution, saying that private cars that similarly emit pollutants are much bigger in number.

### Socially just

While it has its merits, the modernization program has to be socially just, said Mylene Cayetano, head of the Environmental Pollution Studies Laboratory of the UP IESM.

"For example, if I'm driving a diesel-powered private car, my carbon footprint is much bigger than a diesel-powered jeepney that carries 20 passengers," Cayetano said. "But in terms of exposure to polluted air, those in the jeepney are again at the losing end because they cannot afford an air-conditioned car."

In an interview with the Inquirer last year, Dr. Maria Neira, director of public health of the World Health Organization

(WHO), said the government should invest in healthy urban planning and promote a cleaner public transport system to discourage the public from using private cars that take up more space on the road.

Strengthening the mass transit system across the country can improve not only air quality and transport efficiency but also boost development and progress, said government experts and those in the academe.

The DOT's programs of late has focused on strengthening the transit systems across the country, with the rehabilitation and overhaul of the Metro Rail Transit (MRT) 3 line and the extension of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) 1 and 2 to the south (Cavite) and the north (Antipolo), respectively.

The agency is also currently building the MRT 7 line and the country's first subway to connect Quezon City to Bulacan province and Pasay City.

WHO climate researcher Arthur Wyns said that while it was easy to blame people for their choices that might lead to more pollution, the lack of alternatives should be seen as the root cause.

"There needs to be infrastructure to facilitate the people's shift (to eco-friendly transport)," he said. "If there are no safe bicycle lanes, who is going to bike? It's a structural issue, not just an individual lifestyle problem."

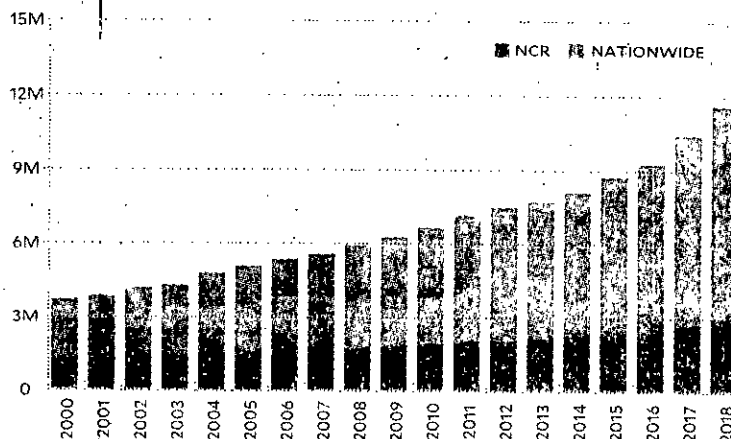
Emerging cities should also learn from the metro's current challenges and aim for a more inclusive and sustainable development, experts said. Instead of eyeing only the improvement of PUVs, a massive urban renewal and practical alternatives are needed to curb the overreliance on private vehicles.

For both national and local governments, this requires political will and putting priority on their constituents' rights and needs—including clean air.

"[Ensuring we have] clean air is everybody's job, not just the government's," Cayetano said. "[If we don't address the problem,] we all lose because air pollution has no boundaries. It will affect us all, rich or poor, because we are breathing the same air." INQ

## NUMBER OF REGISTERED VEHICLES

Private cars and public utility vehicles (PUVs) have increased almost fourfold since 2000, with Metro Manila accounting for a third of all cars across the country.



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**PERSISTENT PROBLEMS** The Department of Environment and Natural Resources sees merit in the shift to Euro-4 compliant vehicles. But as long as secondhand or dilapidated cars are on the road, efforts of the Anti-Smoke Belching Unit and even Private Emissions Testing Centers will make no sense because the problems are already out there, experts say. —INQUIRER FILE PHOTO



**FROM TRASHY TO CORDIAL**

# MALACAÑANG SEES IMPROVED TIES WITH CANADA AFTER GARBAGE ROW

Malacañang expects the diplomatic ties between the Philippines and Canada to revert from "trashy" to "cordial" after the transport of illegally dumped garbage back to Canada over the weekend.

A ship carrying 69 containers of waste mislabeled as plastic recyclables returned to Canada on Saturday from the Philippines, closing a chapter on a dispute that started in 2013 and sparked a diplomatic furor between Ottawa and Manila.

"I guess it will be back to being cordial ... That is what will happen now. It won't be a 'trashy' relationship anymore," presidential spokesperson Salvador Panelo said in jest in an interview over dzIQ.

Asked as to when the diplomats will be sent back to Canada, the Palace said this was for the Department of Foreign Affairs to decide.

### Diplomatic dispute

"I guess, since the very reason for withdrawal was the problem of trash, since it's now resolved, logically that will follow, that we will send back our diplomatic personnel to their posts," Panelo said.

The waste containers became part of a diplomatic dispute between Manila and Ottawa, as President Duterte threatened Canada with war and withdrew top diplomats from Canada after Canada missed a May 15 deadline to take back the waste.

The conflict dates back to 2013 and 2014, when a Canadian company shipped containers mislabeled as recyclable plastics to the Philippines.

The shipment actually contained a mixture of paper, plastics, electronics and household waste, including kitchen trash and diapers, even though Philippine law

prohibits imports of mixed plastics and household trash.

Some of the waste was disposed of in the Philippines, but much of it stewed in local ports for years.

The trash will be incinerated at a waste-to-energy facility, Canadian officials said.

### Plastic pollution

Waste disposal has emerged as a topic of political dispute between Southeast Asian countries and the developed world, with Malaysia in May becoming the latest to demand nations such as the United States, Japan, France, Canada, Australia and Britain to take back 3,000 tons of plastic waste.

The government department Environment and Climate Change Canada told Reuters earlier this month that the government was in talks with Malaysia to recover the plastic waste that originated from Canada.

For years, China had received the bulk of scrap plastic from around the world, but closed its doors to foreign refuse last year in an effort to clean up its environment.

Huge quantities of plastic waste have since been redirected to Southeast Asia, including Malaysia, Indonesia and, to a lesser degree, the Philippines.

In November 2016, Canada amended its regulations on waste disposal to prevent incidents like the one with the Philippines.

Canadian exporters now need a permit to export hazardous waste and can only obtain it if the other country consents to the import, Jenn Gearey, a spokesperson for the Canadian environment ministry, said via e-mail. —REPORTS FROM JULIE M. AURELIO, REUTERS AND AFP INQ





## Ties restored as Canada takes back garbage

The relationship between the Philippines and Canada has become cordial again as the ship carrying tons of garbage rejected by Manila arrived in Vancouver over the weekend, Malacañang said yesterday.

Cargo ship *Anna Maersk*, which carried 69 containers of Canadian trash dumped in the Philippines six years ago, arrived in Greater Vancouver last Saturday, according to reports.

The garbage would be sent to a waste-to-energy facility, Canadian  
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Sixty-nine shipping containers of garbage from container ship *Anna Maersk* are loaded onto trucks and stacked for holding at Global Container Terminals at Deltaport in British Columbia, Canada on June 29. AFP

## Ties From Page 1

officials were quoted by reports as saying.

"Eh, siguro cordial na ulit (Perhaps, it's cordial again)," presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo said in a radio interview when asked to describe the ties between Manila and Ottawa following the arrival of the garbage-hauling vessel in Vancouver.

"Di na basura ang relasyon (The relationship is no longer garbage)," Panelo added.

Last April, President Duterte directed the Bureau of Customs to return to Canada containers of garbage sent to the Philippines in 2013 and accused Ottawa of turning the Philippines into a dumpsite. The Philippine leader even threatened to go to war if Canada refused to take back the trash, which were reportedly mislabeled as recyclable plastics.

The shipment actually contained a mixture of paper, plastics, electronic and household

waste, including kitchen trash and diapers, although Philippine law prohibits imports of mixed plastic and household trash.

To show that it is serious in demanding the return of the garbage, the Duterte administration had recalled the diplomats assigned in Canada and prohibited its officials from traveling to Ottawa.

Canada missed a May 15 deadline to repatriate the rubbish, but then made arrangements soon thereafter to move it back to Canadian soil. *Anna Maersk* eventually sailed for Vancouver, prompting the Philippines to order its diplomats recalled from Canada to return to their posts.

The trash will be incinerated at a waste-to-energy facility, local officials said.

"We committed with the Philippines and we're working closely with them," Canada's Environment Minister Catherine McKenna told reporters

on Thursday.

## Shocking

Global concern over plastic pollution has been spurred by shocking images of waste-clogged rivers in Southeast Asia and accounts of dead sea creatures found with kilos of refuse in their stomachs.

For years, China had received the bulk of scrap plastic from around the world, but closed its doors to foreign refuse last year in an effort to clean up its environment.

Huge quantities of waste plastic have since been re-directed to Southeast Asia, including Malaysia, Indonesia and – to a lesser degree – the Philippines.

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Canadian exporters now need a permit to export hazardous waste and can only obtain it if the other country consents to the import, Jenn Gearey, a spokeswoman for the Canadian environment

ministry, said via email.

Even so, challenges remain.

In May, Malaysian officials criticized Canada after a shipping container filled with contaminated plastic bags from major Canadian grocery chains was shipped to Kuala Lumpur by a private company.

Canada produces more waste per capita than other countries with comparable levels of economic development, ranging from the United States to Japan, according to a study by the Conference Board of Canada.

The majority of it ends up in landfills.

Environmental advocates argue that developed countries should stop exporting their trash and figure out how to handle it domestically.

"The way forward is to drastically reduce the amount of waste we generate, especially plastic waste," Vito Buonsante, plastics program manager at Environmental Defense in Toronto, said.

– Alexis Romero, AFP



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## Ship carrying waste arrives back in Canada from the Philippines

TORONTO — A ship carrying 69 containers of waste mislabeled as plastic recyclables returned to Canada on Saturday from the Philippines, closing a chapter on a dispute that started in 2013 and sparked a diplomatic furor between Ottawa and Manila.

The shipment was taken off the container ship *Anna Maersk* docked close to Tsawwassen Ferry Terminal and arrived at GCT Deltaport in Delta, British Columbia, part of Greater Vancouver, GCT said in a press statement.

Sarah Lusk, Metro Vancouver spokeswoman, said the waste would be sent to a Waste-to-Energy facility in Burnaby where it will be incinerated, but added that there was “uncertainty with respect to timing” and the facility may not receive the waste over the weekend.

The waste containers became part of a diplomatic dispute between Manila and Ottawa, as the Philippine President Rodrigo R. Duterte threatened Canada with war and withdrew top diplomats from Canada after Canada missed

a May 15 deadline to take back the waste.

The waste was shipped to the Philippines in 2013 and 2014 and mislabeled as recyclable plastics. Instead, it was filled with garbage including used diapers and newspapers. A Philippine court ruled in 2016 that it be returned.

Canada made arrangements in late May to accept the containers and said they hired Bollore Logistics Canada to safely bring them back as soon as possible.

Waste disposal has emerged as a topic of political dispute be-

tween Southeast Asian countries and the developed world, with Malaysia in May becoming the latest to demand nations such as the United States, Japan, France, Canada, Australia and Britain take back 3,000 tonnes of plastic waste.

The government department Environment and Climate Change Canada told Reuters earlier this month that the government was in talks with Malaysia to recover the plastic waste that originated from Canada. — *Reuters*



THE SHIP *Anna Maersk* gets containers — including 69 containers of mostly paper and plastic waste returned by the Philippines — unloaded at Roberts Bank port in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, in this June 29 photo.



## Canadian garbage: Back to where it belongs

VANCOUVER—Tons of Canadian garbage left in the Philippines for years arrived back home Saturday, putting an end to a festering diplomatic row that highlighted how Asian nations have grown tired of being the world's trash dump.

A cargo vessel loaded with about 69 containers of rubbish docked in a port on the outskirts of Vancouver, according to an AFP reporter at the scene.

The trash will be incinerated at a waste-to-energy facility, local officials said.

The conflict dates back to 2013 and 2014, when a Canadian company shipped containers mislabeled as recyclable plastics to the Philippines.

The shipment actually contained a mixture of paper, plastics, electronics, and household waste, including kitchen trash and diapers, even though Philippine law prohibits imports of mixed plastics and household trash.

Some of the waste was disposed of in the Philippines, but much of it stewed in local ports for years.

The issue polluted bilateral relations for years, but tensions came to a head in April when Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte threatened to "declare war" against Canada unless it reclaimed the garbage.

Canada missed a May 15 deadline to repatriate the rubbish, but then made ar-

rangements soon thereafter to move it back to Canadian soil.

Canada's Environment Minister Catherine McKenna told reporters on Thursday: "We committed with the Philippines and we're working closely with them."

Global concern over plastic pollution has been spurred by shocking images of waste-clogged rivers in Southeast Asia, and accounts of dead sea creatures found with kilos of refuse in their stomachs.

For years, China had received the bulk of scrap plastic from around the world, but closed its doors to foreign refuse last year in an effort to clean up its environment.

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### Canadian...

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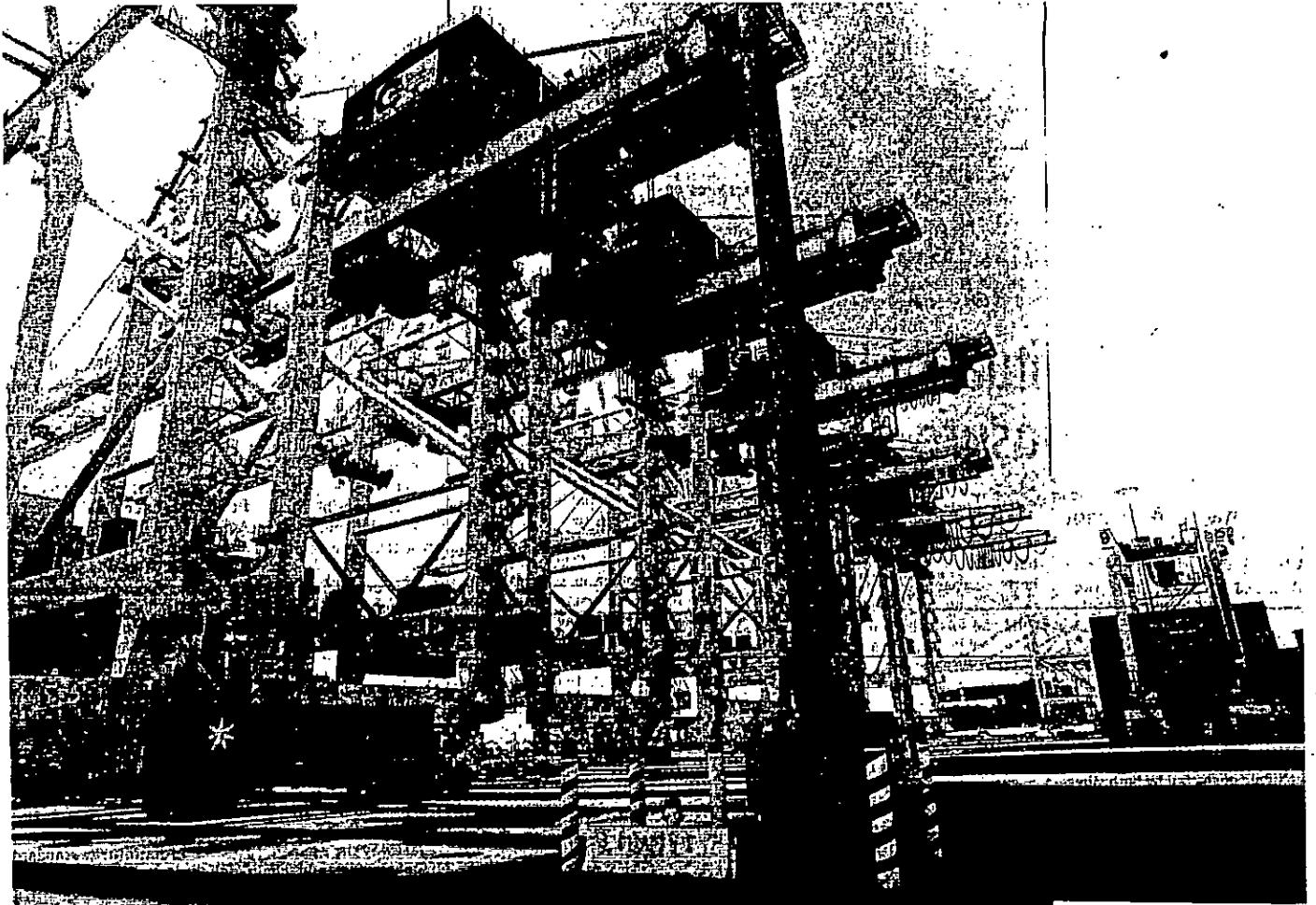
Environmental advocates argue that developed countries should stop exporting their trash and figure out how to handle it domestically.

"The way forward is to drastically reduce the amount of waste we generate, especially plastic waste," said Vito Buonsante, plastics program manager at Environmental Defense in Toronto.

AFP



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**Respect gained** Boxes of garbage from container ship Anna Maersk are loaded on to trucks and stacked for holding at Global Container Terminals at Dellaport in Tsawwassen, BC, Canada. Sixty nine containers were first sent to the Philippines in 2013 and 2014 and were returned to Canada after President Rodrigo Duterte launched sharp rhetoric including a threat to declare war unless the trash is taken back. AFP

# 'Trashy situation' gets closure

A mountain of Canadian garbage left in the Philippines for years arrived back home yesterday, putting an end to a festering diplomatic row that highlighted how Asian nations have grown tired of being the world's trash dump.

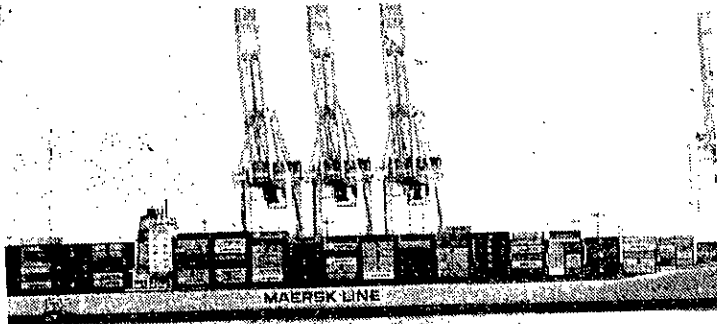
A cargo vessel loaded with about 69 containers of rubbish docked in a port on the outskirts of Vancouver, Canada.

At the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit last week, leaders in the region acknowledged the pioneering role of President Rodrigo Duterte

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**Deadline honored** The Anna Maersk arrives at Dellaport in Tsawwassen, British Columbia, Canada, on 29 June, a day before the end of an ultimatum that President Rodrigo Duterte set to offload 69 containers of garbage from the Philippines. AFP

## 'Trashy situation' gets closure

There was no diplomatic row until he made it one, it was benignly neglected by both sides

**From page A1**

in doing what they thought was impossible, which was returning foreign garbage to sender.

"But there was no diplomatic row until he made it one, it was benignly neglected by both sides. It takes two to tango," Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro "Teddyboy" Locsin Jr. said.

Canadian officials said the trash will be incinerated at a waste-to-energy facility.

The conflict dates back to 2013 and 2014 when a Canadian company shipped containers mislabeled as recyclable plastics to the Philippines.

### 'War' prevented

The shipment actually contained a mixture of paper, plastics, electronics and household waste, including kitchen trash and diapers, even though the law prohibits imports of mixed plastics and household trash.

The previous administration, however, did not pursue the violation of the law by the

exported dump.

Some of the waste was disposed of in the Philippines but much of it stewed in local ports for years.

The issue polluted bilateral relations for years but tensions came to a head in April when Mr. Duterte threatened to "declare war" against Canada unless it reclaimed the garbage.

"I want a boat prepared. I'll give a warning to Canada that they better pull that thing out or I will set sail to Canada and dump the trash there," Mr. Duterte said.

**In November 2016, Canada amended its regulations on waste disposal to prevent incidents like the one with the Philippines.**

Mr. Duterte added he would no longer allow Canada to turn the Philippines into a "dumpsite", urging them to prepare for "a grand reception" to welcome their trash back home.

"I cannot understand why they are making us a dumpsite, and that is not the only case on point. They keep on sending their trash here. Well, not this time," he said.

Canada missed a 15 May deadline to repatriate the rubbish, but then made arrangements soon thereafter to move it back to Canadian soil. AFP



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# 'Garbage issue' hindi na mauulit EXCELLENT RELATIONSHIPS TO ALL -AMB. JOHN T. HOLMES

MAKATI CITY — "OUR focus is an excellent relationships to all," ito ang binigyang diin ni Canadian Ambassador to the Philippines, John T. Holmes nang maging resource person sa Coffee Club Forum na itinataguyod ng ALC Group of Media, kasama ang BusinessMirror, Philippines

Graphic, CNN Philippines, Todong Lakas DWIZ 882 AM at ng pahayagang ito, PILIPINO Mirror.

Sa nasabing pulong balitaan na pinangunahan ni BM Publisher T. Anthony Cabangon, tiniyak ni Holmes ang magandang relasyon nila sa Filipinas kahit pa naging mantsa ang isyu sa

basura na itinambak ng kanilang bansa sa Filipinas noong 2013.

Sinabi ng Canadian envoy na tiniyak ng kanilang pamahalaan na hindi na mauulit ang pangyayari sa Filipinas o sa iba pang bansa.

Paglilinaw pa ni Holmes na nagpapatuloy ang magandang relasyon ng dalawang bansa at ka-

tunayan nito ay kanilang pinasalamatan ang kanilang counterparts na sina Foreign Affairs Secretary Teddy Boy Locsin at Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu na naging bukas ang komunikasyon sa kanila upang maging maayos ang pagbabalik ng may 69 container na basura sa kanilang bansa.

"I don't want to single out particular people, but Secretary Locsin did a fantastic job, his officials were very supportive. Secretary Cimatu and his senior officials, we all were working with one objective in mind, and that was to get the trash out of here as fast as we could," ayon pa kay Holmes.

Noong Sabado ay dumating na sa Vancouver, Canada ang mga basura na unang naglayag noong Hunyo 1 mula Filipinas makaraang magbanta si Pangulong Rodrigo

Duterte na kanyang aatasan ang Bureau of Customs na huwag nang padaungin sa katubigan ng Filipinas ang anumang barko mula Canada.

Iginiit din ni Holmes na kaya natagalan ang pagpapabalik sa kanila ng basura dahil may

mga niremedyohan pang technicalities at dahil sa magandang pakikipag-usap ay natapos nang maayos ang usapin.

Samantala, sinabi pa ng Canadian ambassador na welcome ang Filipino sa kanilang bansa dahil may mga hakbang silang

isinagawa para mapabilis ang visa issuance.

Pinuri rin ni Holmes ang lumalakas na kalakalan ng Filipinas habang nabahaghi din ang palitan ng mga produkto na magpapalakas sa ekonomiya ng dalawang bansa. **EUNICE C.**



**LIGHT TALK:** Nagkaroon ng off the record, subalit mainit na kuwentuhan sina Canadian Ambassador to the Philippines' John T. Holmes at BM Publisher T. Anthony C. Cabangon makaraan arig mahigit isang oras na pulong balitaan. **Kuha ni RUDY ESPERAS**



**SOUVENIR PHOTO:** NAGPAUNLAK ng groupie si Canadian Ambassador John T. Holmes [center] matapos ang forum na itinataguyod ng ALC Media Group sa pamumuno ni T. Anthony C. Cabangon, BusinessMirror (BM) publisher (4th, right) habang kasama rin mula kaliwa sina VP Adel Gazmin, Recto Mercene ng BM, Eunice Calma ng PILIPINO Mirror, BM Editor in chief Lourdes M. Fernandez, BM columnist Emmanuel Dooc, Sandra Zialcita ng CNN Phils. at Raoul Esperas ng DWIZ. **Kuha ni RUDY ESPERAS**



## Garbage back in Vancouver

VANCOUVER, Canada (AFP) – Tons of Canadian garbage left in the Philippines for years arrived back home Saturday, putting an end to a festering diplomatic row that highlighted how Asian nations have grown tired of being the world's trash dump.

A cargo vessel loaded with about 69 containers of rubbish docked in a port on the outskirts of Vancouver, according to an AFP reporter at the scene.

The trash will be incinerated at a waste-to-energy facility, local officials said.

The conflict dates back to 2013 and 2014, when a Canadian company shipped containers mislabeled as recyclable plastics to the Philippines.

The shipment actually contained a mixture of paper, plastics, electronics, and household waste, including kitchen trash and diapers, even though Philippine law prohibits imports of mixed plastics and household trash.

Some of the waste was disposed of in the Philippines, but much of it stewed in local ports for years.

The issue polluted bilateral relations for years, but tensions came to a head in April when President Duterte threatened to "declare war" against Canada unless it reclaimed the garbage.

Canada missed a May 15 deadline to repatriate the rubbish, but then made arrangements soon thereafter to move it back to Canadian soil.



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Canada's Environment Minister Catherine McKenna told reporters on Thursday: "We committed with the Philippines, and we're working closely with them." AFP





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# Ship of trash delivers cargo to Canada

**By Alia Dharssi**

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Global concern over plastic pollution has been spurred by shocking images of waste-clogged rivers in Southeast Asia and accounts of dead sea creatures found with kilos of refuse in their stomachs.

For years, China had received the bulk of scrap plastic

from around the world, but closed its doors to foreign refuse last year in an effort to clean up its environment. Huge quantities of waste plastic have since been redirected to Southeast Asia, including Malaysia, Indonesia and — to a lesser degree — the Philippines.

In November 2016, Canada amended its regulations on waste disposal to prevent incidents like the one with the Philippines.

Canadian exporters now need a permit to export hazardous waste and can only obtain it if the other country consents to the import, Jenn Gearey, a spokeswoman for the Canadian environment ministry, said via email.

Even so, challenges remain.

In May, Malaysian officials criticized Canada after a shipping container filled with contaminated plastic bags from major Canadian grocery chains was shipped to Kuala Lumpur by a private company.

AFP



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## Basura na itinapon sa Pinas, dumaong na sa Canada

DUMATING na sa Canada ang barkong may lulan ng mga basurang itinapon sa Pilipinas, Sabado ng umaga oras sa Canada.

Naibalik na ang mga ito matapos manatili sa Manila Port ng hulos kalahating dekada.

Ayon sa ulat, dumaong na ang M/V Bavaria may dala ng 69 containers ng basura sa Vancouver port.

Umalis ang nasabing cargo ship sa Pilipinas noong May 31 base sa utos ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na isauli na ang mga ito sa Canada.

Dadalhin umano ang mga naturang basura sa waste-to-energy na pasilidad ng naturang bansa.

Matatadaang dumating sa Pilipinas ang 103 containers na may bigat na 2,500 tonelang ng basura noong 2014 at 2015 kung saan idineklara ito bilang "recyclable plastic scraps." (Jocelyn Domenden/Jojo Sadiwa)



# Pinas at Canada bati na

Magiliw na muli ang relasyon ng Pilipinas at Canada, ayon sa Malacañang kahapon, dahil dumating na sa Vancouver ang tone-tonelada nilang basura.

Batay sa report, isang cargo vessel na Anna Maersk na lulan ang 69 container ng basura ng Canada na itina-pon sa Pilipinas may anim na

taon na ay dumating sa Greater Vancouver nitong Sabado.

Dadalhin ang naturang mga basura sa isang waste-to-energy facility, ayon sa ilang opisyal ng Canada.

"Eh siguro magiliw na muli," sabi ni Presidential Spokesman Salvador

**Nina RUDY ANDAL at ALEXIS ROMERO**

Panelo sa isang radio interview nang tanungin kung ano na ang magiging relasyon ng Maynila at Ottawa ngayong nakarating na sa Vancouver ang barkong nagbalik ng basura roon mula sa Pilipinas.

"Di na basura ang relasyon," dagdag ni Panelo.

Matatandaang dumating sa Pilipinas ang naturang mga basura noong 2013 at 2014 na idineklara bilang "plastic materials for recycling."

Ngunit laking gulat ng mga otoridad na ang laman pala ng mga ship-

ment ay pinaghalong mga papel plastics, electronics, at household waste, kasama na ang mga gamit na diaper.

Noong Abril, inatasan ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang Bureau of Customs na ibalik sa Canada ang mga container ng basura nito.

Nagbanta rin ang Pangulo na itatapon nito sa magagandang beach ng Canada ang mga basura.

Inakusahan din niya ang Ottawa na ginagawang tambakan ng basura ang Pilipinas.

Nagbanta pa ang

Pangulo na makikipag-giyera siya sa Canada sakaling mabigong kunin ng mga ito ang kanilang mga basura.

Para ipakita na seryoso ito sa paghiling na ibalik ang mga basura, ipina-recall ng administrasyong Duterte ang mga diplomat ng Pilipinas na nakatalaga sa Canada at pinagbawalan ang mga opisyal nito na maglakbay sa Ottawa.

Noong Mayo, ang Anna Maersk ay umalis mula Pilipinas papuntang Canada dala ang haturang mga basura kaya pinabalik na sa kanilang mga puwesto ang mga pinauwing diplomat.



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## 69 container ng basura balik Canada na

Dumating na kahapon nang umaga ang 69 container ng basura na nauang itinapon sa Pilipinas ng Canada.

Ang basura ng Canada ay dumaong alas-siete nang umaga sa Deltaport sa Tsawwassen ferry terminal sa Vancouver.

Ang nasabing basura ng Canada ay mahigit anim na taong naimbak sa Pilipinas bago ipinabalik ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

Susunugin ang tone-toneladang basura sa isang waste-to-energy facility sa Burnaby, B.C.

Dumating sa bansa ang naturang mga basura noong 2013 na idineklara ng Canadian company na Chronic Inc. bilang plastic materials for recycling.



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## ISINAULING BASURA NAKARATING NA NG CANADA

NAKARATING na sa Canada ang barkong naglalaman ng kontininer na basurang itinambak nila sa Filipinas ilang taon na ang nakalilipas.

Ganap nang naibalik sa naturang bansa. Sabado ng umaga, oras sa Canada ang mga ba-

sura na halos kalahating dekadang nanatili sa bansa.

Dumaong ang M/V Bavaria sa Vancouver Port lulan ang 69 containers na mga basura matapos ang isang buwang paglalayag mula sa Filipinas.

Matatandaang nag-

banta ng giyera sa Canada ang Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte kapag hindi ito naibalik sa kaniya.

Umalis ang cargo ship noong Mayo 31.

Dadalhin ang mga naturang basura sa waste-to-energy facility ng Canada para sunugin.

Dumating sa Filipinas ang 103 kontininer na basura na may bigat na 2,500 tonelada noong 2014 at 2015 na idineklarang recyclable plastic scraps.

Ang laman ng 34 sa mga kontininer ay maaayos na naitapon ng Bureau of Customs (BOC).



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**AVERTING GARBAGE CRISIS**

# BULACAN DUMP OWNER TO REPAIR ACCESS ROAD

**CITY OF MALOLOS**—The operator of a sanitary landfill in Norzagaray town in Bulacan said it would start repairs on the only access road used to haul trash from 18 towns and cities next week, after agencies resolved the legal issues that triggered a five-week garbage crisis in the province.

Aside from an erosion that prevented garbage trucks from going to the dump operated by Waste Custodian Management (Wacuman), the 18-hectare landfill at Sitio Tiakad in Norzagaray was shut down by the town government over a property dispute as well as questions on its compliance with environmental standards.

Arthur Legaspi, Wacuman president and chief executive officer, said the company was ready to fix Igay Road while waiting for government agencies to formalize their reports on the status of the road.

A presidential proclamation issued by then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo classified the Wacuman landfill as the alternative waste facility for Bulacan and Metro Manila. The proclamation directed the government to maintain all roads leading to the landfill.

Igay Road at Barangay Paradise 3 in City of San Jose del Monte is the only route to the landfill. Rains eroded portions of the road in May but repairs were not started because of claims that it was a private road and any repair would need the permission of its owners.

Village officials led by Reynaldo Cardona said San Jose del Monte had sole jurisdiction over the access way, and that funds had to be appropriated for repairs, including those for other damaged roads in the city.

**Public property**

Legaspi said Wacuman volunteered to make repairs but was rebuffed by the San Jose del Monte government.

During a meeting with out-

going Gov. Wilhelmino Sy-Alvarado on June 27, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) said evidence pointed to Wacuman's operations as legitimate and the road should be reopened.

Alvarado said the national government built Igay Road. "No one owns the road. That's public property. No one can refuse to fix and reopen that road because there are laws that need to be followed," he said.

On April 22, the Norzagaray government ordered Wacuman to stop operating because of lack of business permit after the landfill operator failed to submit documents showing it owned the land hosting the dump.

Wacuman is disputing a property claim filed in court by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

"Wacuman was granted an environmental compliance certificate (ECC). Its validity to operate has been determined by the ECC. The local government cannot establish the validity or invalidity of the Wacuman lot's ownership," Chairmaine Jacqueline Paulino, DILG Central Luzon assistant director said.

**Polluted waterways**

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources is also finalizing a report about Wacuman after Cardona reported that the landfill had polluted nearby waterways.

Lormelyn Claudio, Central Luzon director of the Environmental Management Bureau, said samples taken on June 21 from landfill waters discharged into the rivers were below standard.

But Claudio said the findings were inconclusive because the landfill had been operating for more than a month and rain that fell on June 20 and 21 could have affected the water quality.

—CARMELA REYES-ESTROPE INQ



**NO ACCESS** This damaged Igay Road at Barangay Paradise 3 in City of San Jose del Monte will be repaired so that dump trucks can resume garbage collection in Bulacan province.

CARMELA REYES-ESTROPE



## A solution to Metro Manila's garbage problem

The world's leading climate scientists agree that the planet's greenhouse situation has reached crisis levels. This is mainly due to the uncontrolled amount of waste generated by our cities and from the hazardous contaminants resulting from overusing fossil fuels.

It is scientifically proven that the earth's average temperature increased — according to NASA, by 1.62 degrees Fahrenheit since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, with most of the warming occurring in the last 35 years as an offshoot of carbon emissions. Global temperatures are seen to rise even further unless mitigation programs are put in place.

Exacerbating the situation is the amount of garbage we generate. In Metro Manila alone, the amount of garbage generated is an astonishing 12,500 tons per day. This puts Metro Manila among the top five most severe waste-ridden cities of the world. Quezon City is the largest generator of trash, spewing-out some 3,600 tons a day, followed by the cities of Manila and Caloocan, each generating about 1,200 and 913 tons daily, respectively.

While exiting laws mandate that non-organic waste like metals and plastics be segregated and channelled to recyclers, the reality is that the country does not have enough recycling facilities to absorb the city's entire load of non-organic waste. What happens is that the bulk of metals and plastics are directed to junk shops who try to repurpose them. Those unsold are simply dumped in open trash pits and in our waterways.

Organic waste, on the other hand, is buried in landfills. There are three landfills that currently absorb Metro Manila's waste, they are: the 40-hectare landfill in Navotas, the 19-hectare landfill in San Mateo, and the recently expanded 70+-hectare landfill in Rodriguez, Rizal.

The practice of dumping in landfills affects our air quality as it produces massive amounts of methane gas, a by-product of decomposing waste. It also affects our water quality as toxic bacteria and chemicals seep into our water table. Ultimately, dumping of waste in or out of landfills affect our wildlife and the health and well-being of our people. The toxic effects of our waste will remain for generations to come.

What we need are sustainable solutions.

The world is not short of technologies that can convert waste to energy or even waste to fuel. Many have tried to set up shop in Metro Manila but only one has succeeded — a waste-to-energy facility in the Rizal landfill owned by the Montalban Methane Power Corporation. The Metro Pacific Group has also established a partnership with Quezon City to convert the city's waste into power. However, the plant has yet to break ground.

Standing in the way of sustainable solutions to Metro Manila's garbage problem is the financial structure and politics of the city's waste management systems. At the heart of the conflict is what is called "tipping fees" or the amount government pays a landfill owner for the right to dump trash in its facility. The current rate is P600 per ton, and this is paid by the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) to the landfill owner. It is the means by which the landfill owner recoups its investment and how it

### NUMBERS DON'T LIE ANDREW J. MASIGAN

The squabble over the tipping fees is the reason why waste-to-energy solutions have not prospered in the Philippines.

finances its maintenance costs.

The conflict lies in the fact that sustainable solutions like waste-to-energy plants also rely on trash to serve as their feedstock (the main input to generate power). With the trash channelled to the waste-to-energy plant instead of the landfill, the latter is deprived of its main source of income. Worse, waste-to-energy plants also require the collection of tipping fees as it forms a part of its business model.

The squabble over the tipping fees is the reason why waste-to-energy solutions have not prospered in the Philippines.

While it is true that government regulators can intervene and arrange a split of Metro Manila's waste so that both the landfill owners and the waste-to-energy plants have enough tipping fees to be viable, the reality is that certain powerful politicians have a stake in the landfills and they refuse to give up a portion of their tipping fees. It is a classic case of corruption standing in the way of the greater good.

### A POSSIBLE SOLUTION

I recently came in contact with an American company that is hoping to solve Metro Manila's garbage conundrum. The company is called Waste-fuel of America and they specialize in converting municipal solid waste into aviation fuel (or diesel). Waste-fuel has existing plants in various stages of development in the US, Mexico, Columbia, Panama, and Brazil, among others. The Philippines is a prime investment destination for Waste-fuel.

The Philippines was singled-out for these reasons: Its abundance of waste, the local demand for aviation fuel which last year topped 628 million gallons, and our strategic position to export fuel to key aviation hubs like Hong Kong, Singapore, and Thailand. The Philippines is between one and three hours away from these hubs. Annual demand for aviation fuel across Asia is at 50 billion gallons.

As I write this, talks are ongoing between Waste-fuel, the landfill owners, the MMDA, and the Department of Trade and Industry to sort out the tipping fee issue and other legal concerns.

Waste-fuel's intention is to build a bio-refinery with the capacity to process 3,500 tons of waste a day. This will yield some 22.9 million gallons of aviation fuel a year which could either be used to serve local or regional demand. This translates to P743 billion worth of import saving or export earnings, whichever the case may be. Waste-fuel has plans to scale-up as more waste becomes available.

The investment to build Waste-fuel's bio-refinery is in the region of \$700 million. Not only will an investment of this scale have an impact on the nation's balance of payments, its financial ripple effect among Filipino contractors, equipment suppliers, and service providers will be enormous. The project is



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also seen to generate some 200 jobs for Filipino engineers and scientists.

As far as taxes are concerned, government stands to earn approximately P415 million in income taxes, annually, after the 8th year. This does not include business and local government taxes.

Wastefuel's technology is fully compliant with the Clean Air Act in that its process does not involve incineration or combustion. Instead, it uses steam and pressure to convert waste into gaseous form and, then using the Fischer-Tropsch process, it converts the gas to liquid. The outcome is what is called a "syncrude" and this is what is refined into aviation fuel.

What is remarkable about Wastefuel's technology is that aviation fuel produced with its methods has a carbon content that is less than 20% of that made from fossil fuel. To put its environmental impact into context, for every minute of commercial flight using fuel made from garbage, we prevent one ton of trash from inundating our landfills and avoid the equivalent of four truckloads of CO2 from polluting our air.

Aviation fuel made from renewable sources or sustainable aviation fuel, as it is called, is seen to disrupt the petroleum industry. Not only does it leave a lighter carbon footprint, it is also cheaper. Lower carbon emission and a cheaper cost — the value proposition is too compelling to ignore. This is why analysts consider sustainable aviation fuel the wave of the future.

There's a more compelling reason why sustainable aviation fuel makes sense.

In 2016, the international Civil Aviation Organization, or ICAO, pledged to "make all growth in international flights after 2020 'carbon neutral'" (according to CarbonBrief). The commitment was made before the United Nations through a climate initiative called the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation or CORSIA.

To date, 73 nations have volunteered to comply with the CORSIA initiative. Collectively, the airlines of these nations represent 76% of total air travel. By 2026, participation in CORSIA will be mandatory for all air carriers.

To meet their carbon emission commitment, airlines will have to use sustainable aviation fuel in whole or in part. Even today, Japan Airlines, United Airlines, and Cathay Pacific are already making purchase orders for their long term supply of sustainable aviation fuel. With this global accord in place, quantum growth in the demand for sustainable aviation fuel is expected.

The Philippines is in the position to be a major beneficiary of the CORSIA accord if Wastefuel succeeds in overcoming the tipping fee issue and politics surrounding Metro Manila's garbage management. It will also provide a permanent solution to the city's garbage problem. It will be a win-win situation for the country.

Lets hope greed and politics does not get in the way of this game changing project. ■

ANDREW J. MASIGAN  
is an economist.







Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

A broader look at today's business

## Plastic woes



Atty. Jose Ferdinand M. Rojas II

### RISING SUN

**T**HESE days, many restaurants that used to offer single-use plastic straws have abandoned the practice. Instead, paper straws have replaced plastic straws, or no straw at all. What I find strange, however, are food establishments that don't have straws but are still using plastic cups and cup covers. Fact is, alternatives for many items are not readily available, systems are not in place and many businesses are at a loss as to how to go "zero waste." It seems impossible to many.

During an out-of-town trip, a traveling group decided to stop by the roadside to buy fresh *buko* to quench their thirst. The vendor said straws were not available but placed the coconut meat and coconut water in disposable cellophane bags. If you

would really think about it, what are the alternatives for this purpose? Probably the easiest option would be the customers' personal tumblers. However, if these are not available, there needs to be another way.

It will take some effort on the

part of the business establishments down to the individuals or consumers to come up with new systems and processes, new alternative materials and the resolve to fully commit to this new lifestyle. It is only difficult because we are all used to doing things the way they were always done. But since the experts are predicting that there is not much time left to save our planet, then we all must embrace the difficult task and embrace change.

In supermarkets and department stores, the baggers would always ask customers if they are carrying their own eco bags. If the customer doesn't have any, he or she can opt to pay for plastic bags. Unlike in some places like Kenya where plastic bags have been totally banned, here these can be obtained for just a couple of bucks. And so the plastic waste continues to be thrown into the rivers, waterways and oceans, and continues to threaten our planet.

I do believe the government needs

to have a stronger and very specific regulation on the use of plastics. The responsibilities of corporations have to be established, as well as the rest of the nation's citizenry. It would be best if there would be a specific plan on how to reduce the production of plastic products, and what practical and accessible alternatives there are. Additionally, everybody should stop focusing on the plastic straw. I am not sure what percentage of the total plastic waste it represents, but I do know there are many other plastic products we all should be looking at.

It is possible that laws, regulations, and policies could be drafted under the influence of businesses and capitalists. But these same capitalists need to understand that if environmental protection is not prioritized, eventually, it would be very bad for their businesses. And we are not just talking about their corporations but also about their families, loved ones and children.



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# Reduce plastic production to reduce pollution, Asean urged

By RHODINA VILLANUEVA

A group of environmentalists said the Bangkok Declaration and the ASEAN Framework of Action on Marine Debris is a good example of how regional action can be achieved to address a common challenge.

"However, the Framework falls short of addressing the plastic pollution problem at root, by giving more focus to waste management rather than the need to reduce the production of single use plastics so that they don't end up as waste," Greenpeace pointed out.

This came after Southeast Asian nations earlier vowed to fight against plastic pollution in the ocean, as their leaders adopted a joint declaration during a summit in Bangkok.

"Limiting the scope of the Framework to marine debris focuses only at

the end-of-pipe – after plastic pollution has been manufactured--approaches the problem as a waste recovery, management and disposal issue. However, the issue is not how to manage plastic waste so they don't end up as marine debris – but how all nations must focus upstream, and drastically reduce plastic production," Greenpeace said, saying plastics is a pollution problem, not a litter problem, and must be addressed throughout its life cycle, from production to end of life.

Therese Salvador, media relations coordinator, Greenpeace Southeast Asia, said that while the Framework touched on innovation and alternatives, it lacks the vision to develop appropriate systems, not merely for replacement of packaging with other disposable materials. With advancements in technology, ASEAN governments are in a position to develop 'greener'

innovations to help facilitate a mindset shift on single-use plastic, she added.

To effectively reduce plastics pollution, whether on land or at sea, Greenpeace said ASEAN nations must go beyond this Framework and institute policies at home that ensure a lot less single-use plastic products will be manufactured. This can be done through regulations and bans on single-use plastics, and laws that will facilitate redesign of packaging and product delivery systems.

Most importantly, Salvador said, the Framework failed to address the problem of waste imports, saying "ASEAN nations have been struggling against the waste trade which has serious ecological and social consequences. ASEAN's non-action on the waste trade issue, even those for recycling, is alarming when the summit is the best time to address it."



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## PUSONG PANALO

ni Atty. Jose Ferdinand M. Rojas II

SA panahon ngayon, marami sa mga restaurant na dating nagbibigay ng single-use plastic straws ay hindi na gumagamit nito ngayon. Mga straw na gawa sa papel ang ipinalit dito, o 'di kaya naman ay wala kahit na anong klaseng straw. Ang ipinagtataka ko lamang ay ang mga food establishment na wala

ngang plastic straws pero gumagamit naman ng plastic cups at plastic covers. Sa totoo lang, hindi madaling makahanap ng alternatibo para sa maraming bagay na gawa sa plastik. Bukod pa rito, walang sistema para sa pagre-recycle o pagre-reuse, at maraming mga korporasyon o negosyo ang nalilito

## ANG PROBLEMA SA PLASTIK

kung paano nga ba isasagawa ang 'zero waste'. Tila imposible ito para sa marami.

Sa kanilang biyahe patungo sa isang probinsiya, isang grupo ang tumabi sa gilid ng daan upang bumili ng, sariwang buko para inumin. Ayon sa tindera, wala raw straw dahil bawal na raw ito. Kaya lamang, inilagay naman niya ang laman ng buko at ang buko juice sa mga cellophane bags. Kung tutuu-sin, ano nga ba ang mga alternatibo sa kasong ito?

Siguro ang pinakamadali at pinaka-posibleng paraan ay ang paglalagay ng buko juice sa kanyang kanyang baunan na dala ng mga kostumer. Kaya lamang, kung walang dalang baunan ang kostumer, ano pa ang ibang paraan?

Kailangan ng sakripisyo at tiyaga ng mga negosyante at mamumuhunan pati na rin ng mga kostumer at mga indibidwal upang maglatag ng mga bagong proseso at sistema, bagong alternatibong materyales na

pamalit sa plastik, at pagpapasiya o determinasyon upang lubusang yakapin ang ganitong pamumuhay (zero waste lifestyle). Mahirap lamang ito sapagkat sanay tayo sa nakasanayan na. Ngunit dahil nagbitiw na ng prediksyon ang ilang mga eksperto na kaunti na lamang ang panahong natitira upang mailigtas natin ang ating planeta ay dapat na tanggapin at gawin natin ang mga bagay na hindi komportable, ang mga bagay na mahirap.



# Basura, sanhi ng pagbabaha!

## TINGNAN NATIN



**By VIC REYES**

**LUBHANG** mabilis ang pag-usad ng panahon dahil nakatatlong taon na sa Malakanyang si Pangulong Rody Duterte.

Sa totoo lang, tatlong taon na din niyang hinahabol ang mga ismagler, durugista, korap sa gobyerno at iba pang kriminal.

At sa loob ng panahong 'yan ay nakatatlong customs commissioners na din siya.

Ito ay sina dating Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon, Police Gen. Isidro Lapeña at Military Gen. Rey Leonardo "Jagger"

Guerrero.

Sina Faeldon at Lapeña ay natanggal sa Aduana dahil sa isyu ng iligal na droga.

Napalusutan sila ng mga ismagler ng shabu, ang tinatawag na "poor man's cocaine."

Pero ngayon, marami ang umaasa na magtatagal na sa puwesto si Commissioner Guerrero.

Ang panalangin nga ng mga supporter ni Sir Jagger, sanay manatili siya sa Aduana hanggang June 30, 2022.

Sa petsang ito kasi matatapos ang six-year presidency ni PRRD.

Sa takbo ng mga nangyayari sa Aduana ay mukha namang magtatagal sa puwesto si BoC Chief Guerrero

Sa tingin nga natin, nakuha na ni Jagger ang trust and confidence ng tinatawag na "water-front community."

Ang komunidad ay binubuo ng mga taga-Bureau of Customs, importer, broker, mamamahayag at iba pang stakeholder.

Paanong 'di magtata-

gal si Guerrero, eh kilala itong fair, just, honest at transparent na lingkodbayan.

Ang talagang galit sa kanya ay ang mga taong ang tanging gusto ay lokohin ang gobyerno at taumbayan.

Pero iilan lang naman iyang mga salot ng lipunan.

Hindi ba, Sir Jagger?

Kitang-kita na ang perhuwisyon ng dulot ng pagbabaha sa mga mababang lugar.

Madaling lumubog sa tubig-ulan ang mga "flood-prone" na lugar.

Mabilis ang pagtaas ng tubig pero mabagal ang pagbaba nito.

Ito ay dahil barado ng basura ang mga daluyan ng tubig.

Marami ang nangan-gamba na lalong titindi ang pagbabaha dahil sa walang katapusang pagtatapon ng basura kung saan-saan.

Ibig bang sabihin nito ay bigo ang gobyerno na maipatupad ang mga environmental laws, rules at regulations?

Tinatawagan din natin ng pansin ang mga opisyal ng barangay. Aksyon naman diyan!

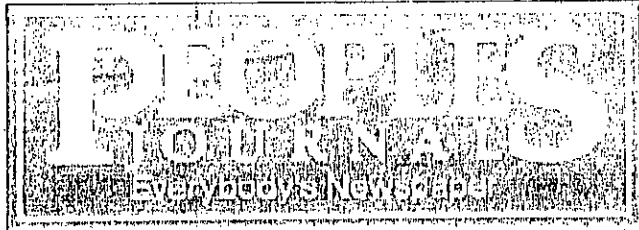
Sa huling tatlong taon ni Pangulong Duterte ay siguradong abala ang mga gustong kumandidato sa pagka-pangulo, bise presidente at senador.

Sa lawak ng bansa, tamang-tama lang ang tatlong taong paghahanda.

Dapat umpisahan na nila ang pagpaparamdam sa taumbayan.

Kaya nga inaasahan na naman ang pagsisimula ng grandstanding mula sa mga presidentiable, vice presidentiable at senatoriable.

Sa Pilipinas, hirati ang mga tao sa pulitika. Kung sabagay, ang ibang politiko kasi ay ginawa ng negosyo ang pulitika. Hay buhay nga naman! (Para sa inyong komento at suhestiyon, tumawag o mag-text sa # 0921-8624484 / email: vicreyes08@yahoo.com. Ilagay lang ang huong pangalan at tirahan.)



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## Basura, Manila Bay, baha, trapik atbp

**HINDI** ko na nga isinama ang isyu ng maraming lubak sa mga kalsada ngayon saan ka man magpunta. Natural na raw ito at tag-ulan na naman.

Huwag pang idagdag ang maraming "bungkalan" sa mga lansangan bago pa man mag-tag-ulan.

Ngayong tag-ulan na, dadami pa ang lubak at sana'y matigil na ang pagbubungkal ng mga lupa. Pero matitigil pa nga kaya?

Bata pa ako ay tila naging tradisyon na ng mga kinauukulan ang pagbubungkal ng mga kalsada. Lagi akong lumulundag sa mga dinadaan-an kong mga hukay sa kalsada pag-uwi ko galing ng paaralan. Lagi kamiing nakikipag-luksong tinik ng mga kamag-aral ko sa mga hukay sa kalsada.

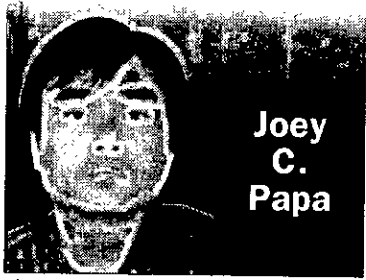
Ngayong nagkapamilya na ako, higit na dumami ang pagbubungkal sa mga kalsada. Alam naman nila ang problema- kawalan daw ng koordinasyon ng mga -mambubungkal!

Mambubungkal mula sa mga telco, mula sa water companies, mula sa lokal na pamahalaan atbp. Hanggang ngayon wala pa ring koordinasyon?

Dumating na ang pagbaha. Naungkat muli ang matagal nang alam na problema- ang sandamakmak na basura.

Lumutang na muli ang mga basura sa Manila Bay. Matagal na ring

### BANGON KALIKASAN



Joey C. Papa

alam kung saan galing ang mga basurang nagpupunta sa Manila Bay. Saan pa kundi sa mga bahay sa mga barangay!

Kakasuhan daw. Magpapakulong daw ng mga barangay chairman. Wala pa rin. Matagal na ring alam ang na pamamahala ng basura ay tungkulin ng mga pamahalaang barangay. Wala pa ring nangyayari.

Malulutas pa ba ang trapik? Nak-upooooo!!

Umulan lang ng ilang minuto nitong nakaraang linggo, nagbaha na sa may Main Avenue sa Edsa at natuklasan ang dahilan-- sandamakmak na basurang nakabara sa mga drainage. Ang resulta - dagdag na krisis trapik!

Basura, baha, basura sa Manila Bay, trapik, pagbubungkal ng kalsada, ang lahat ng ito ay pabigat sa

sambayanang Pilipino. Idagdag pa ang kakulangan ngayon sa tubig at linggo-linggong pagtaas ng presyo ng gasolina at diesel. Anak ng putakti, sigaw ng bayan!

Matiisin pa rin ang mga Pinoy. Ngunit hanggang kalian ang pagtitiis na ito?

Natutuwa ang mga nagpapabigat sa buhay ng mga Pilipino dahil mabilis humanap ang Pinoy ng mga bagay na pampagaan ng dinadalang bigat ng buhay. Madali silang magkuwento at magpatawa na kung minsan ay kahit mag-isang nagsasalita na lang na maaaring mapagkamalang nawawala tuloy sa katinuan ang isip o kaya'y dinadaan sa pagkanta.

Isang paraan ng mga Pinoy ang pakikipag-usap kahit hindi kakilala ang katabi sa upuan sa dyip o tindahan upang malibang lamang ang sarili sa mabubuon huntahan o kuwentuhan na maaaring humaba. Sa paraang ito ay nakapaglalabas ng sama ng loob, maihihinga ang dinadalang pasakit na dinadala o kaya'y ang pagpunta sa mga kaibigan sa kanto at pakikinig ng mga biruan na kahit pansamantala'y naiibsan ang dinadalang problema sa buhay.

Ngunit kailangan bang laging gani-to ang buhay ng mga Pilipino?  
(bangonkalikasan@yahoo.com)



## Vizcaya stops OceanaGold operations

**KASIBU, Nueva Vizcaya:** Gov. Carlos Padilla issued an order to stop the operations of OceanaGold Philippines Inc. (OGPI) in its Didipio mines on Thursday after its Financial and Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA) expired.

Padilla met with residents of Barangay Didipio here explaining why he had to stop the Australian-based OGPI's mining operations.

He also disputed the letter of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) allowing OGPI to continue its operations pending the approval of its application for the renewal of its FTAA, which expired on June 20.

In a June 20 letter to Jose Leviste Jr., OGPI Board chairman, MGB Acting National Director Wilfredo Moncano said OGPI was allowed to continue its operations despite the expiration of its FTAA, which is renewable for another 25 years.

An FTAA is a license issued to a multinational company that shares

technology and resources to explore and extract minerals in the Philippines.

"Please be informed that [through] the memorandum of the same date to the DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) secretary, this office has taken its position that OGPI is permitted to continue its mining operation pending the approval of the renewal of FTAA No. 001," Moncano said in his letter.

OGPI's FTAA 1 now only covers 10,266 hectares, including the currently operating mine in a 925-hectare area in Barangay Didipio in the mineral-rich upland town of Kasibu.

However, Padilla considers the MGB letter allowing OGPI to continue its operations as a "mere opinion and pronouncement and not a confirmation," allowing the company to resume its operations.

"[I]n the absence of an effective agreement renewing the FTAA, all rights and interests vested in OGPI by virtue of the agreement are ter-

minated effective midnight of June 20, 2019," Padilla's order said.

The governor also directed the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office, Philippine National Police, Kasibu municipal government and Didipio *barangay* (village) governments to restrain any operations of OGPI.

Elders in the mining community said there were more residents who were dependent on the mining operations for their livelihood and were now pushing for the renewal of OGPI's FTAA.

Padilla, in the meantime, urged residents, "We may have been divided because of the mining project, but please let us maintain peace and harmony in our communities and let us not allow mining issues to destroy our culture and unity."

He urged residents to let the provincial government's legal actions against OGPI take due course.

**LEANDER C. DOMINGO**



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COMMUNICATION  
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# Manila Standard

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## NV orders halt to OceanaGold mine operations

By Ben Moses Ebreo

KASIBU, Nueva Vizcaya—The provincial government here has ordered OceanaGold Philippines Inc. to stop its mining operations in barangay Didipio here following the expiration of its Financial and Technical Assistance Agreement issued by the Office of the President on June 20.

Governor Carlos Padilla led provincial government personnel in issuing the Cease and Desist Order last week and held a dialogue with the anti-mining villagers and barangay officials in Didipio.

The order considered the claim of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau that OGPI can continue its operations pending the approval of its new FTAA

application as “a mere pronouncement and not a confirmation” allowing the resumption of the firm’s operations.

Padilla’s order also directed the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office, Philippine National Police, Kasibu municipal and Didipio barangay local governments to “enjoin and restrain” any operations of OGPI since its FTAA expiration.

During the forum in Didipio, Padilla urged the villagers to maintain their harmony and unity in their communities despite their different stances on the mining project.

“Because of the mining project, we were divided but please let us maintain peace and harmony in our communities. Let us not allow mining issues to

destroy our culture and unity,” he said.

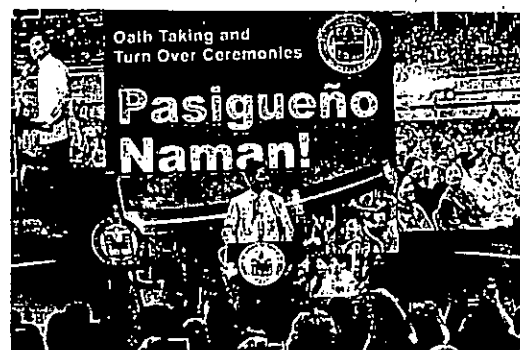
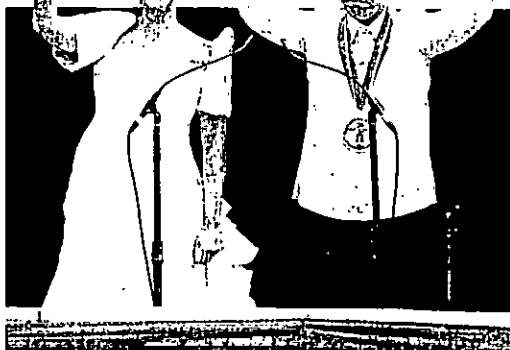
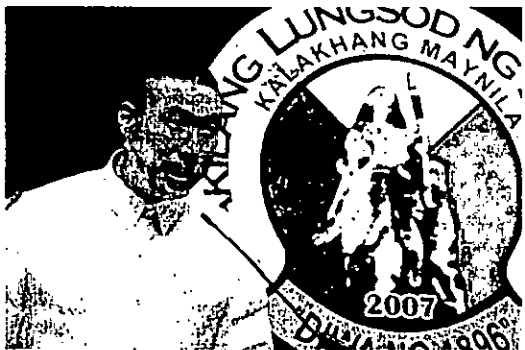
Padilla urged the villagers to let the provincial government’s legal actions take their due course, as they will issue a cease and desist order against OGPI.

The Sangguniang Panlalawigan, in a special session last week also approved a resolution declaring all mining activities in barangay Didipio as illegal and urged Padilla to undertake all necessary and legal actions to protect the interest of the state, especially Nôvo Vizcayanos.

In a separate resolution, the provincial board also urged municipal officials of Kasibu to cause the cancellation of OGPI’s mayor’s permit in barangay Didipio in the wake of the expiration of its FTAA, which was first issued in 1994.

# Metro trio of 'Davids' takes over

After toppling dynastic families, Pasig's Sotto, San Juan's Zamora and Manila's Domagoso promise change



TRIUMPHANT TRIUMVIRATE (From left) San Juan Mayor Francis Zamora gives his first speech as the city's new chief executive; Manila Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso and Vice Mayor Honey Lacuna wave to supporters at city hall while Pasig Mayor Vico Sotto addresses constituents at his inauguration. —GRIG C. MONTEGRANDE, MARIANNE BERMUDEZ AND MATTHEW REYSIO-CRUZ

By Matthew Reysio-Cruz  
@MatthewINQ

A fresh batch of Metro Manila mayors and officials formally assumed their posts on Sunday, heralding a new era of governance in the country's political and economic center.

First-term chief executives, in particular, were eager to point out the difference between them and their predecessors, with some making it clear they would take not just novel policies to city hall, but also fundamentally different styles of leadership and visions for their cities.

Chief among these were the "Davids"—Manila Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso, Pasig Mayor Vico Sotto and San Juan Mayor Francis Zamora—who had dislodged "Goliaths" or longtime officeholders or dynastic families.

Each of them was elected by landslide margins, handing them a strong mandate to implement the sweeping changes they had campaigned on.

"Enough of the politics that instills fear in its citizens," said Sotto, who at 30 years old was one of Metro Manila's youngest mayors. "The highest goal of government and law is service to the public—a simple concept that has been easily forgotten."

Across the capital, pomp-filled inauguration ceremonies gave way, almost immediately, to the sober reality of governing. Minutes after he took his oath of office, Sotto rushed to Pasig City Hall for his first meeting.

The newly elected mayors had spent the past weeks since the May 13 polls basking in the glow of their victories, but they would now face increased pres-

sure to make good on their ambitious promises.

Both Sotto and Zamora, who ended the decades-long dominance of the Eusebio and Ejercito-Estrada families, respectively, said that they had started reviewing the finances, contracts and other documents of their predecessors.

#### Clean note

"It's my responsibility to ensure every centavo was used correctly. I want to start on a clean note," Zamora told reporters. "The past administrations were all under one family, so it's only now that we are gaining access to these papers."

Sotto and Zamora have explicitly denounced the former mayors of their cities for alleged corruption, and both branched transparent governance as a centerpiece of their plat-

forms.

Even Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte, who served three terms as vice mayor to former Mayor Herbert Bautista, gently chided her predecessor.

"My first executive order will involve the creation of an internal audit service under the Office of the Mayor to ensure that all processes and documents in Quezon City are in order," she said during her inaugural address.

According to Belmonte, the net amount of funds Bautista had left her added up to only P516 per resident in Quezon City.

"I really wanted to have more elbow room to do more projects and programs during the first six months of my term because you all deserve the best," she said.

Aside from the individual

challenges posed by the capital's 17 local government units (LGUs), the new mayors will need to work together to confront Metro-wide issues that include worsening traffic on shared highways, pollution in shared rivers and the continued spread of illegal drugs.

#### Metro future 'very bright'

"I'm very confident that we'll be able to work well together," Sotto said. "It looks like the future for Metro Manila is very bright."

But for all the focus on the political "Davids," 13 LGUs in Metro Manila will be controlled by reelectionists or relatives of mayors who had reached their term limit.

The national political orientation in this capital of more than 12 million residents would remain largely unchanged as

well, as President Duterte retained a sizeable base of support moving into the latter half of his term.

Eleven mayors belong to the administration-backed coalition of PDP-Laban, Nacionalista Party and Nationalist People's Coalition. Belmonte, meanwhile, is allied with Davao City Mayor Sara Duterte's regional party, Hugpong ng Pagbabago.

Mayors Jaime Fresnedi and Lenlen Oreta in the cities of Muntinlupa and Malabon, respectively, maintained their allegiance with the Liberal Party, while Makati Mayor Abby Binay and Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco were allied with the United Nationalist Alliance.

Only Sotto and Domagoso, of Aksyon Demokratiko and the local party Asenso Manileño, respectively, were not allied with a strong national party. INQ





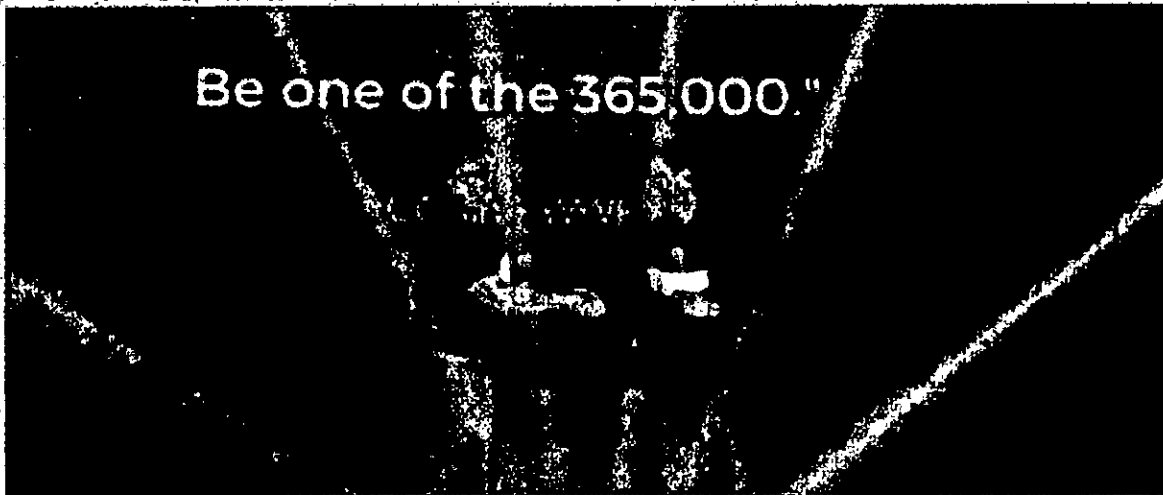
## GCash Forest eyes 365 thousand trees planted in 365 days

FILIPINOS who want to contribute to environmental preservation can now conveniently use an innovative mobile phone app to help plant trees and increase the Philippines' forest cover.

Leading mobile wallet, GCash, is introducing an exciting "green" feature on the app called GCash Forest, which lets subscribers plant virtual trees that will have real-life counterparts. By the end of 365 days, GCash Forest aims to plant 365 thousand trees with the help of GCash subscribers.

According to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Forest Management Bureau (FMB), the Philippines is losing 47,000 hectares of forest cover every year. The FMB also reported the need to rehabilitate 1.2 million hectares of forest lands by 2022 to prevent landslides, ensure water availability, and preserve biodiversity.

"GCash Forest is about making it easier, more convenient, and even rewarding for everyone to take care of our environment for the benefit of future generations," said Mynt CEO Anthony Thomas. "GCash is no longer just providing an excellent platform for accessible financial products and services but also enabling Filipinos to be more active in responding to real-life issues, such as climate change mitigation through reforestation.



**WORLD WIDE FUND for Nature Philippines President and Chief Executive Officer Joel Palma (left) and Mynt President and Chief Executive Officer Anthony Thomas (right) perform a ceremonial handshake to convey their shared commitment of planting 365,000 trees in 365 days.**

GCash considers GCash Forest as a last mile initiative that fully recognizes the emergence of an all-digital Filipino lifestyle.

To implement its tree-planting initiatives, GCash Forest partnered with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and The Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN). The DENR will provide

land resources in Ipo Watershed, an essential component of the Angat-Umiray-Ipo watersheds system supplying 98 percent of Metro Manila's water. WWF will be providing trees and manpower while BIOFIN will provide expertise on monitoring. Mr. Thomas added that recent findings on the Philippines' vulnerability to climate-related hazards call for greater collective

action. Results of the Global Peace Index 2019 identified the Philippines as the most susceptible country to the adverse effect of climate change. By leveraging the GCash platform and scale, GCash Forest aims to rally a coalition of individuals, non-government organizations, and international organizations to meet its 2020 targets.



## Mobile app aims to plant 365,000 trees to hike forest cover

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To plant trees through GCash Forest, GCash users need to collect "green energy" by frequently using the app. Users who get enough green energy can choose which species of trees they want to plant in a selected area at the Ipo watershed. Once the trees are physically planted, users get to receive a certificate of ownership with a serial number, fun facts and updates on the growth of their trees.

"Many Filipinos, especially the younger ones, care about the environment but a lot of them don't know how they can actively take part in environmental protection. This is a barrier that GCash Forest addresses because they only need to use their smartphones—an already integral part of their daily lives—to make a difference," said Thomas.