

DATE : 04 JUL 2019

DAY : Thursday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



#nationataglance



DENR

CORDILLERA ADMINISTRATIVE REGION: BAGUIO CITY
DENR lifts closure order on Irisan dumpsite, gives Baguio City until Dec 31 for conversion into eco-park

THE DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has lifted the June 26 cease and desist (CDO) order against the Irisan dumpsite in Baguio City, with several conditions, including a Dec. 31 deadline for the conversion of the site into an ecological park. In a letter dated July 1, a copy of which was posted by the Baguio City government on its Facebook page, DENR Regional Executive Director Ralph C. Pablo said the local government's "explanation" for its failure to comply with the 2012 permanent closure order on the dumpsite was "reasonably implementable." Three of the four conditions set by DENR Cordillera Administrative Region office with a July 31 deadline are: Clear out all mixed waste (raw compost and plastics) from the site; install and operationalize all equipment identified in the city government's conversion plan; and collect only biodegradable waste and no storage of any residual waste outside the Environmental Recycling System. The 4th condition is the conversion of the Irisan dumpsite into an "Environmental-Friendly Eco-Park" not later than Dec. 31 this year. The 5.2-hectare dumpsite, which was already ordered closed by the National Solid Waste Management Commission in 2012, was issued a CDO following a visit to the site last week by DENR Undersecretary Benny D. Antiporda.



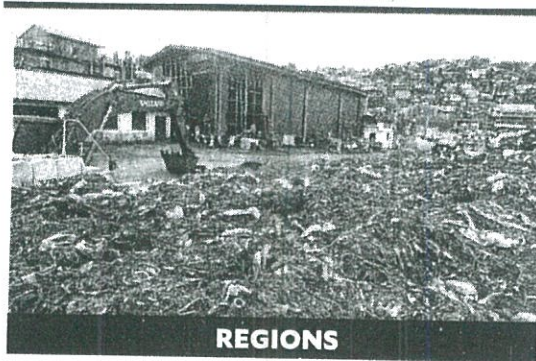
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Baguio aims to turn dump into eco-park

BAGUIO CITY—Mayor Benjamin Magalong on Tuesday ordered the three-month cleanup of the decommissioned Irsan dump, as the city started turning the area into an ecological park. Magalong spent his first days in office dealing with the summer capital's waste management problem after trucks stopped collecting trash due to the shutdown of the city's two waste-to-fertilizer machines last week. —STORY BY KARLSTON LAPNITEN

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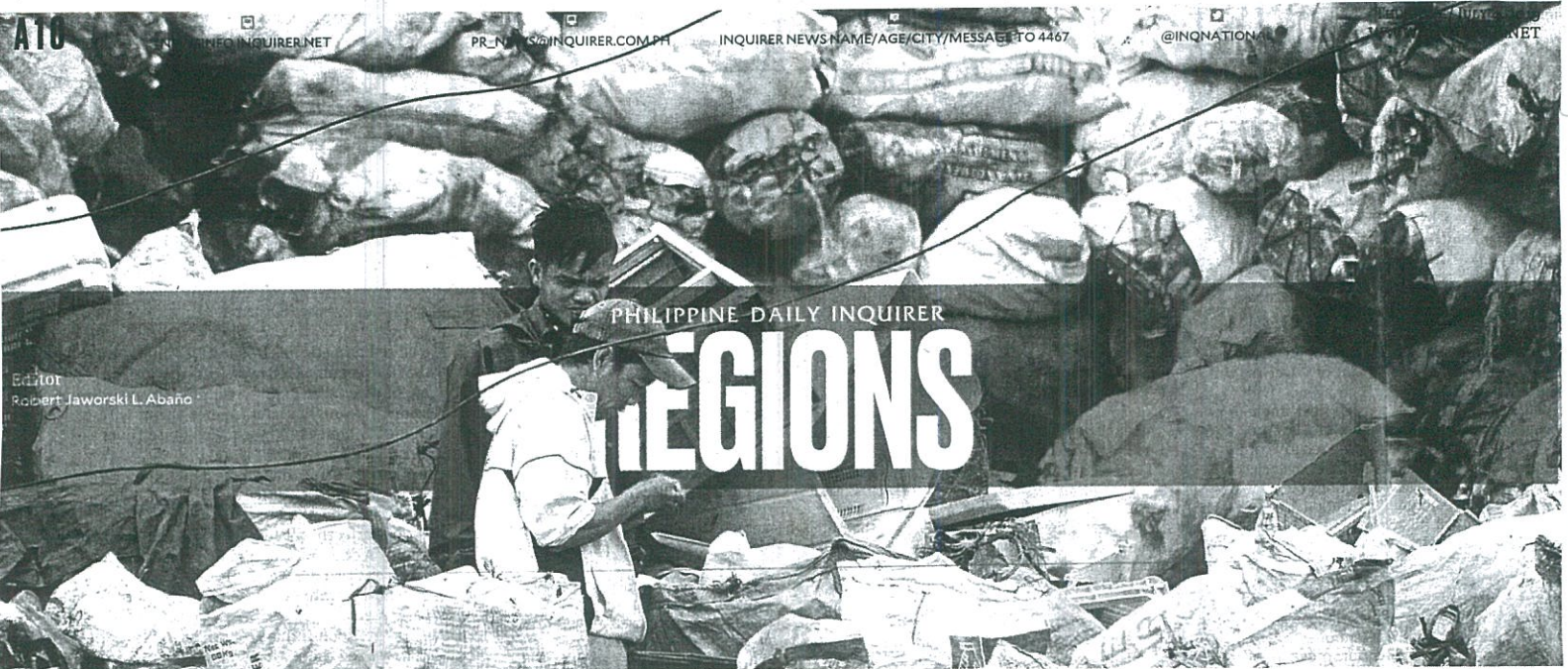
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Editor
Robert Jaworski L. Abano

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
REGIONS

RELOCATION Junk shops surrounding Irisan dump in Baguio City are expected to relocate once the local government starts clearing the area and turning it into an ecological park. —KARLSTON LAPNITEN

In Baguio, 3-month dump cleanup starts

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Summer capital's war on trash shows city means business, says Magalong



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By Karlston Lapniten
@karlstonlapnitenINQ

BAGUIO CITY—About 30,000 metric tons of biodegradable waste that had accumulated at the decommissioned Irisan dump here would be gone within three months after Mayor Benjamin Magalong ordered city officials to convert the area into an ecological park.

Magalong started his first days in office dealing with accumulated trash after garbage trucks stopped collecting organic waste due to the shutdown of the city's two waste-to-fertilizer machines on June 27.

On Tuesday, Magalong spent his day inside the Irisan dump, presiding over meetings with his department heads and local village officials.

"This will be a sort of showcase that we mean business. If we can do it here, anything we can do everywhere," said Magalong, whose campaign was grounded on revitalizing Baguio.

Garbage crisis

The rehabilitation also includes closing at least seven junk shops operating near the facility.

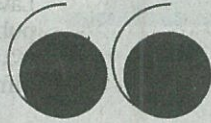
Baguio was nearly plunged into a garbage crisis after the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) stopped the machines' operations and suspended the hauling of biodegradable waste to Irisan.

Ralph Pablo, DENR Cordillera director, on Monday issued an order allowing the city



REHABILITATION Around 30,000 metric tons of solid waste that remained at the decommissioned Irisan dump will be processed into fertilizer as part of the area's rehabilitation.

—PHOTOS BY KARLSTON LAPNITEN



If we can do it here, anything we can do everywhere

Benjamin Magalong
Baguio City Mayor



to resume its solid waste operations provided City Hall processed all organic garbage stored at the dump and hauled out unprocessed compost.

A lot of work, prayers

Baguio generates 50 MT of biodegradable waste in a day, according to a waste assessment and characterization survey.

Processing the trash at Irisan—and not counting the

daily delivery of fresh waste—within three months will need "a lot of work and prayers," said Rapport Innovations chair, Rod Guerrero.

Rapport took over the operations of the dump in May this year under a five-year contract with the city government.

"We initially estimated at least two years to clean up this pile but the mayor wanted to clean it [as soon as possible]. We will help," Guerrero said.

To do this, he said they would transfer their operations from Tarlac to this city and bring in "as much machinery as the area can accommodate."

With the equipment, they can process at least 50 MT tons of waste daily, he said, adding that the city-owned environmental recovery system (ERS) machines can process at least 40 tons daily.

In June, experts from Adamson University and the Department of Science and Technology learned that one of two ERS machines had malfunctioned because of poor maintenance.

Magalong said Rapport can have it repaired and made fully operational this month.

Collapse

The city has been using the Irisan dump since 1972. In 2011, six people, including two children, died after the retaining wall of the dump collapsed, burying houses below with trash.

In 2012, the Court of Appeals granted a writ of kalikasan and a writ of continuing mandamus against the city government to permanently close the area.

Magalong said the solution to Baguio's waste problem could be resolved by waste-to-energy systems. He said the city will be one of the two recipients of a waste-to-energy technology from Japan.

The city spends at least P70 million annually to haul garbage to sanitary landfills in Tarlac and Pangasinan provinces. INQ



DENR wants CDC model for waste disposal

By Romeo Dizon

CLARK FREEPORT—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Central Luzon want local government units, specially those surrounding the Clark Development Corp., to follow the government firm's best practice of proper waste disposal to protect the people and the environment.

Lormelyn Claudio, DENR regional director, said the CDC waste disposal is the "best model that must be followed" by local governments in the region.

Claudio made the recommendation during the 21 "Recyclables Collection Event and Proper Disposal of Hazardous Waste" at the Freeport, as she also urged the CDC to help local government units and partners on their proper waste disposal program.

Claudio envisions CDC, which manages the former American air force base here, to be the benchmark in environment practice in the region, including LGUs.

"There is urgent need to create awareness among the LGUs on how to recycle households waste in their respective communities," she said.

Under the CDC program, waste materials, whether hazardous or non-hazardous, are segregated for proper disposal until they are sold to DENR-registered recyclers and treaters.

Hazardous materials are substances that harm people and the environment if not properly disposed by any company or person after being used.

This year's event raised a total of P714,998 from sales of recycled waste materials, including busted bulbs and lamps, electronic waste, used lead acid batteries, used motor oil, and others.

The Freeport is the home of about 1,000 different companies and producers, mostly exporters and importers under the Clark Investor and Locators Association.



DENR calls for public-private partnership to combat plastic pollution

FIGHTING plastic pollution needs stronger public-private partnership, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) yesterday said.

The DENR called on government, business sector and other stakeholders to work together and find the best solution to marine plastic problems.

The Department said that plastic pollution has become one of the most serious threats to the health of oceans and a major hazard to marine biodiversity.

According to Assistant Secretary and concurrent Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) Director Ricardo Calderon, there should be a stronger public-private partnership to address plastic pollution and convert it into tangible strategies and investible action plans.

Joel dela Torre



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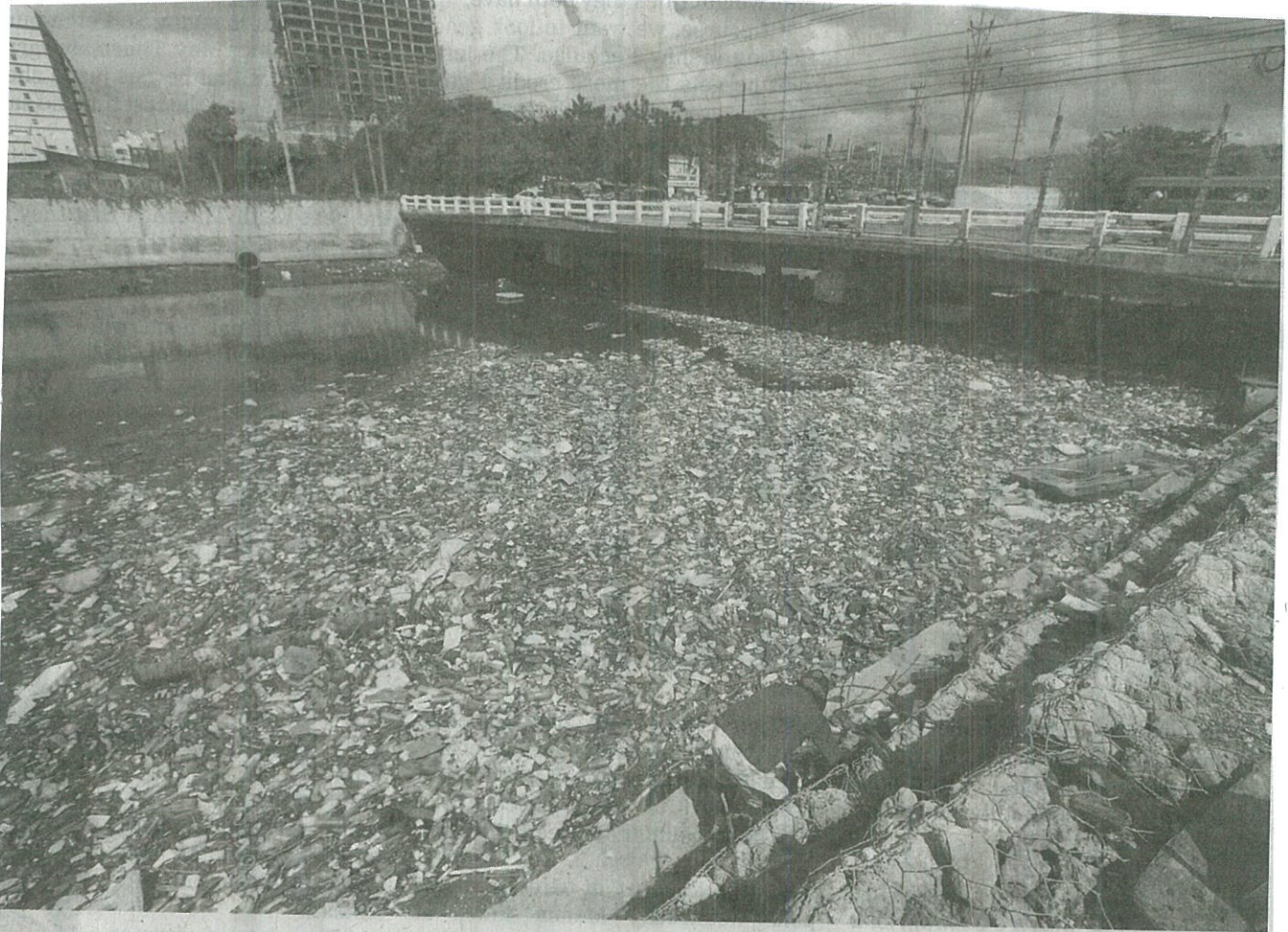


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EFFECTIVE COLLECTION - Trash pile up at the mouth of Mahiga River in Cebu City after being trapped in a bio fence that kept the garbage from spilling out into the open sea. Cebu City Mayor Edgardo Labella is intensifying the city's campaign for a more effective form of garbage collection. (Juan Carlo de Vela)



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NO TO PLASTIC BAGS. Miss Air Philippines Zahra Bianca Saluda and Miss Water Philippines Berjayneth Chee join EcoWaste Coalition activists for the environment and officials of the Mother Earth Foundation during a visit at the Farmers' Market in Cubao, Quezon City in campaigning for the use of *bayong* and other reusable bags to replace plastic bags that are polluting the environment with chemicals and plastic waste. **Manny Palmero**



Clean Laguna bay as water source

By JESS DIAZ

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Laguna Lake Development Authority were urged on Tuesday to clean Laguna de Bay so it could be fully tapped as a potable water source for Metro Manila and neighboring areas.

"This recurring water shortage fully exposes the unattended problem that we have been shouting about all these years: the need for an immediate cleanup of Laguna de Bay," Rep. Lito Atienza of party-list group Buhay said.

Atienza, a former DENR secretary, said the lake should be cleared of fish pens and cages that "continue to pollute and impede the free flow of water."

"If we can clean it up, it could be our main source of water," he said.

At present, the Angat Dam in Bulacan is Metro Manila's principal source of water. The authorities are rationing water from the dam due to lack of rains amid increased demand from residents of the metropolis.

Water concessionaires Maynilad and Manila Water source some of their water from Laguna de Bay. The water, however, is periodically contaminated by algae.

Atienza lamented that the concerned agencies have failed to remove obstructions in Laguna lake despite the order of President Duterte issued in his first State of the Nation Address three years ago.

"The Laguna de Bay has been monopolized all these years by fish pens owned by big businessmen and politicians. They seem to be impossible to remove even after the President ordered the concerned government agencies to clean up Laguna de Bay. This deprives our fisher folk of their traditional and historical fishing ground and Metro Manilans of an alternative water source," he said.

At the same time, he called on the government to compel Manila Water and Maynilad to build their own water sources and wastewater treatment facilities.

Manila Water had an understanding with the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System that the MWSS would build these water sources.

The government, however, is just starting to build Kaliwa Dam in the Sierra Madres.

"The President can force this issue with them. It is very clear in their concession agreement that they should have provided these facilities from Day 1. What started in 1997 is their collection of income, but the investment they have committed to provide these facilities has not been done," he said.

In a recent hearing at the House of Representatives, Manila Water and Maynilad representatives said water interruption in their services areas last up to 12 hours due to limited supply they receive from Angat Dam.

Weather bureau officials said they expect enough rainfall to restore water in the dam to its normal level by September.



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Water level at Angat improving

By ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ

The monsoon rains have further increased the water level at Angat Dam in Bulacan.

Based on the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration's (PAGASA) monitoring Wednesday morning, the water level at Angat Dam was 161.08 meters, up by 0.79 meters from Tuesday's 160.29 meters.

It is slightly above the 160-meter critical level, but still way below the reservoir's 180-meter minimum operating level and 210-meter normal high water level.

"We are hopeful that the rains continue to pour in Angat Dam and the water level to rise

steadily," National Water Resources Board Executive Director Seville David Jr. said

Most parts of Luzon and Visayas will experience a gradual improvement in weather condition as the effect of the southwest monsoon (habagat) weakened.

PAGASA weather specialist Aldezar Aurelio said the habagat has temporarily weakened and only light to moderate rains and isolated thunderstorms will prevail over Pangasinan, Zambales, Bataan, and Palawan.

Aurelio said PAGASA is also monitoring a low pressure area (LPA) inside the country's area of responsibility or 730 kilometers east of General Santos City Wednesday morning.

While the LPA is less likely to intensify

into a tropical cyclone, he pointed out that its trough or extension will bring scattered rain showers and thunderstorms over Eastern Visayas and Mindanao.

Metro Manila and the rest of the country will have a generally fair weather with partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers due to localized thunderstorms

Aurelio warned that rains, especially during severe thunderstorms, could trigger possible flash floods or landslides over low-lying and mountainous areas.

PAGASA also warned that moderate to rough seas will prevail over the seaboard of Luzon and small sea crafts are advised not to sail.



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Angat water level steadily rising

FOR the fourth straight day, water level at Angat Dam, the main source of Metro Manila's water, rose yesterday due to the southwest monsoon rains.

The dam's water level was pegged at 161.08 meters as of 6 a.m. yesterday, an increase of .79 meter from the previous day, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA).

Angat water level is still way below its operational level of 180 meters that was breached last April 28 due to the El Niño phenomenon.

The dam also registered an increase in water elevation on Tuesday by .44 meters, Monday by 1.21 meters, and Sunday by .68 meters.

Weather specialists said the wa-

ter level at Angat may be back at its ideal operating level this month if the two to three anticipated tropical cyclones will bring more rains.

A low pressure area was monitored 165 kms east southeast of Gen. Santos City as of 3 p.m. yesterday and is expected to bring cloudy skies with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms over Caraga, Davao Region and SOCCSKSARGEN.

PAGASA also said the southwest monsoon has weakened. But cloudy skies with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms will prevail over Palawan.

Metro Manila and the rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers due to localized thunderstorms. — *Victor Reyes*



Angat Dam water rises

The water level, however is still far from the 181.72-meter rule curve elevation

By Korinah Saromines

The recent monsoon rains that fell across the metro finally had Angat Dam's water level to rise — which stood at 161.08 meters by 6 a.m. on Wednesday, according to report.

This was higher than the water level recorded at 6 a.m. on Tuesday, which was 160.29 meters.

The water level, however is still far from the 181.72-meter rule curve elevation.

Meanwhile, the water level at La Mesa Dam also rose on Wednesday — from 72.23 meters at 6 a.m. on Tuesday to 72.35.

The water level at Pantabangan Dam in Nueva Ecija also went up on Wednesday to 191.74 meters from Tuesday's 191.71 meters.

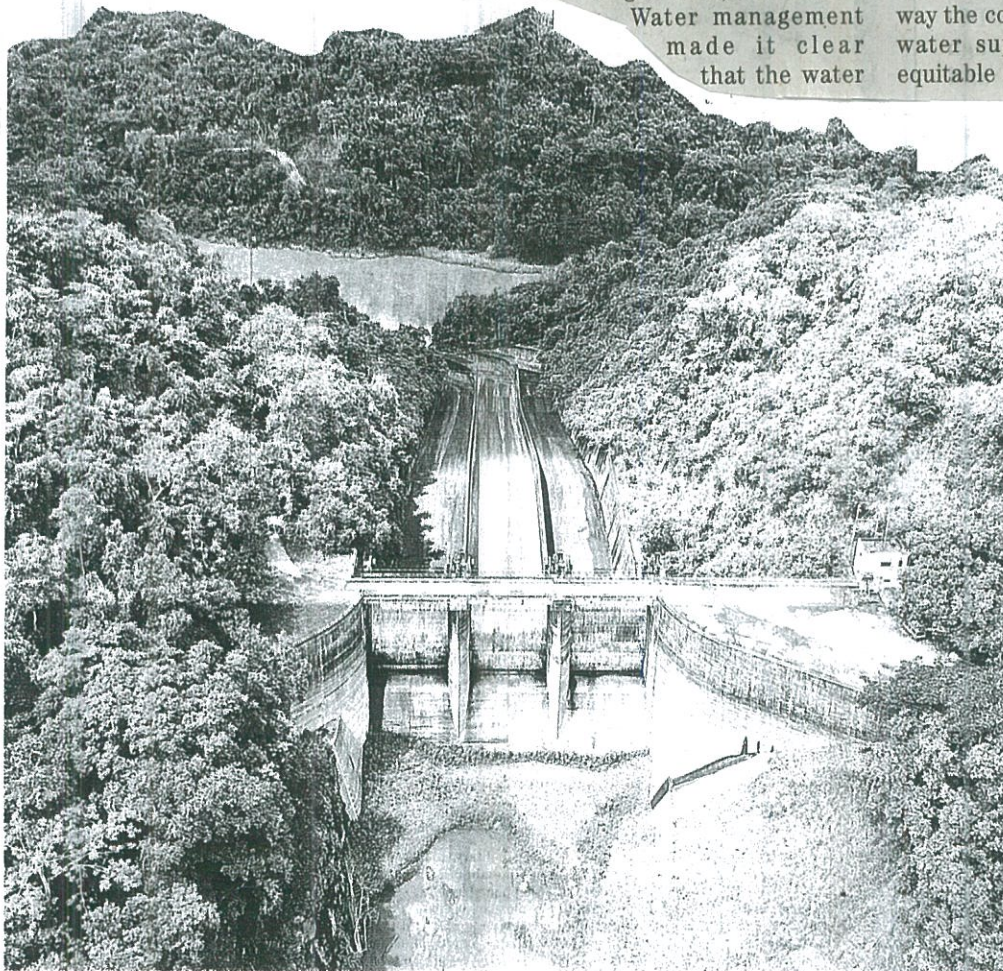
Despite the rising water levels at Angat Dam, the Manila Water management made it clear that the water

supply shortage is far from solved.

Manila Water technical spokesman Donna Perez explained that in the worst cases, the water company is now able to provide at least 8 hours of water service, while in the best cases, customers have running water for longer than 12 hours a day. She said that 99.85 percent of customers in the East Zone franchise area now have notably improved water service.

"We are still only getting 36 cubic meters per second allocation, so there has been no change in the volume of water we can give," said Perez.

Perez however explained that the improved water service today is not the result of the very modest rise in Angat Dam's water level. Instead, it came as a result of changes in the way the company allocates available water supply, resulting in more equitable distribution, she added.



THE water level in Angat Dam rises to 161.08 meters on Wednesday.



New LPA spotted off GenSan

A new low-pressure area was spotted off General Santos City yesterday and is expected to bring rains over Mindanao and parts of the Visayas until today, according to the state weather bureau.

Aldzar Aurelio, Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) senior weather specialist, said the low-pressure area has a slim chance of developing into a tropical cyclone.

The weather system brought cloudy skies with scattered rains and thunderstorms over Eastern Visayas and Mindanao.

As of 4 a.m. yesterday, the low-pressure area was spotted 730 kilometers east of General Santos City.

PAGASA said the southwest monsoon continued to bring rains over Bataan, Zambales, Pangasinan and Palawan yesterday.

The weather bureau warned against rough seas in the western coast of Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte, Pangasinan and Zambales.

Monsoon break

PAGASA said Metro Manila, the rest of western Luzon and parts of western Visayas would experience a "monsoon break" until the weekend apart from isolated thunderstorms.

Aurelio said warm and humid weather would be experienced in these areas.

He said the temperature

in Metro Manila would likely hit 35 degrees Celsius on Saturday.

At a joint briefing yesterday with the National Water Resources Board (NWRB), PAGASA said there would be a weakening of the southwest monsoon until July 16.

"There will be no rainfall in the next two weeks. The low-pressure areas in the Pacific are not developing into typhoons," PAGASA weather specialist Junie Ruiz said.

Angat Dam

Meanwhile, the water level in Angat Dam is not expected to worsen even though there may be little or no rainfall in the next two weeks.

NWRB executive director Sevillo David Jr. said they would retain the 36 cubic meters per second allocation for the supply of water in Metro Manila to improve the water level in Angat Dam.

The water level went up to 161.08 meters as of 6 a.m. yesterday from 160.29 meters on Tuesday.

"Some of the excess in the rains the past few days have yet to reach the dam. Based on our projection, it will no longer go down the 160-meter level," David said.

The minimum operating level is 180 meters.

"Should the elevation continues to rise in a comfortable level, the allocation will be adjusted accordingly," David said. — Helen Flores, Louise Maureen Simeon



Tubig sa Angat Dam nakaalpas na sa 'critical'

Nakaalpas na sa critical level na 160 meters ang Angat dam.

Sa latest dam monitoring ng PAGASA, ang Angat dam ay pumalo na sa 161.08 meters water level, mas mataas sa 160.29 meters noong Martes.

Patuloy ding tumaas ang water level sa La Mesa dam na umabot sa 72.35 meters mula sa 72.23 meters dulot ng walang humpay na ulan nitong nakaraang araw.

Tumaas din ang water level sa Pantabangan, Ambuklao, Binga at San Roque maliban na lamang sa Ipo, Magat at Kaliraya dam na patuloy ang pagbaba ng

water level dahil wala silang nararanasang pag-ulan sa kanilang lugar.

Dahil sa patuloy na pagtaas ng water level sa Angat, umaasa ang PAGASA na wala ng magaganap na water service interruption sa Metro Manila. (Angie dela Cruz)



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NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

No increase in MWSS water allocation yet despite Angat level improvement

THE NATIONAL Water Resources Board (NWRB) on Wednesday said it will maintain its water allocation to Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage (MWSS) at 36 cubic meters per second (CMS) to help in first improving the water level in Angat Dam. "Ang (The) technical working group *ay nag-meeting ngayong araw* (had a meeting today) and reviewing '*yung* (the) current situation for the past weeks, including the PAGASA projection... *walang masyadong pag-ulan ang darating* (there will be not much rain coming) starting today until next week, so we decided to maintain the allocation of 36 cubic meter per second," NWRB Executive Director Seville D. David, Jr. said in a briefing after the TWG meeting. The NWRB reduced water allocation during this month from 46 CMS to 40 CMS, and further to 36 CMS as the Angat Dam water level dropped below the 160-meter critical level. MWSS Administrator Reynaldo V. Velsaco, for his part, said water interruptions will continue. — **Vincent Mariel P. Galang**

>> See full story on (<https://bit.ly/2XqcYh2>)



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Mini-dams

SMALL water-impounding units.

Call it by any other name, but the purpose remains the same—catch and store rain-water.

Sometimes the cure to big problems come in small sizes.

This applies to both personal situations and national conditions.

When a problem reaches gargantuan proportions, the approach occasionally calls for compartmentalized and sequential solutions.

For instance, when one water mega-infrastructure is too costly or takes too long to build, why not break it down into smaller facilities?

This could lower project costs and quicken the construction process.

Also, when the projects are rationally dispersed in the regions, the benefits are equitably enjoyed by all communities, even in the remotest provinces and islands.

This is the vision and the mission behind the proposal of a young, rising, dynamic, and visionary congressional leader who is the front-running contender for House Speaker.

Leyte Rep. Martin Romualdez on Tuesday vowed to marshal congressional support to study the possibility of harvesting rainwater in local catchments or mini-dams as a source of drinking water for the country's cities and municipalities.

Romualdez, one of the top contenders for Speaker in the 18th Congress, said harvesting rainwater in mini-dams is a viable undertaking as the mean annual rainfall of the Philippines varies from 965 to 4,064 millimeters.

But with that much water, Romualdez said: "It is ironic that Metro Manila is submerged in flood waters even at the slightest downpour, yet households do not have a steady supply of water from their faucets."

The president of the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats (Lakas-CMD) cited the experience of Singapore, where rainwater is collected through a comprehensive network of drains, canals, and rivers and channeled to the reservoirs before it is treated for drinking water.

This makes Singapore one of the few countries in the world to harvest urban stormwater on a large scale for potable consumption, he pointed out.

"However, due to budget requirements, we may have to do initially with the construction of mini-dams or small local catchments for rainwater based on existing infrastructure in various localities," the Leyte lawmaker said.



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MINI-DAMS SOLUSYON SA WATER CRISIS

ISINUSULONG sa Kamara ang pagtatayo ng mini-dams para masolusyunan ang problema sa suplay ng tubig.

Ayon kay Leyte Rep. Martin Romualdez, isasakatuparan ito sa ilalim ng isinusulong na Department of Water na tututok sa pagtatatag ng malinis na water supply mula sa iba't ibang pagkukunan nito tulad ng tubig ulan na mula naman sa mini-dams.

Iginiit nito na sa-yang ang mahigit 900 hanggang 4,000 millimeters na tubig-ulan na bumubuhos sa Filipinas kada taon, kaya panahon na para pag-aralan ang rainwater harvesting na pagkukunan ng inuming tubig para sa mga lungsod at bayan.

Base naman sa panukala ni Bulacan Rep. Gavini Pancho, iipunin ng local catchment ang tubig-ulan para magamit na suplay ng inuming tubig, pang-agrikultura,

commercial at sa industrial sector.

Hindi lamang aniya magiging sapat ang suplay ng tubig kundi matutugunan pa ang problema sa pagbaha lalo na sa Bulacan at Metro Manila.

Paliwanag ni Pancho, hindi gaanong gagastos ang gobyerno para sa proyekto dahil mayroon nang umiiral na imprastruktura na isasailalim sa levelling at pagpapalalim ng riverbed.

CONDE BATAO



Urgent: Department of Water Resources (2)

Last week's column was on the creation of a Department of Water Resources (DWR), as proposed by concerned groups and environment experts (former environment secretary Elisea Gozun among them) that would address the water crisis in NCR. Pending the law creating the DWR, an executive order (EO) is being proposed.

"Functional integration" is the catch phrase in the proposal for a DWR or an EO at least. "Ideally, the management of water resources should fall under one agency with broad mandates and extensive field implementation units. In the absence of a law creating such an agency, the (draft) executive order provides that existing offices/agencies performing water-related functions be 'functionally integrated' under the National Water Resources Council."

Four of the eight objectives for the creation of DWR:

- To strengthen and coordinate policy-making and planning for flood management, integrated with storm water drainage, urban drainage and appropriate retention or retarding basins in order to plan for, prevent and minimize the detrimental and catastrophic effects of flooding and intense and longer droughts;

- To encourage and enable more private sector participation in the continued growth and development of the water sector, e.g. the provision of safe water supply and sewerage/septage services;

- To promote and adopt water demand management as a national policy to ensure that water is optimized, that water efficiency and water conservation become a way of life, that the recycling and reuse of water and treated wastewater are widely practiced, that water is properly priced to encourage efficient use and conservation and that rainwater, floodwaters and runoffs are captured/harvested and stored for future use;

- To ensure the effective implementation of Presidential Decree No. 1067, known as



HUMAN FACE

MA. CERES P. DOYO

The Water Code of the Philippines, and Republic Act No. 9275, known as the Clean Water Act of the Philippines.

Feedback from reader Cesar E. Yniguez, who had worked in the water sector for more than 40 years:

"From what I understand, the proposal will place under DWR such functions as water supply, flood control, irrigation, among others. It will place under one department the development and operations of water utilities/water districts, irrigation systems and MPWH flood control and probably all the dam operations of the National Irrigation Authority and NAPOCOR nationwide. Will DWR do all these better and more focused than all these 30 agencies under the sector? Who will set the priorities for the various programs within such department?"

"If what we need is an integrated approach to water resources development and management, strengthening NWRB and transforming it into a national water management council as proposed should be enough.

"The current water shortage in Metro Manila is a regulatory failure. The real cause of the shortage, with water supply not being able to meet the demand, is MWSS's failure to

develop raw water sources which is their responsibility under the concession agreement. Manila Water and Maynilad are tasked to treat and distribute efficiently and effectively the raw water that MWSS will provide—24 hours supply, 100-percent coverage, affordable and good water quality, sufficient pressure (7-14 psi or more), etc. The concessionaires have done this...

"What can compel MWSS to do their responsibility under the concession agreement (CA)? Why can they not be sanctioned or penalized? Why can the MWSS Regulatory Office, which is supposed to regulate the agreement between MWSS (as the utility and owner of Metro Manila's water supply system) and Manila Water and Maynilad (tasked with water treatment and distribution), not do this? It is because MWSS-RO is under the MWSS Board of Trustees. Can they penalize their boss?"

"How can the MWSS-RO regulate when they are under the first party to the agreement (MWSS) that they are supposed to regulate? This is an anomalous situation which the congressional hearings should address. Get an independent water supply regulator similar to MWSS-RO to cover not just the Manila water supply concession but the proliferating joint venture agreements between water utilities/water districts outside Metro Manila and the private sector (Manila Water, Maynilad, Prime Water, etc.)..."

"Forget about sources from nearby water districts as proposed by the LWUA administrators (how do you pipe in the water from the provinces to Metro Manila?), desalination as suggested by a newly minted senator (does he know the cost and power requirements?) and giving the concession back to the government (have they not bungled it enough—that was the reason for privatization in 1997). If these are what you hear in the congressional hearings, it is just a waste of people's money."

Send feedback to cerespd@gmail.com.



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MEDIUM RARE

Small favors

By JULLIE YAP DAZA

JUST as we expected, and just as those experts in MWSS and NWRB knew, it wasn't their genius on the job that gave us rain, and with rain, water to wet our thirsty reservoirs.

There's not enough yet to pull up the water level in Angat, La Mesa, Ipo, and Binga, but let's be thankful for small favors from heaven. Let's be fair also. If the water concessionaires are being penalized for failure to deliver, so should the public servants looking over their shoulder be made to account for their inability to anticipate the dry season and the strong demand for water during the hot months. If my work involved just waiting for the rainy season to solve a problem, should I charge taxpayers for my salary?

I asked Jeric Sevilla, group head of Manila Water's corporate strategic affairs, to explain a minor miracle. For, just as Angat hit critical, the water coming out of our faucets arrived in a tidy stream and no longer as droplets, *alleluia!* Although the official line is that service cut-offs are still 12 to 16 hours long, Jeric indirectly attributes the windfall (waterfall?) to "more rains falling

into the watershed areas."

His clients in our slightly elevated area should feel blessed, indeed, but without sounding ungrateful, are farmers getting back their fair share of the allocation? That was NWRB's bored solution, which was not a solution, taking away water from the farmers to stop urbanites yelling and wailing for "Tubig!" It worked, didn't it, the complaints died down but we never heard a peep from the deprived farmers.

For their sake, let's re-learn the precious pricelessness of water, every drop of it wherever it comes from. Don't use a garden hose to wash your car. (I've kept mine out of sight so as not to tempt the driver.) Don't turn on the water to maximum volume because you don't need maxi, mini will do. Each member of the family should have their own drinking glass for use throughout the day. Don't brush your teeth with the water running, Richard Gomez' favorite tip. Don't luxuriate in the shower for more than three minutes, Peter Musngi's mantra. In the toilet, "if it's yellow, let it mellow; if it's brown, flush it down." The biggest wasters of water at home are husbands, according to a survey conducted by a happily married suburban wife.





Medium Rare

Jullie Y. Daza

Small favors

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Solution to the water crisis starts with us

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Val A. Villanueva

BUSINESSWISE

I MUST have struck a sensitive chord among readers of this column who have flooded my e-mail with complaints about having to bear with the water shortage crisis aside from worrying a host of other problems of daily urban living.

To say that all of them are outraged and furious is an understatement. The recipients of their wrath are the government and the two water concessionaires, the Manila Water Co. and the Maynilad Water Services.

I can't blame them and why should I? Their grievances are valid and they have all the right to be infuriated.

But if I may quote what I previously wrote about this sensitive issue, "Water shortages worldwide are mournfully distressing signs of our pitiful incompetence to manage ourselves within bounds, or to effectively chart for our indispensable assets essential to our future."

My take here is that while we may rightfully condemn the government and the water distributors for this seemingly unending predicament, perhaps it's about time to take stock on how we manage the use of our respective taps.

A near perfect analogy of how we deal with water use is how we control our daily finances. It's a simple dictum of: We should never spend more than what we earn, or we should never spend beyond our means.

To better understand water use, perhaps I should share with you some thoughts from the book, *Chasing Water* written by Brian Richter, a global leader in water science and conservation for more than 25 years. He is the Chief Scientist for the Global Water Program of The Nature Conservancy, an international conservation organization, where he promotes sustainable water use and management with governments, corporations and local communes.

He says global communities using "...overtaxed rivers and aquifers around the world are in serious trouble for three simple reasons: [1] they have been consuming their available water faster than it can be regularly replenished with rain and snow, [2] they lack sufficient restraint or regulatory controls to keep this from happening, and [3] resource limitations or political lethargy cause reaction time to be too slow to avoid disaster."

Of course we all know that our government and the two water concessionaires have failed us big time and have yet to account for their condemnable inaction. Having said that, however, how to cope with the present crisis and how to handle it in the near future starts with us. Again, we refer to how we deal with our personal funds. Saving more and withdrawing only what we need at the moment should keep our water sources stable for a much longer time.

Richter writes that one telling measure of water bankruptcy in the US is its overdraft of groundwater from aquifers like the High Plains (Ogallala), or the Central Valley Aquifer in California. He says: "When you pump water out of an aquifer faster than it is being recharged with percolating rain or snow, the volume of the aquifer is depleted. Since 1900, we've drained US aquifers by a volume equal to two Lake Eries."

What he means in water budget terms is that the communities drawing water from those aquifers are not only overspending their liquid income (percolating rain and snow are the deposits that recharge our aquifers),

they're now raiding their savings to near exhaustion.

As with an overdrawn bank account, Richter points to two general ways to rebalance it: you can look for ways to increase your deposits (water supply) or you can reduce your expenditures (demand management).

Richter opines that even before pursuing expensive new options for bolstering water supplies, it is critically important to minimize the amount of water needed in our homes, industries and on farms. When viewed as a water budget-balancing strategy, water conservation—both in cities and on farms—typically costs one-third to one-tenth of the expense of developing new water supplies, such as by importing water or desalting ocean water. No water supply option should be pursued until we have trimmed our water expenditures to a minimum.

Here, agriculture uses the bulk of our water supply through irrigation. Have we valued the importance of water in the produce we get from this industry? Is the cost of water inputted in the agricultural products we buy? One has just to witness how water runneth over our rice fields like there's no tomorrow. Perhaps, if we'd only value water's importance in agriculture then we'd learn how to conserve it. In most households, water is being wasted in the way we use them. It's just like splurging on what little we have even before we have the means.

In addition to cost savings, water conservation is highly preferable to water supply projects from an environmental perspective. Water impor-



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tation can disrupt existing land uses or natural landscapes, or block animal migration routes as pipelines or canals are constructed across the landscape. These projects can also include villages along the pipeline or canal route. Generating the electricity needed to power a water importation project likely also produces undesirable carbon emissions that are driving climate changes.

According to Richter, there is great potential for using water more efficiently, both in our homes and on farms. "The average rate of water use in Australian cities, for example, is less than half the volume used in cities in the western US. Much of that difference comes from the Aussies' landscape aesthetic. In their urban landscapes, they plant native species or other vegetation well-suited to their climate, thereby requiring little to no outdoor watering.

"Much greater water savings are possible in irrigated agriculture, simply because of the gigantic volumes of water used in growing crops. While squeezing true water savings out of an irrigation system can be tricky, a tiny bit of improved efficiency here will result in a very large volume of savings. With more than a half-century of experience in pushing irrigation efficiencies higher, there is much to be learned from Israeli farmers."

Simply, the single most important way to ride out a water shortage is to begin living within the limits of nature's water budgets. We need to stop squandering the rain.

*For comments and suggestions, e-mail me at
mvala.v@gmail.com*



KUNSABAGAY

NI TONY F. KATIGBAK

Ang tubig ay buhay

GRABENG kalbaryo sa tubig ang naranasan noong summer. May mga lugar sa Metro Manila na kahit patak ng tubig sa kanilang mga gripo ay wala. Umabot yata sa isa o dalawang linggo na walang tubig. Ngayong lumipas na ang tagtuyot at nakakaranas na tayo ng mga pag-ulan, nadagdagan na ang tubig sa Angat Dam na pangunahing nagsusuplay ng tubig sa Metro Manila. Kahit paunti-unti na tayong nakakabawi ay ipagpatuloy pa rin natin ang pagtitipid sa tubig.

Kunsabagay, nabawasan na rin ang pangangailangan natin kasi meron tayong ipon na tubig mula sa ulan na puwedeng ipanlaba at menos din tayo sa dilig ng mga pananim. Sana maging aral sa ating lahat ang nangyaring

tagtuyot nung nakaraang buwan. Iwasan nating maging bulagsak sa paggamit ng tubig upang sa gayon, pagsapit ulit ng tag-araw ay sagana nang dumadaloy ang tubig sa ating mga gripo. Ganito lang 'yan, kapag tayo'y may isinuk-sok ay merong mabubunot di ba?

Lalo na't tubig ang usapan dito, di ba nga ayon sa mga matatanda ang tubig ay katumbas ng buhay. Walang sinu-mang mabubuhay sa mundo kung walang tubig. Nakita na-man natin ang sitwasyon nang nawalan ng tubig ang ilang lugar sa Metro Manila. May mga negosyong nalugi na ang pangunahing ginagamit ay tubig. Kaya paralisado ang mga lugar na nawalan ng tubig.

Merong binubuong Department of Water ang mga mam-babatas at balak isulong ng 18th Congress sa pangunguna ni Rep. Martin Romualdez. Pabor ako sa balak na ito at sana maisabatas para may ahensiyang kakalampag sa dalawang higanteng supplier ng tubig sa Metro Manila at mga karatig lugar.

Magtulung-tulong tayo upang magkaroon ng batas sa tubig. Huwag ipagwalambahala ang tubig dahil mas mabuti pang mawalan ng kuryente ang komunidad kaysa tubig ang mawala.



TRIBUTE TO VICTIMS

BOCAUE FOLK TO REVIVE DYING RIVER AS THEY RECALL PAGODA TRAGEDY

By Carmela Reyes-Estrope
@careyestropeINQ

BOCAUE, BULACAN—The town's deteriorating river will be revived, residents say, as they remember the Pagoda tragedy where 270 people died during a fluvial procession 26 years ago.

Devotees are expected to join the river procession on Sunday when a floating pagoda carrying a venerated wooden cross, called the "Mahal na Poon ng Krus sa Wawa," will sail around the Bocaue River.

This year's three-story high wooden pagoda is reinforced by metal braces to make it sturdy and ensure the safety of those who will join the procession.

The grand procession takes place on the first Sunday of July and is preceded by a nine-day novena as part of the tradition.

On Wednesday, Mayor Joni

Villanueva-Tugna said she would push for a river cleanup to pay tribute to the 270 people who died on July 2, 1993, when the pagoda collapsed due to excessive weight.

The cross-bearing pagoda never sailed again for 21 years until residents and businessmen revived the procession in 2014.

Devotion

Residents said the devotion to the Krus sa Wawa started in the 1800s when a wooden cross was found in the river amid a strong current whipped up by a typhoon.

They said the cross came from the town's old church that had been gutted by fire. The cross has since been kept in a riverside church in Barangay Bambang here.

Tugna has been spearheading the rehabilitation of the river since 2016 through the "Bocaue River Wonder" program.



PROCESSION In this 2017 photo, residents and devotees join the fluvial procession honoring the Holy Cross of Wawa along Bocaue River in Bulacan province. —NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

"The best way to remember those killed in the 1993 procession is through reviving and cleaning the Bocaue River," Tugna said during the pagoda launch on June 28.

She said the local government would tie up with Pasig City to revive the river as recommended by Mayor Vico Sotto, who joined the launch.

The 125-kilometer Pasig Riv-

er, once considered "biologically dead," has been revived through the cleanup efforts of the local government and non-governmental organizations.

Clean, safe

Various fishermen's groups in this town have been regularly cleaning the Bocaue River, removing domestic waste and water hyacinths that clog the waterway.

Jen Santos, program director of Bantay Kalikasan Movement, said the Bocaue River should not only be known as the venue of Pagoda procession but also as "a clean and safe river."

She said waste and garbage from residential areas along the riverbank largely contribute to the pollution. The river is the catchbasin of waste from the towns of Marilao and Sta. Maria, and City of Meycauayan in Bulacan, and other upper areas in

Rizal province and Quezon City.

During high tide, domestic waste from Manila Bay flows to the river.

Emelita Lingat, head of provincial environment and natural resources in Bulacan, said 2,000 "bokashi" balls were thrown into the Bocaue River in April as part of its rehabilitation.

Bokashi is a technology used in cleaning and preventing foul odor of rivers in Japan.

Lingat said water samples were taken before the balls were thrown and new tests would again be conducted after three months.

Dinia Gomez, Bocaue municipal environment and natural resources officer, said they expected water quality in the river to improve. She said bokashi ball production would be a major project of the Sangguniang Kabataan in Bocaue. INQ



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THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
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• 9 nabbed for illegal quarrying

CEBU CITY — Two days after Cebu Gov. Gwen Garcia suspended all quarry permits, nine persons were arrested after they were caught extracting sand and gravel in Barangay Tagbubonga, Asturias town, Cebu. Police said Benjie Alcantara, Francis Cuizon, Nomer Monte, Virgilio Noya, Demetrio Taburnal, Flaviano Cuizon, Leonides Noval, Elizer uUizon and Teodoro Pucot will be charged for violating Section 3 of the Republic Act 7942 otherwise known as the Philippine Mining Act. Police said the nine men were caught extracting and loading sand and gravel into three trucks around 4:30 p.m. last Tuesday. Police went on to arrest the nine men after they failed to present needed permits. (Calvin Cordova)



9 arrested for quarrying

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Police said the nine men were caught extracting and loading sand and gravel into three trucks around 4:30 p.m. last Tuesday.

Police said the nine men failed to

present needed permits.

Garcia had ordered the "immediate suspension of sand and gravel permits pending review" shortly after she assumed post last June 30.

In a memorandum sent to the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO), Cebu Treasurer's Office and Cebu Provincial Police Office, the governor ordered to "put a stop to the unabated illegal quarrying activities in the Province of Cebu."

The order is "to prevent further degradation of the environment which causes calamities that result to massive destruction of properties and loss of human lives." (**Calvin Cordova**)



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Illegal logs seized

BUTUAN CITY – Operatives of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and Philippine Army (PA) swooped down yesterday on a far-flung mountain village of Sabud, in Loreto town, Agusan del Sur province and seized a large number of illegally-cut forest products. An initial report received by DENR 13 Regional Executive Director Atty. Felix S. Alicer said there were about 24,000 board feet of illegally-sawn lumber that were found in the area, but the operatives tagging a 10-wheeler Saddam-type truck were able to initially seize only 369 pieces of lumber with a volume of 4,128 bd.ft. The lumbers were loaded into the truck but heavy rains and the bad road condition, however, hampered the retrieval operation in the area, a flash report on Wednesday said. (Mike U. Crismundo)



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Proposed Boracay bridge needs regional endorsement — NEDA

ILOILO CITY - The proposal of San Miguel Corporation (SMC) to build a P5.5-billion bridge that will link mainland Aklan to the world-famous Boracay Island in Malay town still needs endorsement from the Regional Development Council (RDC-6) of Western Visayas.

This was bared by Ro-Ann Bacal, regional director National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), who said that the RDC still needed to assess if the proposed Boracay bridge was part of infrastructure priorities in the region.

Public Works and Highways Secretary Mark Villar had earlier announced that SMC may soon acquire its original proponent status (OPS) so that it could be finally undertake the Boracay bridge project.

Speaking at the regional socio-economic briefing, Bacal told The Manila Bulletin that SMC's proposal has never been presented to regional officials.

To recall, SMC submitted an unsolicited proposal to DPWH last year. It wanted to build a 1.2-kilometer bridge linking mainland Malay to the famous resort island that will transport only goods, and not tourists.

Bacal said the RDC-6's Infrastructure Development Committee may call SMC to present the proposal.

Meanwhile, Bacal welcomed President Duterte's approval of the Boracay Medium-Term Action Plan. She said it outlines commitments made government agencies to ensure the sustainability of the long-term rehabilitation of the country's most popular beach destination. (Tara Yap)



Creation of Boracay Authority mulled

FOLLOWING the approval of the P25-billion Boracay Medium-Term Action Plan, Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon on Wednesday sought the creation of the Boracay Development Authority (BDA) to manage and develop Boracay Island.

"The approval of the Boracay Medium-Term Action Plan is a significant development in our desire to restore Boracay as the most beautiful island in Asia," the Minority Leader said.

He said the approval of the action plan all the more calls

for the immediate creation of the BDA, saying it was important to have an agency that could take over the management, development, regulation, protection and maintenance of the island, including its coastal and marine biodiversity.

Under Senate Bill 17, its Board of Directors will be composed of 15 members: one representative each from the Province of Aklan, the Municipality of Malay and the three *barangay* (villages) comprising the island of Boracay; four representatives

from the national government; three representatives for the business and investment sectors; and three representatives from local community organizations and/or nongovernment organizations.

Among the powers of the body are to formulate and implement short- and long-term plans, issue permits, order the closure or suspension of a development or construction, and the cessation of operations of any going concern that are detrimental to Boracay island.

It can also adopt and implement measures and standards for environmental pollution control, and construct, acquire, own, lease, operate and maintain on its own or through partnership with the private sector the required infrastructure necessary in Boracay.

"Creating the authority would help ensure that the island will continue to exist with a functioning ecosystem, under a workable plan for sustainable development," Drilon said.

JAVIER JOE ISMAEL



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Manila Standard



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Drilon seeks creation of Boracay dev't body

WITH the Duterte administration approval of the P25-billion Boracay Medium-Term Action Plan in a Cabinet meeting Monday night, Senate Minority Leader Franklin M. Drilon yesterday sought the creation of Boracay Development Authority.

Under Drilon's proposed Senate Bill No. 17, the BDA will manage and develop Boracay Island.

"The approval of the Boracay Medium-Term Action Plan is a significant development in our desire to restore Boracay as the most beautiful island in Asia," Drilon said.

He noted that the approval of the action plan all the more calls for the immediate creation of BDA, saying that it is important to have an agency that can take over the management, development, regulation, protection and maintenance of the island, including its coastal and marine biodiversity.

Macon Ramos-Araneta



Boracay plan boosted

President Rodrigo Duterte's approval of the P25 billion Boracay Medium-Term Action Plan was branded yesterday by Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon as a huge boost to the government efforts to restore the beauty of the island paradise.

"The approval of the Boracay Medium-Term Action Plan is a significant development in our desire to restore Boracay as the most beautiful island in Asia," Drilon said.

Drilon complemented the move with his filing of Senate Bill 17 which calls for the creation of Boracay Development Authority that will be mandated to take over the management, development, regulation, protection and maintenance of the island, including its coastal and marine biodiversity. **MJM**



DRILON BATS FOR CREATION OF BORACAY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

SENATE Minority Leader Franklin Drilon sought the creation of a Boracay Development Authority to manage and develop Boracay Island.

Drilon filed Senate Bill 17 after the Duterte administration approved the P25-billion Boracay Medium-Term Action Plan in a Cabinet meeting Monday night.

"The approval of the Boracay Medium-Term Action Plan is a significant development in our desire to restore Boracay as the most beautiful island in Asia," Drilon said.

Drilon said the approval of the action plan all the more calls for the immediate creation of Boracay Development Authority, saying that it is important to

have an agency that can take over the management, development, regulation, protection and maintenance of the island, including its coastal and marine biodiversity.

He lamented how the current set-up failed in protecting Boracay Island leading to the degradation of the country's top tourist destination.

"It is apparent that Boracay has suffered from the governmental system currently in place. It has failed to provide the island with the protection and preservation that it needs," Drilon said.

Drilon proposed the creation of Boracay Development Authority to operate, administer, manage, and develop Boracay Island. **Marlon Purificacion**



P25 bilyon para sa full rehabilitation ng Boracay pirmado na ni Duterte

INAPRUBAHAN na ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang nasa P25 bilyon na pondo para sa Boracay Medium-Term Action Plan na kakailanganin sa full rehabilitation ng pamosong isla, matapos ang anim na buwang pagpasara noong Abril 2018.

Sinabi ni Presidential Spokesperson Salvador

Panelo na inanunsyo ito ng Pangulo sa 39th Cabinet Meeting sa Malacañang noong Lunes.

Dagdag pa nito, sina National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Director General and Socio-economic Planning Secretary Ernesto Pernia and Usec. Adoracion Navarro ang mangunguna sa action plan na may apat na tema.

Kinabibilangan ito ng enforcement of laws kung saan mayroong intervention sa pag-regulate ng mga bisita at hotel accommodations; prevention na nakapaloob ang intervention para sa sewerage infrastructure, solid and liquid waste management; rehabilitation and recovery of ecosystems; at sustainability ng mga activities sa isla gaya ng improvement ng mga kalsada at public health infrastructure, construction ng permanent housing program para sa mga indigenous people at education facilities.

Una nang binansagan ng Pangulo na "cesspool" ang naturang isla dahil sa natuklasang naglalakihang mga tubo na nagpapalabas ng dumi na direkta patungo sa dagat.



Lonely teardrops and raindrops



MIRRORLESS

**ROLLY G.
REYES**

solid and liquid waste management;

- Rehabilitation and recovery of eco-systems, and sustainability of activities in the island through improvement of roads and public health infrastructure; and

- Construction of permanent housing for indigenous people and education facilities.

These are laudable points that should be replicated everywhere. LGUs should pay attention as they are at the forefront of these action plans.

PRRD has approved the P25-billion Boracay Medium-Term Action Plan, which will install safeguards against ecological degradation while also sustaining tourism in the island. PRRD approved the plan which will sustain the efforts of the government after the closure.

The action plan has four components:

- Enforcement of laws on regulation of visitors and hotel accommodations;
- Pollution control and prevention through sewerage infrastructure, and



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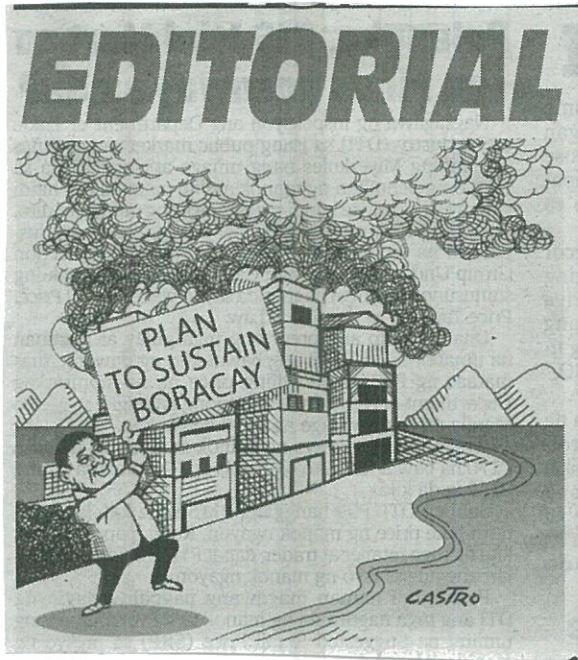
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MAILBOX

Not an affiliate of DMCI

Dear editor,

This is in reference to the news article entitled "NGOs, tribal groups urge DENR to cancel coffee plantation permit", which appeared in the July 3 issue of **The Philippine STAR** (page B9) and *www.philstar.com*.

In the said article, M&S was referred to as an affiliate of DMCI Holdings. We would like to clarify that M&S is not an affiliate of DMCI Holdings Inc. None of our subsidiary companies also own or operate a coffee plantation in Lake Sebu in South Cotabato.

As indicated in our company website (*www.dmci-holdings*), annual reports and regulatory submissions to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), DMCI Holdings is a diversified engineering conglomerate with business interests in construction, real estate, energy, mining and water distribution.

We hope that the above information helps clarify matters.

Cherubim O. Mojica

DMCI Holdings Inc.

Vice President and Corporate Communications Officer



Nationinbriefs

OCEANAGOLD DENIES SHUTDOWN OF DIDIPIO MINE

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya: Australia's OceanaGold, which operates the Didipio Mine in the mineral-rich upland town of Kasibu, said reports and "rumors about a halt of their operations were just speculations." The OceanaGold report said operations had not stopped since there was no stoppage order coming from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau. The company's commercial report added that its Didipio copper-gold project located 270 kilometers north of Manila is expected to churn out this year between 120,000 and 130,000 ounces of gold and 14,000 to 15,000 tons of copper.

LEANDER C. DOMINGO



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Editorial

Bangis ng air pollution

NAKAGIGIMBAL ang report na 120,000 Pilipino bawat taon ang namamatay dahil sa pagkalanghap ng hangin na may lason. Ayon pa sa report, number 3 ang Pilipinas sa mga bansa sa Asia na marami ang namamatay sa air pollution. Nangunguna ang China at ikalawa ang Mongolia.

Karaniwang pinagmumulan ng hangin na may lason ang ibinubugang usok ng mga sasakyan partikular na ang mga dyipni na karaniwang yumayaot sa mga kalsada. Walumpung porsiyento na pinangagalingan ng air pollution ay mula sa mga hindi namimintinang sasakyan o mga karag-karag na. Pinakamalala ang air pollution sa Metro Manila.

Ayon sa Department of Health (DOH), ang maruming hangin ay nagdudulot ng non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Kabilang sa mga sakit na nakukuha dahil sa pagkalanghap ng hangin na may lason ay allergies, acute respiratory infections, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, cancer at cardiovascular diseases. Unang tinatamaan ng sakit ang mga pasahero at pedestrians dahil sila ang nakalantad sa maruming hangin. Araw-araw nilang nalalanghap ang maruming hangin na dulot ng mga sasakyan. Bukod sa usok ng mga sasakyan, nalalanghap din ang usok ng mga sinunog na basura, goma, plastic at iba pang harmful wastes na delikado sa kalusugan.

Sa inilabas na data ng DENR-Environmental Management Bureau, ang air pollutant concentrations sa Metro Manila ay umabot na sa 130 micrograms per normal cubic meter (NCM). Ang maximum safe level ng air pollutant concentration ay 90 micrograms per NCM. Ngayong 2019, tiyak na mas mataas na ang level ng air pollutant concentrations.

Sabi ng isang health official, hindi nabibigyang pansin ng gobyerno ang isyu ukol sa air pollution. Hindi ito binibigyang halaga gayung dapat ay unahin ito sapagkat nakasalalay dito ang buhay ng mamamayan.

Tungkulin ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na mapangalagaan at mapadalisay ang hangin. Sila ang nararapat magpatupad at gumawa ng hakbang para masawata ang mga nagpaparumi sa hangin sa Metro Manila at kalapit na lungsod. Kung naisaayos ni DENR Sec. Roy Cimatu ang dagat sa Boracay at Manila Bay, bakit hindi ang paglilinis sa kalawakan ng Metro Manila. Ipatupad niya ang puspasang paghuli sa smoke belchers partikular na ang mga lumang sasakyan na nagdudulot ng air pollution. Isalba ang Metro Manila sa pagkamatay dahil sa lumalaganap na hangin na may lason.



COST OF CHINA DAMAGE TO PH REEFS: P33B A YEAR

1/2

STORY BY KARL R. OCAMPO AND JHESSET O. ENANO

Filipino scientists and maritime law experts warn of a bleak future for the country's marine resources as fish catch decline and more reefs face destruction due to foreign encroachment into the West Philippine Sea.

A2

FROM A1

By Karl R. Ocampo
and Jhesset O. Enano
@Team_Inquirer

The Philippines is losing about P33.1 billion annually from the damaged reef ecosystems at Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal and the Spratly Islands mainly due to China's reclamation activities and illegal fishing operations, according to Filipino marine scientists.

Deo Florence Onda, a scientist with the University of the Philippines' Marine Science Institute (UP MSI), on Wednesday said the figure, while already staggering, was a "conservative estimate," considering the complex marine biodiversity of the country.

"The value includes all the services that we get from the coral reefs like climate regulation and the benefits we get from the ecosystem," he said at a forum organized by conservation group Oceana Philippines.

Onda said the amount of losses was determined using the baseline value of \$353,429 (P18 million) per hectare per year for coral reefs that was arrived at in a study by a Dutch information and analytics company.

While the reefs remain damaged, the country loses that much annually, he said.

The study, "Global estimates of the value of ecosystems and their services in monetary value," was done in 2012 by Elsevier, one of the world's major providers of scientific, technical and medical information.

Satellite images showed the damaged reef ecosystems at

Panatag covered 550 hectares and 1,300 ha in the Spratlys group.

Unchecked by gov't

Maritime law expert Jay Batongbacal said the figures did not include areas not visible to satellites.

While the Chinese are not the only poachers in Philippine waters, the mass harvesting of giant clams by Chinese fishermen and China's massive reclamation to build seven artificial islands caused the most severe damage.

If these activities remain unchecked by the government, Onda said the decline in the country's fisheries output

would continue and could threaten the country's food security.

Batongbacal said poaching had also led to falling fish catch for the Philippines while China's production was going up.

"We aren't joking when we say that if we do not stop Chinese fishers from our seas, they will likely drain all our marine resources in just a few years," he said. "In Scarborough Shoal, they even destroy the reefs themselves ... If this continues, the shoal would be completely wiped out in five years."

Human rights lawyer Chel Diokno said the government had been "remiss in its constitutional obligation to protect our

marine resources and fisherfolk."

He cited the ramming and sinking of a Filipino fishing boat by a Chinese trawler, which then abandoned 22 Filipinos struggling in the water before they were rescued by Vietnamese fishermen.

Interconnected

Onda said the country's various ecosystems were interconnected and it would be unwise to focus on just one.

The scientist was reacting to remarks made by Supreme Court Associate Justice Andres Reyes Jr. during oral arguments on Tuesday on a petition for a writ of kalikasan seeking pro-



tection for the country's marine resources, particularly in the West Philippine Sea.

Kalayaan Palawan Farmers and Fisherfolk Association filed the petition.

Reyes said the government did not have the resources to guard all the country's shoals, suggesting instead to spend the money it had to rehabilitate the heavily polluted Pasig River.

"If we want to understand how we live," Onda said, "we need to understand the entirety of the ecosystem. There is a strong connection between the land and the seas. Not protecting one will affect the other."

Issues concerning the environment and natural resources should not be "compartmentalized" as there are many Filipinos who depend on these ecosystems for food and livelihood, he added.

Dep't of Fisheries, Oceans

"We have been treating the environment separately, but in fact, we should be treating it as one unit. As a decent human being, I think it should not be a question [of whether] we should protect it," he said. "We should not [have to choose] on what we should protect and not."

In a statement presented at the Oceana forum, UP MSI scientists said they supported the creation of a single government agency to oversee the use and protection of the country's waters.

"As the Philippines transitions to blue economy, we call on the creation of a separate Department of Fisheries and Oceans that will be mandated to study, utilize, manage and protect the largest ecosystem and future biggest contributor to

the Philippine economy—our oceans and seas," the statement said.

According to the World Bank, blue economy is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs while preserving the health of the ocean ecosystem.

For better coordination

Fisheries management is currently under the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, which is under the Department of Agriculture, but marine protection is under the Biodiversity Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

"If it's [all] under one agency, then perhaps the coordination can be better because you are not only considering resources in terms of economics, such as fisheries, but you are also considering the ocean as an ecosystem," Onda told reporters.

"The government's management policies, both in terms of ecological and economic [concerns], will jibe together under one agency," he added. "There are a lot of services that our oceans can offer, and we still have not maximized that."

Citing a 2018 report by Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia, Onda said the ocean economy contributed to some 7 percent of gross domestic product.

That is a conservative figure as more than half of the country's population live in coastal communities and a vast majority of Filipinos rely on marine resources for various needs, he added. INQ

2/2



SHATTERED CORALS Fragile corals, living organisms that also provide shelter to fish and other marine creatures, take decades to grow but can be destroyed in mere seconds through harmful fishing methods by poachers and illegal fishermen. Scientists say declining fish catch is a sign of continuing reef destruction resulting in lost marine resources valued at about P33 billion yearly.

—PHOTO COURTESY OF DR. DEO FLORENCE ONDA OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES' MARINE SCIENCE INSTITUTE



Protect dwindling marine resources – scientists

SCIENTISTS from the University of the Philippines' Marine Science Institute (UP MSI) said the government should protect the country's dwindling marine resources by declaring the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the West Philippine Sea (WPS or

South China Sea) an exclusive area. According to the UP MSI, the EEZ or the area surrounding up to 200 nautical miles or 370 kilometers from the Philippine shore from Batanes to the south of Balabac, Southern

►MarineA2

■ MARINE FROM A1

Protect dwindling

Palawan — which include the Kalayaan Island Group in the Spratly Islands, is "a rich fishing ground plentiful in marine life."

While the municipal waters nearer to the Philippine shore are "more productive in terms of fish catch per area," the EEZ has a higher fisheries production.

According to the institute, combined fisheries production of municipal waters and the WPS EEZ, which comprises around 40 percent of the country's EEZ, had declined over the past decades and is projected to be depleted further by 25 percent to 50 percent in the

next few years.

"The key to utilizing and protecting resources in the WPS EEZ is exclusive access. Allowing foreign entities to occupy and exploit these waters would be tantamount to denying Filipino fisherfolks access to their own food and resources," the UP MSI said in a statement.

The scientists expressed concern on the damage to marine habitats, resources and genetic diversity that affect the ecosystem for future generations.

"Alarmingly, we are losing these at a rate faster than we are under-

standing them. Aside from corals and clams, WPS is also rich in seaweeds, seagrasses, other animals and even microorganisms. Some of these marine microbes may become sources of new drugs, medicines, and other biotechnological products," the UP MSI said.

"Reported activities of foreign vessels, such as the Chinese fishing fleets in our EEZ violate both local and international standards. Harvesting of clams and corals, dead or alive, results in significant physical damage and ultimate demise of the habitats from where they were taken. These are the same habitats that serve as home and breeding grounds of most marine life, and source of food of many Filipinos," it added.

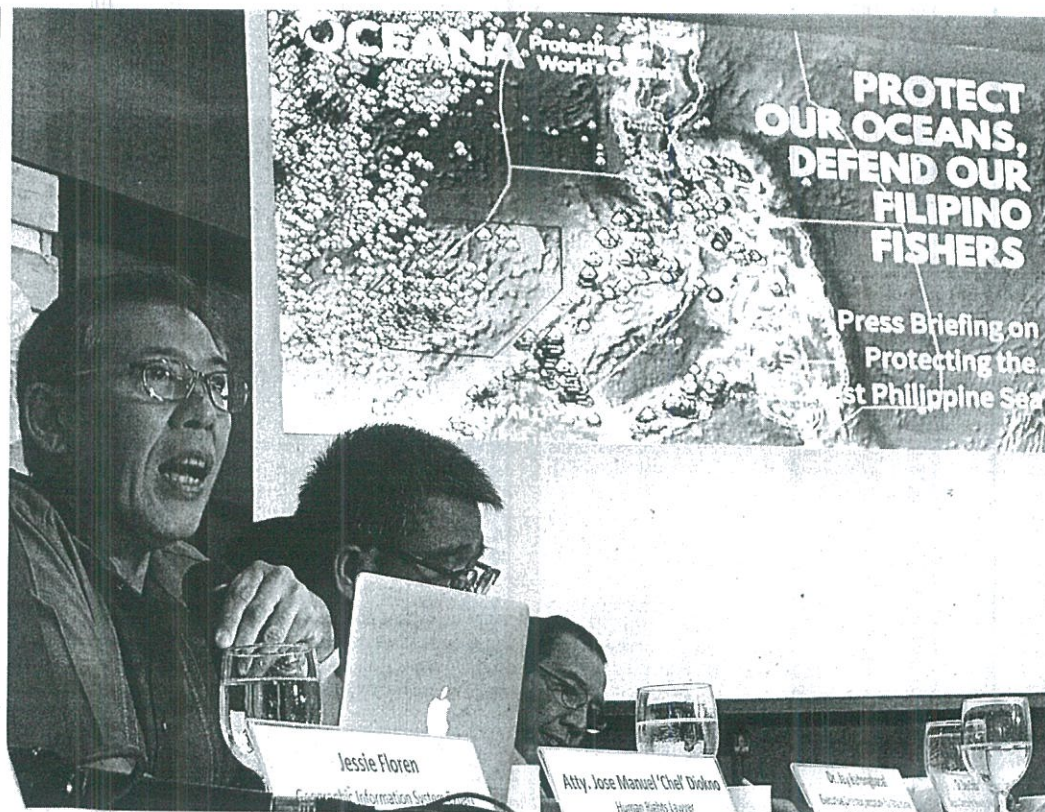
Meanwhile, fisherfolk group Pam-

bansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mammalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) sought a stop to China's "poaching" activities in the WPS to preserve the country's depleting resources.

"There is no other way to prevent this imminent marine environmental disaster from happening but to stop China from plundering the West Philippine Sea through the unity and an active assertion of the freedom-loving Filipino people," Pamalakaya chairman Fernando Hicap said in a statement.

The group also sought the criminal accountability of President Rodrigo Duterte "for failing to uphold the constitution and other environmental protection laws to defend the WPS."

DIVINA NOVA JOY DELA CRUZ



CALL FOR PROTECTION Chel Diokno cites the need to protect the country's exclusive economic zone in the West Philippine Sea during a news briefing on Wednesday. PHOTO BY RYAN MANTON



UP scientists seek creation of fishery department

By JANVIC MATEO

Marine scientists from the University of the Philippines have proposed the creation of a separate Department of Fisheries and Oceans to manage and protect marine ecosystems, including the West Philippine Sea.

The UP Marine Science Institute (MSI), in a statement Tuesday, also warned of ecological and social consequences of tolerating foreigners who access resources in the country's exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

It noted that failure to protect and manage resources that should have been exclusive for Filipinos could threaten the country's food security.

The UP MSI noted that fisheries production in municipal and EEZ waters of the country is predicted to drop by 25 to 50 percent in the next few years.

It said activities such as harvesting of clams and corals result in significant physical damage and ultimate demise of the habitats, further leading to destruction of breeding grounds of fish and other marine resources.

"As stewards of (the West Philippine Sea), we are responsible for deterring ongoing and future activities and practices that endanger or damage our resources. These laws that apply to Filipinos should

also apply to all, with no exemptions. Reported activities of foreign vessels such as the Chinese fishing fleets in our (EEZ) violate local and international standards," read the statement.

"The key to utilizing and protecting resources in the (West Philippine Sea EEZ) is exclusive access. Allowing foreign entities to occupy and exploit these waters would be tantamount to denying Filipino fisherfolk access to their own food and resources," it added.

Creating a separate department would also be significant in the country's efforts to transition to a blue economy, saying the agency would be mandated to study, utilize, manage and protect the largest ecosystem and future biggest contributor to Philippine economy: the oceans and sea.

Aside from ensuring that resources in the country's EEZ are reserved for Filipinos, the UP MSI also pushed for national agencies to invest more on science and technology that would support the crafting of appropriate and effective management strategies.

It called on all parties "to stop, deter and avoid activities that may further compromise the status and health of these resources and to implement laws and policies that are already in place."



The South China Sea

By ANTONIO CLAPAROLS

Last June 13, Dr. John McManus shared something vital to the entire world, and I want to personally thank him for his insights and concern.

The South China Sea is no ordinary sea. It is one of the most diverse and richest part of the global ocean. It harbors at least over 570 species of reef-building coral, out of less than 1,000 found worldwide.

It is responsible for over 15 percent of global fish catch and the larvae from its coral reefs replenish the

Pacific Ocean day in and day out.

The coral reefs in the South China Sea not only house some of the most diverse of the world's marine ecosystems, they also regenerate themselves rapidly following typhoons.

The only obstacle to this resilience is manmade activities, including the creation of artificial islands, which have been burying the ecosystems deep in sediment and concrete.

There is also a resurgence of giant clam harvesting, now using highly destructive methods. One method digs up reef flats via reinforced propellers while another involves pressurized water.

This industry is driven by the high market values of the giant clamshells, typically worth hundreds to thousands of dollars each. The shells are carved into a multitude of ivory-like products.

The Chinese authorities cannot

completely abate this activity.

Many Chinese fishermen, as well as marine biologists and citizens are aware of this practice and are greatly concerned about this threat to the richness of South China Sea's coral reefs.

They are aware that any further destruction will affect them and the region, which is a source of food, income and pride for current and future generations.

The University of the Philippines

Marine Science Institute and the East-West Center in Honolulu share these concerns, too.

It is for this reason that we strongly feel that the best solution is to establish international marine peace parks covering Scarborough Shoal and the Spratly Islands to ensure their integrity.

Although the South China Sea has vast oil reserves, the amount existing adjacent to the offshore coral reefs is known to be nearly negligible. The value of the coral reefs far outweighs what little oil and gas there is to be found among the reefs.



To refuse to recuse

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The
specific
environment
for
protection
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writ was
the marine
environment
in Panatag
Shoal, the
Ayungin
Shoal and
Panganiban
Reef.**

Last month, upon the petition of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines and some members from the Kalayaan Palawan Farmers and Fisherfolk Association, the Supreme Court issued a Writ of Kalikasan.

A writ merely means legal action. Questions of culpability are not part of the actions sought through it. Environmental protection however, is.

The specific environment for protection through the writ was the marine environment in Panatag Shoal, the Ayungin Shoal and Panganiban Reef. Panatag Shoal is in the municipality of Masinloc, Zambales. Ayungin Shoal and Panganiban Reef are in the municipality of Kalayaan, in the province of Palawan.

All are undisputedly deep inside Philippine boundaries and are not among disputed territory in our Exclusive Economic Zone, often the subject of controversy under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the 2016 South China Sea Arbitration award.

The writ's petitioners named several government agencies as respondents given that among its responsibilities the protection of the environment is among the state's primordial charges. Thus the state and its officers are duty-bound and obligated to provide such protection.

Among the respondents were the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Department of Agriculture (DA), the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), the Philippine Navy, the Philippine Coast Guard, the Philippine National Police (PNP), the PNP Maritime Group, and the Department of Justice. The inclusion

of the latter five agencies are merely for enforceability of the writ.

Allow us to jumpstart our analysis. The composition of this set of respondents indicates to us the profound albeit extremely focused issues raised where respondents are all government agencies already charged with the responsibility to protect, not simply the Philippine environment but more importantly, Filipino interests when and where imperiled by entities foreign or domestic.

**“
On equal
footing in
some cases is
the DA, and,
just to be
specific and
relevant to the
petitioners'
exclusive
interests, the
BFAR.**

argue against Filipino interests on behalf of entities that threaten our environment.

Necessarily there would be the DENR at the forefront of environmental protection. On equal footing in some cases is the DA, and, just to be specific and relevant to the petitioners' exclusive interests, the BFAR. The criticality of these agencies to the body of laws that protect our environment cannot be overemphasized in the light of the



BYSTANDER
Dean de la Paz

uniquely Filipino Writ of Kalikasan that no other jurisdiction has.

The inclusion of the DA as respondent signifies that in the inverted socio-economic pyramid reflecting Filipino demographics, agriculture takes precedence. Ours is not an industrial economy. However feeble might be the contribution of agriculture to GDP, the

sector remains significant in providing for health and well being.

Focusing further, the inclusion of the BFAR as a respondent pinpoints aquatic resources as one of our most critical assets.

The foregoing establishes our rationale in our support of Supreme Court Justice Antonio Carpio's refusal to recuse himself from the deliberations to grant a Writ of Kalikasan on the three areas mentioned earlier. Carpio is duty-bound to provide his wisdom.

In this non-partisan matter of protecting our natural resources in undisputedly Philippine areas, we are invoking several rights that are either ours as a Filipino writer, the appellants' rights and responsibilities as a steward and benefactor — those fishermen seeking a Writ of Kalikasan as persons with direct and vested interests in the debate at hand — and finally, the rights and responsibilities of Justice Carpio as high magistrate, government official and Filipino.

This is not a question of politics or even sovereign territory for which Carpio has expressed his position. Sovereignty is irrelevant. This is about every Filipino's duty to protect the environment.



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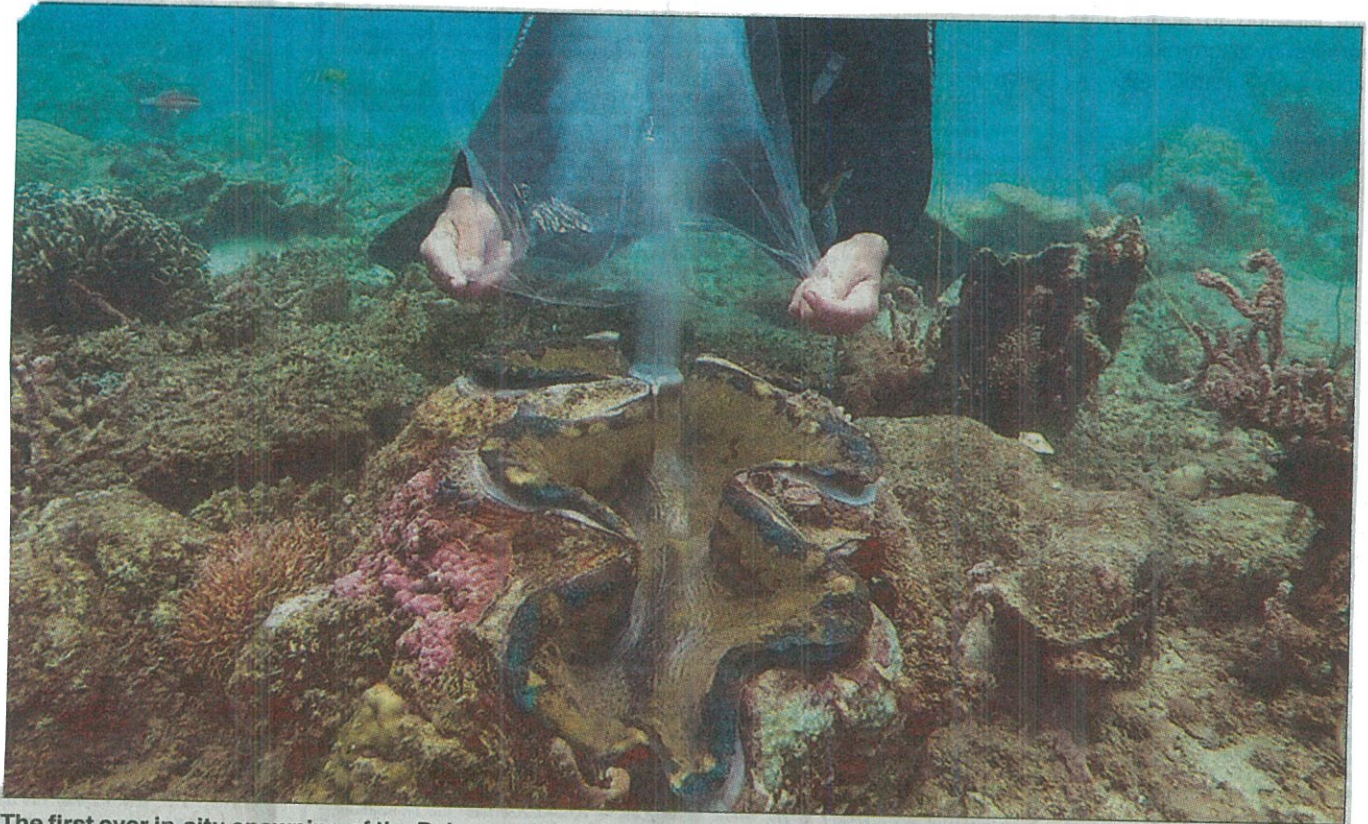
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The first ever in-situ spawning of the Palawan native species of the biggest giant clam, *Tridacna gigas*, was commenced by Malampaya Foundation and partners to help increase its declining population at Western Philippines University hatchery in Binduyan, Puerto Princesa City. University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute, forerunner of giant clam conservation in the Philippines, supervised the spawning activity where about 9.5 million eggs were fertilized from native giant clams located at Dos Palmas last June 1. The activity was in line with MFI's 'String-of-Pearls Project' that began last year, successfully multiplying two other species of giant clams: *Tridacna squamosa* and *Hippopus hippopus*, which will be deployed to marine protected areas in northern Palawan communities.



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LITTLE turtle ready to swim.

Sea turtle rescued

Dr. Guy fears that the animal
ingested plastic

By Jonas Reyes

SUBIC, ZAMBALES – An Olive Ridley sea turtle was rescued by residents of this town early Tuesday.

Residents brought the wounded sea turtle to the Subic Fire Rescue office where it was provided with first aid.

According to the Subic Fire Rescue, the turtle was hitting an old barge when it was spotted by the residents at the Wawandue coastal area.

The rescued turtle, wounded and unable to swim, is now on a floater at a facility inside a marine theme park in the town for monitoring. According to Dr. Anthonette Guy they will conduct an x-ray of the turtle.

Guy fears that the animal ingested plastic.



Belmonte urges youth: Be more protective of environment

Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte has urged the youth to be more protective of the environment.

"It is time to start becoming responsible citizens with regards to looking after the environment because sustainable development means that we will protect the environment for future generations," she said in her speech during the 24th Police Community Relations Month celebration at the Quezon City Police District headquarters at Camp Karingal on Monday.

Belmonte said she hopes the youth would take the lead in improving the envi-

ronment.

"Kami sa henerasyon ko sa tingin ko we failed miserably kaya ngayon wala ng isda sa ating mga ilog (I believe we failed miserably, that's why our rivers have no more fish)," the mayor said.

She said the youth can contribute in their own little way by properly throwing their trash, practicing segregation and using eco-friendly straws when drinking beverages.

Belmonte lamented that pollution has taken a toll on the environment and proof of this is the unpredictable weather conditions in the country.

- Emmanuel Tupas



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Strategic Communication Initiatives Service

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THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Eco-conscious retreat at a 'green' hotel

Text by **KATHRINA PAZ ELEFANTE**

Pico de Loro cove by Hamilo Coast was built with one thing in mind: sustainability. The 40-hectare property is a peaceful paradise with pristine coves and rich biodiversity – and it was only natural to protect this ecological gem through continuous green improvements.

Pico Sands Hotel, a 154-room hotel nestled within this green destination in Batangas, also upholds sustainability practices – a comforting fact for the eco-conscious vacationer.

Chemical-based kitchen cleaners and laundry products were replaced by biodegradable options. Paper straws and take-out packaging made of cornstarch are used in place of single-use plastic.

Most recently, the hotel has replaced plastic water bottles in the guest rooms with refillable glass bottles that can be refilled at water dispensing stations on each floor.



This will prevent over 113,700 plastic bottles from being disposed into the ocean and into landfills yearly.

The hotel also offers eco-activities such as diving, hiking and tours to the mangrove forest and coves.

Aparaw or non-motorized boat is also being offered, which allow guests to enjoy a boat ride without disturbing marine life.

Lastly, those on a whole foods diet can delight in Pico Restaurant's

Paleo-Vegan menu.

These small yet impactful changes are particularly significant when multiplied with the number of guests they have daily, not to mention their corporate guests who hold conferences, planning sessions and teambuilding activities.

Staying at Pico Sands Hotel is a rediscovery of nature's beauty – and once you've seen such beauty, you will also be compelled to protect it.

GREEN IS IN!



Responsible stay

Enjoy the amenities – without the guilt – of Pico Sands Hotel. The eco-friendly hotel inside the Pico de Loro development in Nasugbu, Batangas implements green practices in its day-to-day operations. (Photo by Jovel Lorenzo)



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Mapúa donates school chairs made from recycled wastes

Malayan Colleges Mindanao (MCM) donated 100 armchairs made solely from recycled plastics to Matina Aplaya Elementary School in a turnover ceremony held recently.

MCM, through its NSTP-led project dubbed Malayans on the Move to Value the Environment or M.O.V.E., mobilized its students, employees, administration and partners in an ecological awareness program that aimed to collect plastic waste in a regular pitch-in activity conducted all throughout the school year.

"We launched an Integrated Plastic Waste Management program whose goal is to contribute to the decrease of the flow of waste plastics into the marine and agricultural ecosystem in Davao City," MCM executive vice president and chief operating officer Dodjie Maestrecampo said.

"As an institution whose mission is to provide solutions to problems of indus-

tries and communities, the Mapúa School supports efforts at mitigating waste management issues from a grassroots level," Maestrecampo added.



Malayan College Mindanao president Dr. Reynaldo Vea turns over donated armchairs made from recycled plastic materials to Matina Elementary School Principal Renaldo Seras during the turnover ceremony on May 20.



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CCC backs call for Asean action on climate change

By JANVIC MATEO

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has expressed support to the call of President Duterte for member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to play an active and leadership role in addressing climate change and seeking climate justice.

"Cooperation is key. We highly support the President's call upon ASEAN countries to join forces in calling out industrialized nations to counteract the threat of climate change," said Climate Secretary Emmanuel de Guzman in a statement on Friday.

"We need to send a very clear signal to the international commu-

nity that ASEAN leaders are taking decisive climate action," he added.

During the recent ASEAN Summit in Thailand, Duterte urged member countries to hold developed countries accountable for climate change.

He also called fellow Southeast Asian nations to adapt and build resilience by advancing initiatives

that care for the people and the environment.

De Guzman said that the contribution of countries to climate change, and their capacities to survive its consequences, varies enormously.

With innovation of their more advanced mechanisms, he said developed nations tend to emit more carbon footprints than those of the developing ones.

Meanwhile, with little to no resources, vulnerable and developing countries will find it unviable, if not difficult, to catch up from these fast-progressing nations.

The climate body said this shows

the need for developed countries to provide technologies and investments, in the form of climate finance, to developing countries as part of their mitigation efforts.

"We maintain that those with historical responsibility must shoulder the far greater burden of acting faster, sooner, and with far bigger accountability of keeping the long-term temperature goals to no higher than 1.5 degrees Celsius," De Guzman said.

"Otherwise, it's all hypocrisy from rich countries that have benefited the most from the burning of fossil fuels which heightened climate change," he added.

- With Helen Flores



Manila Bay Clean-Up Run sa Hulyo 7

MAY tsansa pa ang running club, school teams at community group na makiisa sa ilalargang 7th Manila Bay Clean-Up Run sa linggo (Hulyo 7), sa pagtataguyod ng Manila Broadcasting Company.

Bukas pa ang pagpapatala sa Olympic Village outlet sa Robinson's Forum, Festival Mall at Farmers Plaza, gayundin sa tanggapan ng MBC-DZRH sa Sotto St. CCP Complex sa Pasay City.

Nakataya ang medalya at papremyo sa kategoryang 3K, 5K, 10K at 21K division para sa men's and women's.

Ang naturang patakbo ay isang awareness and fund-raising program na nakatuon sa pagpapalaganap ng kalinisan sa ating kapaligiran, ilog, estero at karagatan.

Nagsimula ang programa noong 2009 kung saan samasamang naglinis ang mga empleyado at volunteers ng

MBC, establisyemento sa kapaligiran ng Manila Bay, gayundin ang Land Bank.

Bahagi rin ang programa sa pagdiriwang ng ika-80 anibersaryo sa pagkakatatag ng MBA flagship radio station DZRH - ang pinamatandang radio network sa Pilipinas.

Para sa karagdagang detalye, makipag-ugnayan sa Runner's Link sa mobile no. 0926-205-2787 o bukas ang Facebook page ng Manila Bay Clean-Up Run.



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Firing Line

Robert B. Roque, Jr.

Passive attitude towards flood

FOR a long time passing, sleeping it off at home "solved" the flood problem – anyway, the sun was scheduled to shine sooner or later. This passive attitude may have saved us all the headaches in the past by merely shutting both our eyes and then waking up when the river-streets run dry.

However, this callous, lack of foresight now prevents us from leading a bustling generation that could no longer afford to snooze under the stock market switchboard. Everyone now is on the go and suspending classes and offices just ain't the dose of aspirin we need from the government anymore.

While people are busier today, so are the floods busy crawling into higher cities and districts once immune to storms and typhoons.

Floods are still a nagging problem President Duterte and his Cabinet should handle – wisely from a long-term perspective. The task may employ billions of dollars in loans and aid. If so, then so be it.

Perhaps, it is also wise for the electorate to give a 10-point plus factor to the 2022 presidentiable with the most comprehensive and realistic flood-control program. Moreover, Congress better ban further reclamation of Manila Bay unless we do want to live in a

submerged Metro Manila even in the summertime. Unfortunately for all us "flood victims", the only thing we can do now – as always – is wait.

As in previous years, massive flooding is always expected along with tragedies that could have been avoided if preparations had been made.

During the rainy season, we always read news reports about floods and landslides, which usually occur due to negligence and conscious or unconscious devastation of our environment.

Unlike earthquakes which cannot be predicted when it strikes, storms can be anticipated, and preparations can be made several days before they make their presence felt.

A lot of things can cause the rise of flood waters in our surroundings like the never-ending problem of garbage, clogged waterways, manholes, and the trash contributed by informal settlers.

Our environment has also been

trampled by pollution, illegal mining, illegal quarry, and the continued construction of buildings without any clear drainage system.

Even before typhoons hit us, local government units (LGUs) especially the barangays, assisted by the national government, should quickly take action on the flood-prone locations in their areas of responsibility and pinpoint

where the root of the problem lies. Everyone should lend a helping hand.

SHORT BURSTS... For comments or reactions, email firingline@ymail.com or tweet @ Side_View. Read current and past issues of this column at <http://www.tempo.com.ph/category/opinion/firing-line/>



Passage of economic measures to boost FDIs

SOCIOECONOMIC Planning Secretary Ernesto Pernia on Monday said inflows of foreign direct investments (FDI) can at least triple their current level with the passage of economic measures to liberalize the entry of foreign investments into the country.

During the Pre-State of the Nation Address (SONA) Economic and Infrastructure Forum held Monday at the Philippine International Convention Center, Pernia underscored the need to implement legislation to promote investments and create jobs.

He said these bills include the amendments to Foreign Investment Act, Retail Trade Act, and Public Service Act.

"With those three Acts passed and liberalizing the economy, we could really expect much more foreign direct investments tripling or quadrupling what we have already achieved," he noted.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) data indicated that net FDI inflows reached USD9.8 billion in 2018 from USD10.3 billion in 2017.

Pernia, also the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Director-General, pointed out the Philippines currently is the most restrictive country in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) region.

"In Vietnam, practically all areas of FDIs is 100-percent foreign participation is allowed. Here in the Philippines, there are so many areas where FDI is only partially open to foreigners," he said.

In a press briefing, Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III said the Duterte administration is pursuing economic reforms to increase FDIs and jobs in the country.

Apart from these priority bills, Dominguez said it also aims to improve the implementation of existing reforms, such as the national ID system, ease of doing business, universal healthcare and the rice tariffication law.

Policy reforms in the pipeline include additional tax reform packages that will help boost government revenues and make the country more attractive to investments.



May isusumbong? Nood lang sa 'Digong 8888 Hotline'

Ni Beth Camia

Iilunsad ng gobyerno ngayong Hulyo ang bagong TV program na "Digong 8888 Hotline" na tutugon sa mga reklamo ng publiko laban sa kurapsiyon at red tape.

Mapapanood tuwing Huwebes, simula sa Hulyo 11, sa ganap na 2:00 ng hapon, sa PTV 4, ang nasabing programa, kung saan direktang makapagsusumbong ang publiko laban sa mga opisyal ng gobyerno o alinmang ahensiya ng pamahalaan, na nakarañas ng hindi maayos na pagtrato, mabagal na proseso o serbisyo, insidente ng katiwalian, at iba pang reklamo.

Maaari ring isumbong sa nasabing programa ang masusungit at tatamad-tamad na mga kawani o opisyal ng gobyerno, kahit ang patuloy na operasyon ng mga fixers sa alinmang tanggapan ng pamahalaan.

Sa bawat episode ng isang-oras


na programa ay may isang opisyal ng gobyerno ang sasalang para direktang tumanggap ng mga tanong at sumbong mula sa mga manonood, para agaran ding maaksiyunan.

Inaasahang lalabas din sa ilang special episodes ng programa si Pangulong Duterte, pero personal na tumugon sa mga reklamo.

"Kung kayo'y inabuso, kung kayo'y pinagsamantalahan, kung may hindi kayo nagustuhan sa gobyerno, tumawag kayo, day and night at 'yung mga importanteng problema na nakikita ko, aksyunan ko kaagad," anang Pangulo.

Magsisilbing host ng programa si Presidential Spokesman Atty. Salvador Panelo, si Office of the Chief Presidential Council Assistant Secretary Kris Roman, at ang PTV host-anchor na si Trixie Jaafar.





Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES BOARD

RAFEL REALTY AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Applicant: **Case No. 19-2778**

X-----X

NOTICE OF HEARING

This is an application for Certificate of Public Convenience to operate and maintain a waterworks system within Villa Rafael Subdivision and Legaspi Landscape Village, Barangay Bugasongen, municipality of Lezo, province of Aklan, with the following proposed rates:

PROPOSED RATES

Residential/Institutional/Public Taps		Commercial/Industrial	
Consumption, cu. m.	Peso / cu. m.	Consumption, cu. m.	P e s o / cu. m.
0 - 10 (min.)	P301.00 (min.)	0-25 (min.), 26 - 1000	P1,505.00 (min.) 72.00
11 - 20	33.10		
21 - 30	36.20		
31 - 40	39.00		
41 - 50	42.00	Over 1000	84.00
Over 50	45.00		

Peso per Gallon

Bulk Sales	P 12.00 per cu.m.
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Notice is hereby given that this application will be initially heard by the Board on **July 22, 2019**, hearing will start at **9:00 o' clock in the morning** at the NWRB-WUD Conference Room, 8th Floor, NIA Building, EDSA, Quezon City at which time applicant shall present its evidence.

At least fifteen (15) days prior to the scheduled hearing, applicant shall publish this notice once in a daily newspaper of general circulation in the province of Aklan and send by personal delivery or registered mail a copy of the (i) application and its attachments, and (ii) this notice, to all affected parties appearing on page 2 hereof.

Parties opposed to the granting of the application must file their written opposition supported by documentary evidence on or before the above scheduled date of hearing, furnishing a copy of the same to the applicant.

Failure on the part of any person affected to file its opposition on time and to appear at the hearing will be construed, as a waiver of their right to be heard and the Board will proceed to hear and decide the application based on the evidence submitted.

Likewise, failure by the applicant to appear at the hearing shall amount to lack of interest on its part and the instant application shall be dismissed accordingly.

Witness the Honorable Executive Director of the National Water Resources Board this 7th day of June 2019.

By Authority of the Board:
Dr. SEVILLO D. DAVID, Jr., CESO III
Executive Director

Affected Parties:

The Secretary Sanguniang Bayan Lezo, Aklan	The Barangay Chairman Barangay Bugasongen Lezo, Aklan	The Homeowners Assn. President Villa Rafael Subdivision & Legaspi Landscape Village, Barangay Bugasongen, Lezo Aklan
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