

DATE : 12 JUL 2019

DAY : Friday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



NO TO PLASTIC John Law, deputy chief of mission of the US Embassy (right), listens to Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda during the awarding of the US government's grants to reduce plastic pollution in Philippine oceans. The grants were awarded to EcoWaste Coalition and Mother Earth Foundation. PHOTO BY RUY L. MARTINEZ



ECOLOGICAL AID

PH GROUPS GET P20-M GRANT FOR LOCAL WASTE PROJECTS

By Jhesset O. Enano
@JhessetEnanoINQ

The US government has awarded two grants worth P20 million to two local environmental groups to expand their work that would also support the rehabilitation of the heavily polluted Manila Bay.

Mother Earth Foundation (MEF) and EcoWaste Coalition joined five other local groups that received grants under the US Agency for International Development's (USAID) Municipal Waste Recycling Program since 2016.

5-year program

The five-year project has supported waste management programs and recycling efforts in the Philippines, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam to cut back and prevent land-based sources of ocean plastic pollution.

On Thursday, USAID formally awarded the grants to the two organizations in a ceremony in Quezon City.

Their work, which will begin by July or August, will cover 18 months and involve community programs and information campaigns on plastic pollution and other solid wastes.

Batangas coast

MEF will help the environmental office of Batangas City to apply a "zero-waste" approach to solid waste management in 30 barangays in the city.

MEF chair Sonia Mendoza said implementing the zero-waste programs would allow residents to be more involved in collecting, segregating and recycling their wastes.

"If you have biodegradable waste, which amounts to about 70 percent in provinces, you can compost these or use them as animal feed. With that, you already divert 70 percent of trash [from the dumps]," she said.

Manila Bay work

EcoWaste, on the other hand, would spearhead three research programs that would look into the flow of plastic and efficiency of solid waste collection in communities surrounding Manila Bay and its tributaries.

After the studies are completed, along with educational campaigns, EcoWaste would turn over their results to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for their crafting of a national action plan on marine litter. INQ



US awards P20-M grants for Manila Bay rehab

The United States has awarded two grants totaling P20 million to two local groups to reduce marine plastic pollution and support the rehabilitation of Manila Bay.

The grants – given to

Ecological Waste Coalition of the Philippines and Mother Earth Foundation – will promote and expand community-based recycling programs, improve solid waste management and support research on plastic waste around

Manila Bay.

US embassy deputy chief of mission John Law and Department of Environment and Natural Resources Undersecretaries Benny Antiporda and Miguel Cuna presented the grants.

“These partnerships are critical to protecting urban coastal areas that rely on tourism and fisheries sectors. We are proud to work together with the Philippines in finding innovative solutions to keeping plastic waste

out of our oceans,” Law said.

He said the two new grants would help protect and preserve the Philippines’ natural resources.

“The US government is a committed partner in protecting the marine environ-

ment in the Philippines,” Law said on Twitter.

The grants are part of the United States Agency for International Development’s municipal waste recycling program.

– Pia Lee-Brago



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US awards P20-M worth of grants to clean Manila Bay

THE United States awarded two grants Thursday worth P20 million for projects intended to help rehabilitate Manila Bay.

Through the US Agency for International Development's (USAID) Municipal Waste Recycling Program, the US embassy in Manila said the recipients were the Ecowaste Coalition and the Mother Earth Foundation, to fund research and implement projects that will reduce plastic waste.

"These grantees promote and expand community-based recycling programs, improve solid waste management, and conduct research on plastic waste and as mentioned, much of that will take place in historic Manila Bay," Deputy Chief of Mission John Law said during a signing ceremony in Quezon City.

"It's priority for the government, it's priority for President Duterte, and it's priority for the US Embassy."

The Embassy noted that the US earlier awarded five grants to non-governmental organizations under the program, supporting projects in Manila, Puerto Princesa and Bacolod.

The newly-awarded grants bring total USAID assistance to the Philippines under the program to around P57 million.

The Municipal Waste Recycling Program was created to support solid waste management and water recycling efforts at the community level, and is active in the Philippines, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. — **Charmaine A. Tadalán**



US embassy, DENR extend help to cut plastic pollution

UNITED States Embassy and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) yesterday awarded two grants amounting to P20 million for projects to reduce plastic pollution in the oceans.

The grants will be channeled through different non-government organizations that will promote and expand community-based recycling programs, improve solid waste management, and support research on plas-

tic waste around Manila Bay.

"These partnerships are critical to protecting urban coastal areas that rely on tourism and fisheries sectors. We are proud to work together with Philippines in finding innovative solutions to keeping plastic waste out of our oceans," said US Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission John Law.

Environment and Natural Resources Undersecretary Benny An-

tiporda credited the NGOs like the Ecological Waste Coalition of the Philippines (EcoWaste Coalition) and the Mother Earth Foundation, which have been actively involved in helping the government find a solution to the country's garbage problem.

He said grants like these would ensure the success of the NGOs' environmental projects and individuals or groups who can provide effective solutions in urban waste

management are very much welcome.

The US Embassy said the EcoWaste Coalition and Mother Earth Foundation will be provided with the grant to implement projects supporting the rehabilitation of Manila Bay.

Since 2016, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) began implementing its Municipal Waste Recycling Program by awarding grants and technical assistance to

promising organizations in the Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Sri Lanka to reduce marine plastic pollution.

In the February 2015 issue of Science magazine, an article said that eight million tons of plastic waste was discarded into the world's oceans every year. This waste threatens marine ecosystems and human health as it makes its way into the global human food supply, mostly through fish products.



ALGAL BLOOM PROBLEM

MUNTINLUPA CITY GETS P1M FOR LAGUNA LAKE CLEANUP

By Dexter Cabalza
@dexcabalzaINQ

The Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) has turned over P1 million to the Muntinlupa City government for emergency response and the cleanup of Laguna de Bay and its tributaries in the city.

LLDA officials led by general manager Jaime Medina visited Mayor Jaime Fresnedi on Wednesday to discuss plans to prevent algal bloom in the lake.

The LLDA committed to provide technical assistance, including analysis of water

samples taken from the bay. It would also facilitate the installation of treatment facilities on the shoreline in Barangays Sucat and Tunasan.

Algae skimmers

For its part, the city government said it would continue its cleanup of the lake, the shore and tributaries. It added that it was planning to buy skimmers to extract algae from the bay.

The meeting was held a month after residents in the city, especially those living near the lake, complained of a pervasive odor in the area which they likened to the

“stench of pig pens and feces.”

The foul smell caused some to experience difficulty in breathing, headaches, stomachaches, asthma attacks and respiratory tract infection.

According to LLDA, the algal bloom was caused by the oversupply of nutrients such as phosphates and nitrates, which made Laguna de Bay “very fertile.”

“Combined with environmental conditions such as sufficient sunlight, high water temperature and calm water, the algae can grow at a very fast rate,” it said. —WITH A REPORT FROM AIZAM UMAL INQ



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NEWS BRIEFS

Angat Dam again drops below critical level

The water level in Angat Dam again breached its critical low level after a week of fair weather and continuous consumer demand in Metro Manila and adjacent provinces. As of Thursday morning, the dam's elevation was recorded at 159.93 meters above sea level (masl), down by 0.37 m from the previous day. Angat's low water level is at 160 masl. Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration hydrologist Adel Duran said the month of July usually has below normal rainfall and will only normalize from August to October.—JHESSET O. ENANO



Angat water level turns critical anew

By RAMON EFREN LAZARO

The water elevation of Angat dam fell below its critical level of 160 meters yesterday morning for the second time this rainy season.

In a text message, Sevillo David Jr., executive director of the National Water Resources Board (NWRB), confirmed to **The STAR** that Angat dam's water elevation was monitored at 159.93 meters as of 6 a.m. yesterday, down from 160.30 meters from the same time on Wednesday.

David added, "The said elevation is critical for water supply. The Low Level Outlet is currently operational to maintain the current allocation of 36 cubic meters per second (CMS), or around 3.1 billion liters per day."

The water level in Angat dam first went below the critical level last June 22 at 159.78 meters. This prompted the NWRB to reduce the allocation to Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System's concessionaires to 36 CMS from the regular allocation of 46 CMS.

David explained that based on Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration projections, the prevailing southwest monsoon weekend and resulted in the absence of significant rainfall in the Angat dam and watershed.

"However, it is projected that the mon-

soon rains will be present next week. It is our hope that the monsoon rains and the forecast tropical cyclones this month will come earlier to help in the early recovery of Angat dam," David added.

He also noted that "the public can support our efforts in preserving the water in Angat dam by enhancing our water conservation efforts through responsible use of water, including the harvesting and recycling of rainwater."

Environmentalists have expressed concern over Angat dam's dwindling water supply, citing the failure of government agencies tasked to preserve the forest cover of watersheds that are the main source of potable water supply to Metro Manila residents.

Bro. Martin Francisco, chairman of the Sagip Sierra Madre Environmentalists Society Inc., told **The STAR** that these agencies, which he did not specify, have been claiming in the past that no one is allowed to cut down trees on primary forests that are protected areas.

Recently, however, Bulacan Vice Gov. Wilhelmino Sy Alvarado confirmed in a press conference that approximately 12,000 hectares of forest land inside the Angat watershed have already been cleared by illegal loggers and that more than half of the 6,600 hectares of Ipo watershed have been denuded by timber poachers. - With Rhodina Villanueva



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

THE EXPONENTIAL OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900

MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Angat Dam water level again plunges below critical mark

By ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ

The water level at Angat Dam once again plunged below its 160-meter critical mark on Thursday, due to deficiency of rainfall over the watershed area in

Norzagaray, Bulacan.

Based on the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration's (PAGASA) monitoring as of Thursday morning, Angat Dam's water level has declined

past its critical level at 159.93 meters, lower than last Wednesday's 160.30 meters.

It first reached the critical level last June 22 before slightly recovering due to sporadic monsoon **►9**

Angat Dam water level... ◀1

rains over the Angat watershed.

But a weak southwest monsoon or "habagat" has prevailed, causing the absence of significant rainfall over most parts of the country in the past few days.

National Water Resources Board (NWRB) Executive Director Sevilla David Jr. said the Angat Dam's water level of 159.93 meters is now again below the critical level for water supply of 160 meters.

He pointed out that the dam's low level outlet is being utilized to sustain the current water allocation of 36 cubic meters per second or around 3.1 billion liters per day.

NWRB said the water allocation will be adjusted accordingly until such time that the Angat Dam's level is sufficient enough to supply the regular demand of consumers in Metro Manila and nearby areas.

As of the moment, Angat Dam's

current level is still way below its minimum operating level of 180 meters, and normal high water level during the rainy season of 210 meters.

"Based on the PAGASA's projections, the prevailing weak habagat resulted in the absence of significant rainfall in the Angat Dam/Angat watershed," David said.

Monsoon rains expected

"It is also projected that the monsoon rains might be back next week. We hope the monsoon rains could come sooner as well as the projected tropical cyclones in July to help in the early recovery of Angat Dam," he added.

According to PAGASA weather specialist Ariel Rojas, an intertropical convergence zone (ITCZ) will affect most of Mindanao, while the weak habagat will prevail over the rest of the country until the weekend.

The ITCZ, a breeding ground for

potential low pressure area or tropical cyclone, will bring cloudy skies with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms over Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga Sibugay, Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, South Cotabato, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani, Compostela Valley, Davao del Norte, Davao Oriental, Davao del Sur, and Davao Occidental.

Isolated rain showers

Meanwhile, Metro Manila and the rest of the country will have isolated rain showers from localized thunderstorms.

Rojas warned that sudden rains due to severe thunderstorm activity, which may occur in the afternoon or evening, may cause flash floods or landslides in low-lying or mountainous areas.

Rains due to the ITCZ will likely affect some parts of Visayas over the weekend, he added.

Conserve water

David appealed to the public to take advantage of the rain showers occurring in the afternoon or evening, by collecting and recycling water.

NWRB noted that if the 15 million Filipinos in Metro Manila conserve at least four liters of water every day, we can conserve about 60 million liters of water in a day – equivalent to 24 Olympic-sized swimming pools.



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Angat Dam breaches critical water level

ANGAT DAM again breached its 160-meter critical water on Thursday in the absence of significant rainfall in the area.

Data from the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) showed that as of 6 a.m. yesterday, the dam's water level was 0.37 meter lower than a day earlier 50.1 meters below its normally high water level of 210 meters.

This was below the 180-meter minimum operating level of the dam in Bulacan province that supplies water to Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

The weakened Southwest monsoon brought fewer rains, the National Water Resources Board said in a statement. "It is our hope that the monsoon rains and the forecasted tropical cyclones this month will come earlier to help in the early recovery of Angat Dam," it added.

Pagasa said two to three typhoons are expected toward the end of July.

"We have the same interruption schedule pending some adjustments every now and then as we fine-tune the distribution of supply," Jennifer C. Rufo, the Maynilad Water Services, Inc. spokesperson, said in a text message.

Manila Water Co. still receives the same allocations from the water board even if Angat again falls below the critical level, its spokesman Nestor Jeric T. Sevilla Jr. said in a text message. "We are still implementing rotational water service interruptions concession-wide."



Angat Dam hits critical level anew

BY JORDEENE B. LAGARE

THE water level of Angat Dam plunged below critical level anew, but the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) said the supply for the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) would remain the same.

The dam's water level dropped to 159.93 meters at 6 a.m. on Thursday, down by 0.37 meters from the previous day, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical

Services Administration (Pagasa).

"The low level outlet is currently operational to maintain the current allocation of 36 cubic meters per second or around 3.1 billion liters per day," the NWRB

said in a statement on Thursday.

According to Pagasa, the prevailing weakened southwest monsoon or *habagat* is the reason for the absence of significant rainfall. However, it expects monsoon rains to be back next week to help in Angat's recovery.

Since June, Manila Water Co. Inc. and Maynilad Water Services Inc. have been implementing rotational service interruptions in order to maximize the limited supply. Both concessionaires previously said this would continue until the water supply in Angat Dam would increase.

Earlier this month, NWRB Executive Director Sevillo David Jr. said they decided to maintain the allocation of 36 cubic meters per second to MWSS, which divides this between Manila Water and Maynilad.

In a related development, Maynilad customers in a village in Las Piñas City will be receiving a rebate for experiencing prolonged water service interruptions, according to MWSS.

The MWSS penalized Maynilad for failing to provide continuous water service to their customers in Barangay,

Captain Albert Aguilar since May. In a statement, Maynilad said it was ready to comply with the penalty imposed.

The affected customers shall receive a rebate of P2,500 each or a total of P4.5 million. It will be credited to the August water bills until fully expended and MWSS will oversee its implementation.

Maynilad said the rebate would cover 1,841 affected connections. "Our field personnel will conduct a *barangay* (village) roadshow to explain the mechanics of the rebate to the customers concerned."

MWSS Regulatory Office chief Patrick Lester Ty said his office would examine the data Maynilad provided to ascertain the total number of households affected by limited water supply.

"We need to double check. Probably we will request for a meeting this week or next week to finalize... *ang target ko sana kung puwedeng magka-rebate na* by August (our target is to implement the rebate by August)," Ty told reporters on Wednesday.

**WITH A REPORT
FROM DIVINA NOVA JOY
DELA CRUZ**



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Current water allocation stays due to low water level—NWRB

By Rio N. araja

THE National Water Resources Board on Thursday said the current allocation of 36 cubic meters per second or about 3.1 billion liters per day will stay because of the low level supply of Angat Dam in Bulacan.

In a statement, the board took into account the weather forecasts of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration that there would be no rains in Angat watershed due to a weak southwest monsoon.

“However, it is projected that the monsoon rains will be present next week. It is our hope that the monsoon rains and the forecast tropical cyclones this month will come earlier to help in the early recovery of Angat Dam,” it said.

The agency said the public must still observe water conservation, and rain harvesting and recycling to help ease the dam’s poor water supply.

The water level at Angat Dam dropped below critical level again on Thursday, based on PAGASA’s monitoring.

As of yesterday 6 a.m., Angat Dam’s level went down to 159.93 meters from Wednesday’s 160.30-meter elevation.

The dam provides 97 percent of the water needs of Metro Manila and its nearby provinces.



Angat water level returns to critical

The water level at Angat Dam once again plunged below its 160-meter critical mark yesterday, due to deficiency of rainfall over the watershed area in Norzagaray, Bulacan.

Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration monitoring as of yesterday morning showed Angat Dam's water level declining past its critical level at 159.93 meters which was lower than last Wednesday's 160.30 meters.

It first reached the critical level last June 22 before slightly recovering due to sporadic monsoon rains over the Angat watershed.

But a weak southwest monsoon or "habagat" has prevailed, causing the absence of significant rainfall over most parts of the country in the past few days.

National Water Resources Board Executive Director Sevillo David Jr. said Angat Dam's water level of 159.93 meters is once again below the critical level for water supply of 160 meters.

He pointed out that the dam's low level outlet is being utilized to sustain the current water allocation of 36 cubic meters per second or around 3.1 billion liters per day.

NWRB said the water allocation will be adjusted accordingly until such time that the Angat Dam's water level is sufficient enough to supply the regular demand of consumers in Metro Manila and nearby areas.

Angat Dam's current water level is still way below its minimum operating level of 180 meters and normal high water level during the rainy season of 210 meters.

"Based on the PAGASA's projections, the prevailing weak habagat resulted in the absence of significant rainfall in the Angat Dam and Angat watershed," David said.

"It is also projected that the monsoon rains might be back next week. We hope the monsoon rains could come sooner as well as the projected tropical cyclones in July to help in the early recovery of Angat Dam," he added.

PAGASA weather specialist Ariel Rojas said an intertropical convergence zone will affect most of Mindanao while the weak habagat will prevail over the rest of the country until the weekend.

The ITCZ, a breeding ground for potential low-pressure areas or tropical cyclones, will bring cloudy skies with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms over Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga Sibugay, Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, South Cotabato, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani, Compostela Valley, Davao del Norte, Davao Oriental, Davao del Sur, and Davao Occidental. (Ellalyn Ruiz)



Angat Dam below critical level again

By CNN Philippines Staff

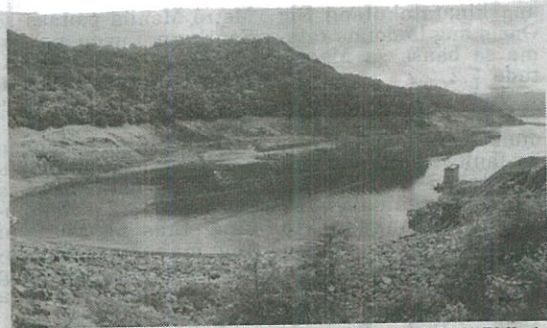
THE water level at Angat Dam, Metro Manila's main water source, has dropped below critical mark again.

As of 6 a.m. yesterday, Angat Dam's water level was at 159.93 meters, slightly below the 160-meter critical level, the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) reported. It was at 160.30 meters the day before.

The dam has stayed at the critical mark for more than a week since June 22. It rose above the critical level last July 2, only to start declining again this week.

The NWRB has reduced water supply allocation in Metro Manila to 36 cubic meters per second amounts, or around 3.1 billion liters per day, amid declining water levels at Angat. The normal allocation is at 4 billion liters per day.

Some residents of Metro Manila and nearby provinces go waterless for up to 19 hours as concessionaires Maynilad and Manila Water continue to implement



Angat Dam

(Courtesy of CNN Phils.)

rotational service interruptions.

"We hope the monsoon rains could come sooner as well as the projected tropical cyclones for July to help in the easy recovery of Angat Dam," NWRB Execu-

tive Director Seville David said in a statement. He noted that the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration had said that it was expecting the return of monsoon rains next week.



Angat dam critical level uli

MAS mababa na sa critical level ang tubig sa Angat dam kahapon ng umaga.

Ayon sa Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration, naitala sa 159.93 metro ang lebel ng tubig sa Angat, mas mababa sa 160.30 metro na naitala noong Miyerkules

ng gabi.

Ang critical level ng Angat ay 160 metro.

Bumaba naman ng 0.05 metro ang tubig sa La Mesa dam o mula 72.21 metro ay bumaba sa 72.16 metro.

Ang dalawang dam ang pangunahing pinagkukuhanan ng suplay ng tubig sa Metro — *Leifbilly Begas*



Angat dam balik critical level

ISANG linggo matapos umakyat sa normal level, bumaba muli sa below critical level ang antas ng tubig sa Angat dam.

Sa monitoring ng Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) nasa 159 meter ang wa-

ter level sa Angat dam mababa sa 160.30 meter na naitala noong Miyerkoles.

Dahil sa pagbaba muli ng tubig sa Angat dam ay binaba ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) ang alokasyon ng tubig sa Metropolitan Waterworks

and Sewerage System (MWSS) at sa mga concessionaires, mula sa regular na alokasyon na 46 cms ay ginawa itong 36 cms.

Aminado ang Pagasa na bagama't nakakaranas ng pag-uulan ay hindi pa ito nakakadagdag sa antas ng tubig sa Angat

dam kaya na-ngangailangan pa rin ng pagtitipid.

Inaasahan ng Pagasa na pagsapit pa ng Setyembre magiging normal ang water level sa Angat kung saan dalawang malalakas na bagyo ang inaasahan ng ahensya na papasok sa bansa. **(Tina Mendoza)**



GARBAGE PROBLEM

BAGUIO FOLK URGED TO USE KITCHEN WASTE TO GROW FOOD

BAGUIO CITY—Saying conventional waste-to-energy plants are “lazy solutions for politicians,” a zero-waste advocate told Baguio residents to set up community operations to collect and compost household organic waste to be used to grow backyard food.

Retired chemist Paul Connett also said the city should learn to repurpose trash and stop consuming more than what a household required while asking local manufacturers to find a better way of packaging goods without using too much plastic.

Residents were forced to store their kitchen waste after the Department of Environment and Natural Resources stopped the operations of the city’s fertilizer-making machines that were fed with organic waste.

The agency’s stoppage order was quickly lifted after the city government reaffirmed its plan to convert its decommissioned dump into an ecological park.

Composting areas

The machines were set up at the old dump and were processing a backlog of biodegradable waste. These had since been producing 189 tons of powdered fertilizer from 720 tons of biological waste each month.

Connett, who spoke at a Sunday forum at City Hall, said villages could handle kitchen trash collections themselves and put up composting areas for backyard gardens or urban farms.

They should improve and expand a local vermiculture system which harnessed earthworms to dissolve biological waste, he said.

Credited for leading a global campaign against the use of fluoride to treat municipal water systems, Connett advised residents not to wait for the government to set up systems that would convert waste into electricity, an option that had become popular due to mounting struggle with waste.

His book, “Zero Waste Solution,” examined the flaws of the business model for using garbage to produce energy, arguing that the value of electricity does not make up for the cost of running trash-fueled generators nor the loss of discarded products that could be recycled or repaired.

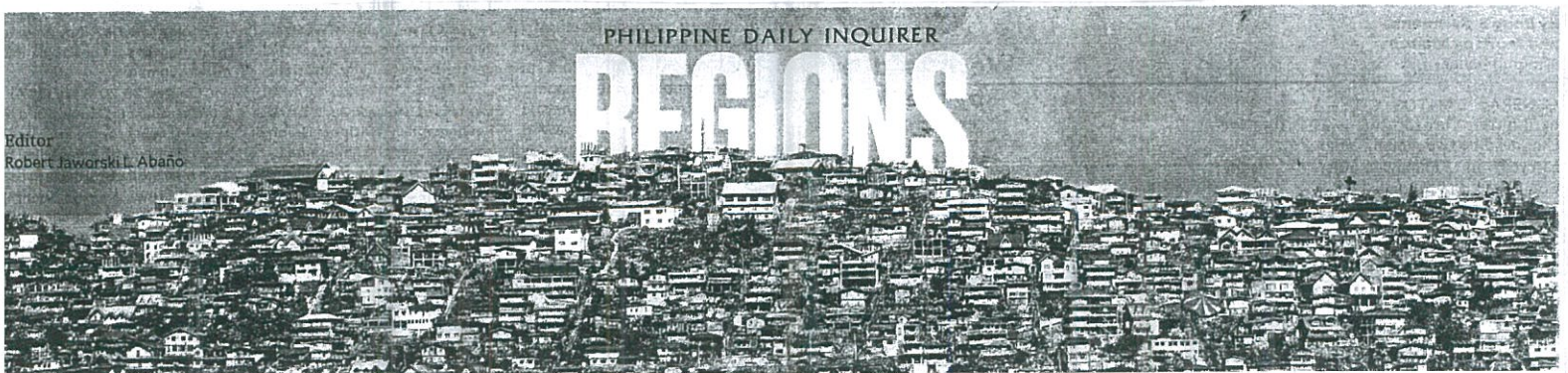
The city government had intended to put up a waste-to-energy thermal plant at an open pit mine in Itogon town, Benguet province, under an arrangement with a mining firm.

—VINCENT
CABREZA INQ

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

REGIONS

Editor
Robert Jaworski L. Abano



LOWDED As Baguio City continues to attract migrants and businesses, the summer capital has to also find solutions to growing problems of waste generation and disposal. —EV ESPIRITU



This is On Me

Floro Mercene

The future of plastic

ACCORDING to the Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup report from 2017, plastic drink bottles were the second most common item collected by volunteers around the world. More than 1.5 million pieces were collected from cleanups conducted along beaches, during dives and from boats.

According to a report from CNN, the London Marathon was able to replace thousands of plastic bottles with pouches of seaweed filled with sports drink. Runners are normally given the drink in a plastic drink bottle at the 23rd mile of the run. This year, the marathon organizers worked with a London based startup laboratory called Skipping Rocks Lab. The lab designed and created Ooho, a small pouch made of the building blocks of seaweed. This pouch is clear, tasteless and can even be eaten. Best of all, it can also be composted in less than six weeks.

In the near future, plastic may be truly biodegradable or compostable. The typical oxo-

biodegradable plastics that we commonly see are not really eco-friendly. These are only biodegradable at specific temperatures and would only break up into microplastics (not truly biodegrade) if it were placed in a landfill or left in the environment.

Other companies are looking into replacing oil-based plastic items with compostable versions. The Wyss Institute from Harvard University has been developing "shrilk", which is a clear plastic created from a mixture of chitosan, made from shrimp shells, and a silk protein from insects. Items, such as bowls and cups, can also be made from fungus. The mycelium acts as the roots of the fungus and can be shaped and baked into a durable and waterproof material. Research into products, such as Ooho, that can replace single use plastic is vital for preventing pollution like millions of plastic drink bottles that are collected by coastal cleanups every year.



Mamba denies black-sand mining in Cagayan

TUGUEGARAO CITY, Cagayan: The Cagayan government denied the existence of a black sand mining operation in the Cagayan River from Aparri town to Lallo town.

Gov. Manuel Mamba said circulating on social media on the Cagayan River activity was "dredging and not black sand mining," referring to a report by an inspection team from the provincial government.

Mamba said an inspection team on Thursday was led by Rodolfo Alvarado, provincial administrator, Allacapan town mayor Harry Florida and other provincial officials to investigate reports of black sand operations in the river particularly at the towns of Lal-lo, Camalaniugan and Aparri.

"The inspection conducted was to

verify reports of illegal black sand operations in the Cagayan River from Aparri to La-lo circulating in the social media and broadcast[ed] over local TV and radio," he said.

He added during an aerial survey aboard Florida's helicopter, the inspection team found no black sand activities or any barge or vessel in the Lal-lo and Camalaniugan towns' part of the Cagayan River.

"What the inspection team found out was an ongoing dredging in the Aparri town with the use of a barge and a vessel for the initial dredging operation or declogging in the mouth of the Cagayan River," Mamba said.

The inspection team also showed photographs and video footage of the

absence of a sand separator in the said barge and vessel except for dredging at the heavily silted part of the river.

"The ongoing dredging is just hauling of sand into the barge without the conduct of any processing," Mamba said.

Mamba said the dredging operations were in preparation for the reopening of the Port of Aparri, which has been idle for 10 years.

"The river has to be dredged so that the river gets deeper for ships and boats to dock when the port is reopened," Mamba said.

He said no ship has docked in Aparri in the last 10 years because of heavy siltation traced to the Cagayan River.

"The port would take in agricultural products and other goods to

complement other Northern Luzon ports in Claveria town in Cagayan province and Currimaos town in Ilocos Norte province," Mamba said.

The inspection team also confirmed an earlier report by a composite team of the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office, Environment Management Bureau and the Department of Public Works and Highways which negated any black sand operations in the Cagayan River Delta.

Earlier, the provincial board has authorized Mamba to enter into a memorandum of agreement with the Pacific Resources Inc. for the dredging of the Cagayan River Delta.

LEANDER C. DOMINGO



Mga hayop na kabilang sa "critically endangered", inuubos ng mga Chinese, tsk-tsk-tsk!

HINDI masukat ang ating galit nang malaman natin ang balita tungkol sa mga pangolin o balintong na nasagip ng mga awtoridad habang dinadala sa Binondo, Manila.

Pito sa sampung pangolin na nasagip ang namatay dahil sa kanilang kahabag-habag na kondisyon kung paano sila dinadala sa Maynila. Natagpuan ang mga ito na nakabilog sa lambat, tila hindi man lang binigyan ng tubig o pagkain at hindi natin alam kung gaano na sila katagal sa kondisyong 'yun.

Samantala, ang tatlong buhay pa ay hindi na rin inaasahang magtatagal dahil sa napakaraming sugat nito sa katawan na natamo, marahil, noong sinubukan nilang makatakas sa kanilang pagkakahuli at sa matinding stress na pinagdaanan ng mga hayop,

kawawa naman.

Dapat siguro, bilugin at ilagay din sa bayong ng ilang araw na walang tubig at pagkain ang mga nahuling nagdadala ng mga pangolin sa Maynila.

Hindi nakapagtataka kung bakit sa Binondo dadalhin ang mga hayop. Ilang beses nang nahuhuli ng coast guard ang mga barko ng China na may dalang mga patay na pangolin.

Ginagawang pagkain ang mga ito kung saan mahal ang singil. Siyempre, dahil sa pera at Tsino na naman.

Ang pangolin ay kabilang sa mga hayop na "critically endangered" kaya bawal hulihin ang mga ito. Malinaw na hindi ito sinusunod dahil sa malakas ang demand nito sa bansa, gayundin sa China. Hindi magtatagal, ang napakaliit na bilang ng mga pangolin ay mauubos, lalo na kung hindi mabibigyan ng pangil ang batas na nagbabawal sa paghuli ng mga ito.

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Tila hindi pa tapos ang isyu tungkol sa susunod na House Speaker sa kabila ng pagbigay ng endorsement ni



Who manipulated

fishermen? Palace

points to Diokno, IBP

By Julie M. Aurelio
@JMAurelioINQ

Presidential spokesperson Salvador Panelo on Thursday said human rights lawyer Jose Manuel "Chel" Diokno and the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) manipulated a group of fishermen into petitioning for an environmental protection order from the Supreme Court.

Panelo was reacting to Diokno's accusation on Wednesday that state lawyers used underhanded tactics by talking secretly to his clients, who then disavowed the petition filed in their behalf by the IBP in April.

"I think it's the other way around," Panelo told reporters. "He should ask himself in the mirror because that questions applies to him."

"If we are to believe the accusations of the fishermen, it's them (Diokno and IBP) that influenced or manipulated them," he said.

The IBP's petition for a writ of kalikasan, a special court order for environmental protection,

covers three Philippine reefs in the West Philippine Sea, waters within the country's exclusive economic zone (EEZ). It claims the marine environment in and around these reefs has been destroyed by China through reclamation and poaching.

It sought to compel the government to enforce the 2016 arbitral court ruling against China's claim over nearly the entire South China Sea.

Panelo said the fishermen had sought Diokno's help "because their houses were being demolished and they have a problem, not in regard to that [petition]."

"And then they were asked to sign documents, which turned out to be the petition. That was the story of the fishermen," he said.

Breach of legal ethics

Diokno, a strong rights advocate who ran on the opposition ticket in last May's midterm polls, on Wednesday said it was "not only suspicious that the government secretly



They were asked to sign documents, which turned out to be the petition. That was the story of the fishermen

Salvador Panelo
Presidential Spokesperson

talked to our clients, that also violates legal ethics."

He said it was a lawyer from the Philippine Navy who talked to the fishermen.

"If there was a breach of legal ethics in this case, it was the fact that the Navy lawyer bypassed the fisherfolks' lawyers," Diokno said in a statement on Thursday in response to Panelo's accusations against him and the IBP.

"The IBP team, and myself as collaborating counsel, acted in good faith. All we want is to help these fisherfolk, our country

men, to ensure their legal right to fish in our own waters without fear or intimidation. This is the premise of the writ of kalikasan petition," he said, adding that it was what the government should do if it truly cared for its citizens.

Disbarment case

"Mr. Panelo, enough of politicking. Have pity on our fishermen. Protect and serve your fellow Filipinos," Diokno said.

According to Sen. Aquilino Pimentel III, Diokno could file a case to discipline or seek the



According to Sen. Aquilino Pimentel III, Diokno could file a case to discipline or seek the disbarment of the government lawyer who had committed ethical violations.

"If he knows the identity of these people who he thinks violated some code of personal conduct of lawyers, he knows what to do," Pimentel said at Kapihan sa Senado forum.

During a hearing on the petition on Tuesday, Solicitor General Jose Calida asked the high court to dismiss the case outright because of the fishermen's statements.

He presented their sworn statements and showed in court a taped interview of the group's leaders, Monico Abogado and Roberto Asiado, who claimed they were "deceived" into signing the petition.

Diokno, however, insisted that three of the fishermen told him they willingly agreed to act as petitioners.

Chief Justice Lucas Bersamin suspended Tuesday's proceedings and called all the lawyers to a conference. Associate Justice Marvic Leonen later announced that the court unanimously decided to suspend the rest of the proceedings and give both parties time to file a joint motion.

Ways to protect EEZ

Panelo said there were other ways to protect the country's marine resources within its EEZ in the South China Sea, apart from going to court.

"You could guard it through the Coast Guard. Let's have more forces there to take care of the Filipinos there. And we will still go back to the issue of diplomatic negotiations," Panelo said.

He pointed out that President Duterte has opted for diplomatic negotiations with China, which was "in possession" of the South China Sea.

Mr. Duterte has repeatedly defended his decision to pursue friendly ties with China and not directly confront it over the South China Sea dispute.

He has said he would not risk the lives of Filipinos in a war against China. —WITH A REPORT FROM LEILA B. SALAVERRIA INQ

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■ Plot leader Diokno: And he wanted to be senator of the Republic?



Imbecilic *kalikasan* writ suit will result in political chaos and economic collapse

THE so-called writ of *ka-*



RIGOBERTO D. TIGLAO

likasan suit asking the Supreme Court to compel government to enforce our environmental laws in the Spratlys and Scarborough Shoal is a cheap, despicable and stupid political plot by the Yellows and Reds. If it wins, it will result in political chaos and economic ruin, at a level worse than we've ever seen.

► TiglaoA5



■ TIGLAO FROM A1

Imbecilic *kalikasan* writ suit will result in political chaos and economic collapse

Lawyers led by failed *Otso Diretso* candidate Jose Manuel Diokno, known to be close to the Communist Party, filed the suit last April claiming to represent the Integrated Bar of the Philippines and Filipino fishermen affected by foreigners fishing in those areas.

But the fishermen have declared that they had nothing to do with the suit, didn't authorize Diokno and his gang to represent them. They said they were shocked when they saw their names as complainants in media reports. Solicitor General Jose Calida the other day submitted to the court the affidavits claiming such, sworn under oath by all the 19 fishermen whom Diokno's gang said it represented.

What Diokno and his gang did was a patent violation of Section 27 of the Rules of Court No. 138, punishable by disbarment: "A member of the bar may be removed or suspended from his office as attorney by the Supreme Court for...for willfully appearing as an attorney for a party to a case without authority to do so."

The Diokno suit is imbecilic or mentally bone-idle since it wanted the high court to order government agencies such as the Coast Guard, the DENR and the Navy to enforce the country's environmental laws, and arrest foreign fishermen violating our rules at Ayungin Shoal, the Panganiban Reef and Panatag Shoal, which they claimed the July 2016 ruling of the "Permanent Court of Arbitration" determined were within the country's EEZ. (It wasn't the PCA, but a five-man arbitral tribunal, which used the PCA only as registry, and one of its huge halls as venue.)

Sovereign territory

Yes, Ayungin and Panganiban are within our EEZ, but they are in that part of the South China Sea internationally called the Spratly Islands (Kalayaan Island Group to us) claimed as their *sovereign territory* by four other entities—China, Taiwan, Vietnam and Malaysia.

Panatag is claimed by China and Taiwan. China has Ayungin as "Ren'ai Jiao," Panganiban as "Meiji Jao," and Panatag as "Huangyan Dao" in its official maps. Vietnam has its own names for these.

Diokno's suit is like asking the Supreme Court to order our government to establish its offices, its police, its military in "*Negeri Di Bawah Bayu*." That's a Malaysian name for Sabah, which we claim but Malaysia also claims and occupies, as China now occupies Panganiban Shoal and Panatag. That's how colossally foolish the Diokno suit is.

Diokno and his gang though may have been carried away by the huge lie being disseminated by the Yellows over the decision of the five-man tribunal, which ruled entirely only on the basis of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos), nothing more.

It indeed ruled that part of the Spratlys and the Panatag Shoal were within our EEZ, and not within China's, and that the Chinese's infamous nine-dash line that covers nearly all of the South China Sea and skirts the Philippine archipelago had no basis under Unclos' provisions.

Beyond UNLCOS

But the Tribunal did not rule which country has sovereignty over Panatag and the Spratly area, as sovereignty issues are categorically beyond the authority of Unclos. In fact, many of the countries, including the Philippines and China, even ratified the treaty with the clear qualification that it cannot rule on matters of territorial sovereignty.

China, Taiwan and Vietnam (and Malaysia in part) claim these areas not because these are within their EEZs (or within the 9-dash line) but as their territories. China has government issuances starting in the 1930s declaring Panatag and the Spratlys as its territories which it calls Huangyan Qúndǎo and Nánshā Qúndǎo, respectively. For Viet-

nam, our *Kalayaan Island Group* is their *Quần đảo Trường Sa*.

Similarly, our claim to these areas are really not based on their being within our EEZ, but that that these are part of our territory. Marcos had his troops occupy many features of the Spratlys, starting in 1973, and officially annexed them in 1978 to the Republic. President Arroyo pushed for the 2009 baselines law, which had a provision that declared Panatag as part of our territory, the first time that area was officially proclaimed as such. The Aquino regime's savvy US lawyers who handled the suit against China cleverly didn't invoke any such claim of territory in order to go around the Unclos provision that it does not deal with questions of sovereignty.

Battering ram

Diokno *et al.* of course didn't care how stupid their suit was as it served its role, which was, as Calida termed it, "as a battering ram to take down the Duterte administration."

Calida wasn't exaggerating. But it was a battering to take down not just Duterte but this nation.

What would happen if the Supreme Court orders the Duterte administration to enforce our laws in this disputed areas? Only two possible outcomes.

One scenario, the most likely: Duterte would defy the court order, and a constitutional crisis — when there's an impasse between two branches of government — ensues. Mainstream media would be screaming and repeating this line for weeks using different angles: "Duterte defies Supreme Court."

Communists and Yellows — with the help of the US that wants Duterte out because of his independent foreign policy — could manage to raise an outrage, even if people don't really understand why he is defying the court. That of course would lead to a very unstable, even violent political scenario. With stability vanishing, investments would

plunge, our economy would go to the dogs. The insurgent communists would be happy.

Second scenario

The second scenario: Duterte will enforce the court's order, order the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, the Coast Guard, the Navy, Marines, and even our police forces to the Spratlys and Panatag to arrest all fishermen there from China, Vietnam, Malaysia and Taiwan.

Immediately, of course, the four countries would stop all economic relations with us, all tourist visits to us. Our economy will be in a recession, worse than anything this country has ever seen.

Remember what happened to Panatag in 2012 when President Aquino sent his refurbished warship *BRP Gregorio del Pilar* to arrest Chinese fishermen?

This time around it won't just be China's civilian Maritime Surveillance forces that would be sent to repel our puny forces, not just the People's Liberation Army's Navy, but Vietnam's battle-tested Marines and even Malaysia's modern air and sea vessels. This time around, we won't just lose Panatag. We'll lose the entire Spratlys or even Palawan, as China or Vietnam, or both will justify their occupation there as necessary to ensure we're forever out of that disputed area.

Does Diokno think the US would defend us for trying to enforce our authority over the Spratlys, which claim it doesn't recognize?

Diokno and his cabal are either being very stupid or devious in filing this dumb-ass *kalikasan* suit. Or perhaps stupidly devious. Somebody should string up in the crossbeams of the Supreme Court headquarters these people who want to ruin our country.

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BOC told to create team vs waste imports

By MARY GRACE PADIN

The Department of Finance (DOF) has ordered the Bureau of Customs (BOC) to create a strike team to guard against the entry into the country of waste materials from overseas.

Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III issued the directive to Customs Commissioner Rey Leonardo Guerrero during a recent DOF executive committee meeting.

Guerrero said he has called on the BOC's counterparts in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to strengthen law enforcement to prevent the region from becoming a dumping ground for hazardous materials, such as garbage from other countries.

Guerrero said his fellow customs officials welcomed his proposal.

In response, Dominguez said the Philippines should establish a special unit tasked to protect the country from imported waste.

"It's time we put up something like an environmental unit in the Customs (bureau) to really act on this garbage issue," Dominguez said.

BOC Assistant Commissioner Vincent Philip Maronilla said the BOC Environmental Protection Unit (EPU), which is under the Enforcement Group (EG), would closely coordinate with their counterparts in the ASEAN.

The EPU, Maronilla said, "would be tasked to coordinate and they would be trained to do shipment profiling in terms of origin, the common operation, common schemes of companies" that smuggle garbage to other countries.

He added that Guerrero had already given instructions to EG Deputy Commissioner Teddy Raval.

Raval would soon reshuffle the EPU and select personnel

who would suit the purpose of the unit. Maronilla said it was possible that Allen dela Cruz, a lawyer, would be retained to head the unit.

Guerrero said other ASEAN member-states thanked the Philippines during the 28th meeting of the ASEAN Directors-General of Customs for "setting the example" when President Duterte compelled Canada to take back 69 containers of trash that were dumped in the country six years ago.

The DOF said other countries like Malaysia and Cambodia are also working to have imported garbage returned to Canada.

"Malaysia was thanking the Philippines for setting the example, this problem about the wastes, because now it has come to the consciousness of the international community," Guerrero said.

Moreover, Guerrero said he has received reports that plans to transport wastes to the country have been abandoned as a result of Duterte's stand on the issue.

The Philippines initially set a May 15 deadline for Canada to ship back their garbage.

After Canada failed to meet this deadline, the government recalled its ambassador and consuls to Canada to demonstrate its "diminished diplomatic relations" with the country.

This prompted Canada to repatriate the trash on May 31, earlier than its June 30 commitment.

Following this development, the South Korean government has also committed to help ship back to its country some 5,176 metric tons of waste materials illegally imported by Cebu-based Verde Soko Philippines Industrial Corp. into the Philippines last year. —With Evelyn Macairan



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

THE EXPORT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
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50 more BOC officials face ax

DOF eyes Customs strike team against garbage importation

By ARGYLL B. GEDUCOS and CHINO S. LEYCO

At least 50 more officials and employees of the Bureau of Customs (BOC) are set to be sacked as President Duterte continues his crackdown against corruption in the agency.

Presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo bared this a day after Duterte

ordered the freezing of several high-ranking BOC officials and employees over their supposed involvement in corruption activities.

On Wednesday, Panelo said the President will name the frozen officials and employees at the appropriate time. **►9**



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50 more BOC officials... ◀1

"The President has directed the freezing of several high-ranking Customs officials and employees, whose names would be disclosed at the appropriate time, as they face administrative and criminal charges, for unlawful activities," he said.

In his Thursday press briefing, Panelo said a lot of Customs people are about to be sacked in Duterte's battle against corruption.

"From what I gathered, mga 72 yata ang tatanggalin niya, or ang facing administrative charges. Ganoon karami, either 72 or 62, hindi ko na malaman eksakto (From what I gathered, I think he's going to fire 72, or will face administrative charges. Either 72, or 62, I can't recall the exact number)," he said.

"Basta marami. Mahigit singkuenta (All I know is there's as many of them. Perhaps more than 50), less than 100... Ganoon karami ang involved sa corruption (That's how many people are involved in corruption)," he added.

Panelo said other officials will surely take over the positions which will be vacated to ensure that operations in the BOC will continue.

Over the weekend, Duterte said he was going to fire more people from the BOC due to their supposed corrupt practices. On Monday, the President said that at least four people will be sacked.

Despite this, Panelo said on Thurs-

day that Customs Commissioner Rey Guerrero is not included on the list of people that will get the boot. Panelo also said early this week that Guerrero still enjoys the trust and confidence of the President.

Earlier, Duterte reiterated that he is thinking of placing the BOC under the watch of the military just to curb the corruption looming in the agency.

Strike team vs imported trash

Meanwhile, Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III has directed the BOC to look into the creation of a special strike team within the agency to stop the entry of waste materials that other countries are attempting to dump in the Philippines.

Dominguez said the strike team that he wants at the BOC will be akin to a special environmental strike force team that will be activated to guard the entry of hazardous materials in the country.

The DOF chief issued the directive after Commissioner Guerrero reported that he had called on his counterparts in Southeast Asia to strengthen their law enforcement against dumping of hazardous materials, including garbage, from other countries.

Guerrero said his fellow customs officials from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member-states reacted positively to his proposal.

In response, Dominguez said that "it's time we put up something like an

environmental unit in the Customs (bureau) to really act on this garbage issue."

Guerrero also reported to Dominguez that other Asian member-states like Malaysia have thanked the Philippines for setting the example in the region when President Duterte stood pat in his decision to compel Canada to immediately repatriate 69 containers of trash that were dumped in Manila six years ago.

After Canada failed to meet the original May 15 deadline set by President Duterte for the return of the imported wastes, the government recalled its ambassador and consuls to Canada to demonstrate its "diminished diplomatic relations" with the North American country.

This action prompted Canada to move its earlier June 30 commitment in repatriating the waste to the Philippines' revised May 30 deadline.

Beating the deadline set by the government, the 69 containers of waste from Canada mislabeled by a private importer as recyclable materials and dumped in the Philippines six years ago were finally shipped out of the country last May 31.

Other ASEAN countries like Malaysia and Cambodia are also working to have wastes dumped in their countries returned to Canada.

"Malaysia was thanking the Philippines for setting the example, this problem about the wastes, because now it has come to the consciousness of the international community, this garbage problem," Guerrero said.

As a result of President Duterte's tough stand on the issue, Guerrero said he has received reports that plans to have other shipments of wastes transported to the country have now been scuttled.

Aside from Canada, the South Korean government has also committed to help ship back to its country some 5,176 metric tons of waste materials illegally imported here last year and currently stored at the Phividec Industrial Authority premises in Misamis Oriental.



BOC 'strike team' guards vs waste from abroad

THE Department of Finance (DOF) has ordered the Bureau of Customs (BOC) to look into the creation of a strike team that will guard the country's borders against the possible entry of waste materials from other countries.

In a statement issued on Thursday, the DOF quoted Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III as saying, after issuing the directive to Customs Commissioner Rey Leonardo B. Guerrero, "It's time we put up something like an environmental unit in the Customs [bureau] to really act on this garbage issue."

The directive was issued at a

SEE "WASTE," A4

Waste. . . CONTINUED FROM A1

recent DOF Executive Committee (Execom) meeting after Guerrero reported that he had called on his counterparts in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) to strengthen the law-enforcement capabilities of member-states not only in the war against drug trafficking, but also in preventing the region from being a dumping ground for hazardous materials such as garbage of other countries.

Guerrero said his fellow customs officials from the Asean reacted positively to his proposal.

The finance chief said the strike team that he wants at the BOC will be like a special environmental strike force team that will be activated to guard against the entry of hazardous materials in the country.

The Customs chief also told Dominguez that other Asean member-states like Malaysia thanked the Philippines during the 28th meeting of the Asean Directors General of Customs held at the Lao Republic for setting the example in the region. This, after President Duterte stood pat in his decision to compel Canada to immediately repatriate 69 containers of trash that were dumped in Manila six years ago.

After Canada failed to meet the original May 15 deadline set by President Duterte for the return of the imported wastes, the government recalled its ambassador and consul to Canada to demonstrate its "diminished diplomatic relations" with the North American country.

This action prompted Canada to move its earlier June 30 commitment in repatriating

the waste to the Philippines's revised May 30 deadline.

"Malaysia was thanking the Philippines for setting the example [on dealing with] this problem about the waste, because now it has come to the consciousness of the international community, this garbage problem," Guerrero said.

Guerrero pointed out that as a result of President Duterte's tough stand on the issue, he has received reports that plans to have other shipments of waste transported to the country have now been scuttled.

Beating the deadline set by the government, the 69 containers of waste from Canada mislabeled by a private importer as recyclable materials and dumped in the Philippines six years ago were finally shipped out of the country last May 31. *Rea Cu*



PHILIPPINE STAR FILE PHOTO

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

BoC ordered to form task force to guard against garbage shipments

FINANCE SECRETARY Carlos G. Dominguez III has ordered the Bureau of Customs (BoC) to create a team to guard against future attempts to bring waste material into the Philippines.

"[t]he strike team that he wants at the BoC will be akin to a special environmental strike force that will be activated to guard against the entry of hazardous materials in the country," the Department of Finance (DoF) said in a statement on Thursday.

"It's time we put up something like an environmental unit in the Customs (bureau) to really act on this garbage issue," Mr. Dominguez was quoted as saying in the statement.

According to the Finance Department, Customs Commissioner Rey Leonardo B. Guerrero proposed to his agency's counterparts in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region to cooperate not only on preventing the entry of drugs but also garbage.

The DoF said other countries responded positively to Mr. Guerrero's proposal.

Between 2013 and 2014, 69 containers with garbage were shipped to the Philippines from Canada. On May 30 the containers were finally shipped back.

"Malaysia was thanking the Philippines for setting the example in this waste problem, because now it has come to the consciousness of the international community," Mr. Guerrero was quoted as saying in the statement.

Meanwhile, the DoF also noted that the South Korean government has committed to take back 5,176 metric tons (MT) of waste material shipped to the Philippines last year.

The South Korean shipments are currently stored at a PHIVIDEC Industrial Authority site in Misamis Oriental. — **Reicelene Joy N. Ignacio**



DoF mulls strike team vs entry of foreign garbage

THE creation of a special strike team at the Bureau of Customs is being considered to prevent the entry of waste materials of other countries into the Philippines, according to the Department of Finance (DoF).

In a statement on Thursday, the department said the creation of a strike team was ordered by Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez 3rd to Customs Commissioner Rey Leonardo Guerrero.

"It's time we put up something like an environmental unit in the Customs to really act on this garbage issue," Dominguez was quoted as telling Guerrero during a recent meeting.

He said the team would be akin to a special environmental strike force team that would be activated to guard the entry of hazardous materials into the country.

The Finance chief's directive came after Guerrero reported that he had called on his counterparts in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) to strengthen the law enforcement capabilities of the organization's member-

states not only in the war against drug trafficking, but also in preventing the region from being a dumping ground for hazardous materials such as garbage of other countries.

Guerrero said his fellow Customs officials from the Asean member-states reacted positively to his proposal.

He said Malaysia thanked the Philippines during the 28th meeting of the Asean Directors-General of Customs held in Laos for setting an example in the region when Canada repatriated 69 containers of trash that were dumped in Manila six years ago.

The containers, which were mislabeled by a private importer as recyclable materials and dumped in the Philippines, were finally shipped out of the country on May 31.

Seoul has also committed to help ship back to South Korea some 5,176 metric tons of waste materials illegally exported to the country last year and currently stored at the Phividec Industrial Authority premises in Misamis Oriental.

MAYVELIN U. CARABALLO



DOF chief seeks strike team to guard against trash import

By Julito G. Rada

FINANCE Secretary Carlos Dominguez III ordered the Bureau of Customs to create a special strike team to guard against the entry of waste materials that other countries are attempting to dump in the country.

Dominguez issued the directive during a recent DOF executive committee meeting after Customs Commissioner Rey Leonardo Guerrero reported that he had called on his counterparts in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to strengthen the law enforcement capabilities of the organization's member-states not only in the war against drug trafficking, but also in preventing the region from being a dumping ground for hazardous materials such as garbage of other countries.

Guerrero said his fellow Customs officials from the ASEAN member-states reacted positively to his proposal.

In response, Dominguez said "it's time we put up something like an environmental unit in the Customs [bureau] to really act on this garbage issue."

Dominguez said the strike team that he wants at the BOC would be similar to a special environmental strike force team that will be activated to guard the entry of hazardous materials in the country.

Guerrero also reported to Dominguez that other ASEAN member-states like Malaysia have thanked the Philippines during the 28th meeting of the ASEAN Directors-General of Customs held at the Lao Republic for setting the example in the region when President Rodrigo Duterte stood pat in his decision to compel Canada to immediately repatriate 69 containers of trash that were dumped in Manila six years ago.

After Canada failed to meet the original May 15 deadline set by President Duterte for the return of the imported wastes, the government recalled its ambassador and consuls to Canada to demonstrate its "diminished diplomatic relations" with the North American country.

This action prompted Canada to move its earlier June 30 commitment in repatriating the waste to the Philippines' revised May 30 deadline.

Other ASEAN countries like Malaysia and Cambodia are also working to have wastes dumped in their countries returned to Canada.

Guerrero said that as a result of President Duterte's tough stand on the issue, he has received reports that plans to have other shipments of wastes transported to the country have now been scuttled.

Beating the deadline set by the government, the 69 containers of waste from Canada mislabeled by a private importer as recyclable materials and dumped in the Philippines six years ago were finally shipped out of the country last May 31.

The South Korean government has also committed to help ship back to its country some 5,176 metric tons of waste materials illegally imported here last year and currently stored at the PHIVIDEC Industrial Authority premises in Misamis Oriental.



Strike team to block imported waste mullied



MALAYSIA and Cambodia are working to have the wastes dumped on them returned to Canada.

It's time we put up something like an environmental unit in the Customs (bureau) to really act on this garbage issue

To prevent other countries from attempting to dump waste materials in the Philippines. Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III has directed Commissioner Rey Leonardo Guerrero of the Bureau of Customs (BoC) to look into the creation of a special strike team.

Dominguez issued the directive during a recent Department of Finance Executive Committee meeting after Guerrero reported that he had called on his counterparts in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to strengthen the law enforcement capabilities of the organization's member-states not only in the war against drug trafficking, but also in preventing the region from being a dumping ground for hazardous materials such as garbage of other countries.

Malaysia was thanking the Philippines for setting the example, this problem about the wastes, because now it has come to the consciousness of the international community, this garbage problem.

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officials from the ASEAN member-states reacted positively to his proposal.

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After Canada failed to meet the original 15 May deadline set by President Duterte for the return of the imported wastes, the government recalled its ambassador and consuls to Canada to demonstrate its "diminished diplomatic relations" with the North American country.

This action prompted Canada to move its earlier 30 June commitment in repatriating the waste to the Philippines' revised 30 May deadline.

Other ASEAN countries like Malaysia and Cambodia are also

working to have wastes dumped in their countries returned to Canada.

"Malaysia was thanking the Philippines for setting the example, this problem about the wastes, because now it has come to the consciousness of the international community, this garbage problem," Guerrero said during the Execom meeting.

Guerrero said that as a result of President Duterte's tough stand on the issue, he has received reports that plans to have other shipments of wastes transported to the country have now been scuttled.

Dominguez said the strike team that he wants at the BoC will be akin to a special environmental strike force team that will be activated to guard the entry of hazardous materials in the country.

Beating the deadline set by the government, the 69 containers of waste from Canada mislabeled by a private importer as recyclable materials and dumped in the Philippines six years ago were finally shipped out of the country last 31 May.

The South Korean government has also committed to help ship back to its country some 5,176 metric tons of waste materials illegally imported here last year and currently stored at the PHIVIDEC Industrial Authority premises in Misamis Oriental.



Belmonte seeks ordinance revision, audit on 'green fund'

QUEZON City Mayor Joy Belmonte has certified as urgent an amendment to an ordinance that will make "green fund" a public fund.

The move was prompted by a recommendation from the Commission on Audit (CoA) that the so-called "green fund" now amounting to P316 million must be subjected to audit.

Belmonte urged the

city council to amend SP 2350 or the Environment Protection and Waste Management Code for CoA auditing. She instructed Vice Mayor Gian Sotto to ensure that it incorporates all of CoA's recommendations.

In an ordinance passed in 2014, the QC Council envisioned the Green Fund as a mechanism through which retailers could generate means to

carry out environmental projects by charging P2 from consumers for every plastic bag used.

By charging for plastic bags, the QC Council hoped this would discourage consumers from using plastic in favor of eco-bags.

CoA however maintains that the Green Fund must be turned over to the City Treasurer's Office and be subject to au-



DOLE: 7K+ POGO workers face deportation for lack of AEP

By SAMUEL P. MEDENILLA
@sam_medenilla

OVER 7,000 foreign nationals (FN) may soon face possible deportation for their failure to secure work permits, according to the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

In an interview, DOLE's Bureau of Local Employment (BLE) Director Dominique R. Tutay said they

were able to identify a total of 7,037 FNs working in the Philippine Off-shore Gaming Operators (POGO) who allegedly did not apply for an Alien Employment Permit (AEP) before the prescribed deadline.

An AEP is a document issued by DOLE to FNs who will be working in the country for more than six months.

"They were given until mid-June to comply...the names of

those who did not comply will be submitted to the BI [Bureau of Immigration]," Tutay told reporters in an ambush interview.

This was in line with the Joint Guidelines (JG) 1, Series of 2019, jointly signed by DOLE, Department of Justice (DOJ), BI and the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), which was signed last May.

Under the said issuance, FNs working in POGOs were no longer allowed to avail themselves of a Special Work Permit (SWP). Instead, they will be required to apply for an AEP.

SWP is issued by the BI to FNs who will work in the country for less than six months.

Higher compliance
TUTAY said the number of FNs they

will be endorsing to BI may still rise since their current figures only covered their validation inspection in Metro Manila alone.

"Our joint inspection team has already saturated the POGOs in NCR [National Capital Region], so we are now focusing our attention to other locators outside of Metro Manila," Tutay said.

Citing the validation result, she said there was a total of 38,343 FNs in 171 POGO service providers in the NCR that were inspected.

Initially, 8,371 FNs were found to have no work permits, which was, however, reduced to 7,037 after some of them applied for an AEP.

Tutay said while JG 1 is yet to be fully implemented, she said it has already triggered a rise on the number of AEP applications in their regional office to 9,357 in the first quarter of 2018 to 15,904 on the same period this year.

"This is equivalent to a 70-percent increase year-on-year," Tutay said.

Additional requirements

TO recall, the government adopted a more aggressive inspection regime on the growing number of FN employees in the country, amid concerns from some lawmakers that many of them do not have the necessary work permits.

➤ This also resulted to the government's issuance of JG 1, and the new Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) 001, Series of 2019, signed by DOLE, DOJ, BI, BIR, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Department of Finance (DOF), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) and National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA), which was signed on Thursday.

Labor Secretary Silvestre H. Bello III said JMC 001 will further ensure that no Filipino will be deprived of work due to the entry of FNs.

"This will also lead to a higher revenue collection for the BIR because no

[work] permit will be issued [to FNs] if they will not pay taxes," Bello said.

Among the salient points of the JMC is enabling FNs to secure a work visa even while they are in their home country; and making Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) a requirement for the application of a work permit.

Centralized database

IT also mandates all concerned agencies, except DOJ and BI, to secure a Certificate of No Objection (CNO) from DOLE in the issuance of their respective work permits for FNs.

"This is so we can capture the data of foreign nationals, who intend to work in the Philippines," Tutay said.

Another landmark provision of JMC 001 is its provision requiring all work permit applications of FNs to be vetted by NICA to ensure they will not pose as a threat to the country's national security.

All of these collected data will be consolidated by BLE in a soon-to-be established centralized database.



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Kenyan Sigei, Hallasgo wagi sa Manila Bay Clean-Up Run

ANG mga taga-Kenya na sina Matthew Kipkorir Sigei, Leonard Kimboi at Jackson Circhir ang nanguna sa 21K race sa katatapos lang na Manila Bay Clean-Up Run habang sina Christine Hallasgo, April Diaz at Maricar Camacho naman ang nagwagi sa women's division.

Sa 10K race, nanalo sina James Kevin Cruz, Gilbert Laido at Anthony Nerza kasama ang mga babaeng sina Luisa Raterta, Jocelyn Elijeran at Rica Moreno.

Sa mga tumakbo ng 5K, sina Immuel Camino, Evelon Abutas, Rowel Galvero, Joida Gagnao, Joneza Sustituedo at Emmalyn Taypin naman ang nakakuha ng medalya.

At sa 3K run, sina Erwin Mancao, Michael Gomez, Norbert Cailao, Liza Abutas at si Angel Mendoza ang mga nagwagi.

Ang Manila Bay Clean-Up Run ay proyekto ng Manila Broadcasting Company (MBC) sa pakikipagtulungan ng mga lungsod ng Maynila at Pasay kasama ang suporta ng Symdex-D, Pride detergent, Unique toothpaste, Shield bath soap, Asian Institute of Computer Studies, White Flower Embrocation, Star Wax, Smart dishwashing paste, White Rose Kojic Whitening Soap, Pocari Sweat at Olympic Village.

Ito'y naglunsad sa ika-80 anibersaryo ng DZRH.



Cleaning up Manila

I am a native Manileno, born in Sampaloc and grew up in Paco. My family tree has roots in Paco going far back as the Spanish era.

Our ancestral home used to be in Calle San Antonio, a side street of Calle Penafraancia where families like the Yulos and the Laurels once lived.

But time has taken its toll on the Manila I knew. It has become dirty, dangerous, and simply allowed to rot. I blame the mayors through martial law and the 30 post-EDSA years for abandoning Manila to the dogs.

DEMAND AND SUPPLY



BOO CHANCO

That's why I was frankly surprised that Mayor Isko Moreno on his first day in office demonstrated a feeling I long had about the need to revive and clean up the city.

Divisoria is an easy place to start. It is known for sheer anarchy. The streets have disappeared as sidewalk vendors appropriated the roadways as if they were paying rent to someone.

As it turns out, they were. Someone was collecting money from the vendors. Mayor Isko

revealed that he got an offer of P5 million a day to close his eyes on the anomalous situation. One wonders if his predecessors did.

Mayor Isko went beyond Divisoria... cleaning up Carriedo, Plaza Miranda and its underpass. He said he has just gotten started and alleviated fears he is all *ningas cogon*.

The new mayor is also saying a lot of the right things. He said he is preserving the Arroceros pocket forest, cleaning up Manila Zoo and working with the Department of Tourism to develop Intramuros as a safe tourist district.

Indeed, Mayor Isko wants to develop a "tourism circuit" that would link Intramuros to the National Museum, Rizal Park, Binondo, and other heritage districts in the city. The Mayor also said he plans to work with the Intramuros Administration (IA) to support its "urban regeneration" initiative.

Mayor Isko has all the support he needs from Tourism Secretary Berna Romulo Puyat. Reacting to Mayor Isko's initiatives, Sec Berna said she is happy to hear that from the Mayor.

The Tourism Secretary noted that "Manila is the cradle of Philippine history and culture, and the primary gateway to the country's 7,641 island destinations. We at the DOT share the vision and enthusiasm of Mayor Moreno in providing our international visitors a great first impression of the Philippines as soon as they set foot in Manila.

"There is much to experience in the country's capital city. Aside from Intramuros, we have Rizal Park, Paco Park, Quiapo Church, Sta. Cruz, Binondo, Manila's Chinatown, and University of Sto. Tomas, as well as the traditional and religious festivities," Sec Berna pointed out.

Not one to lose time, the Mayor met with officials from the IA and the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) a week ago to discuss how to revive Manila's cultural heritage sites and boost the tourism sector.

TIEZA, an agency of the Department of Tourism, committed through its chief operating officer Pocholo Paragas, to among others, put new tourist signages in all tourist destinations, including the 47 parks located in Manila. Signages... we surely need those.

As for the IA, administrator Guiller Asido said the agency committed to fix the Lawton-Intramuros underpass by September. Asido also asked Moreno to have businesses operating in the walled city obtain a permit from the IA before the Manila City Hall. Moreno agreed.

Intramuros had always been a big problem for tourism officials. It is the perfect site for a tourism and heritage oriented development. We need something like that to provide a point of interest for our visitors.

But some of the land there are privately owned, whether legally or land-grabbed through the years. The past IA administrator worked hard to also convince squatters in the area to move elsewhere with government assistance, of course.

The best solution is for President Duterte to declare the entire Intramuros district a heritage site to be owned totally by government. Land with valid titles will be expropriated and owners compensated.

This is the only way we can have a coordinated development plan for Intramuros. Right now, there are bodegas and other buildings that do not contribute to the Intramuros heritage story. If President Duterte can do this, he would be leaving behind a concrete achievement that only a leader with political will can deliver.

Turn to B4

DEMAND AND SUPPLY... From B3

The other thing I want to see developed is the recreation of the Nayong Pilipino. President Duterte already thumbed

down the granting of a gambling license to a foreign entity on that site. There should be no hindrance to developing Nayong Pilipino in the Bay Area into what it was originally supposed to be.

The other low hanging fruit is Binondo, one of the world's oldest Chinatowns. I once worked for a bank whose head office was in Calle Rosario near the Binondo Church. We used to try a lot of the small restaurants, the hole in wall types, around the area. It was good, cheap food.

My friend, Ivan Man Dy is singlehandedly trying to whip up interest for Chinatown cuisine with his walking tours. I joined one of those walks and he brought us to places we would otherwise miss.

The Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce should spend some money to clean up the esteros and make sure those esteros are kept clean. There was a time when eating by a Binondo estero was a good experience. Not any more because of the stench.

Binondo is one project Mayor Isko should do with the Chinoy community. Everyone benefits. And yes, can we revive Escolta?

Mayor Isko is like a breath of fresh air. I hope he has staying power. Maybe we can have a competition among the 17 Metro Manila mayors on who can clean up and beautify their cities best. DILG should launch it.

Boo Chanco's e-mail address is bchanco@gmail.com. Follow him on Twitter @boochanco



HOW OGPI KEEPS DIDIPIO'S WATER SAFE AND CLEAN

Can you imagine using clean water that's already been used in a mining operation? In Didipio, Nueva Vizcaya, this is possible because of OceanaGold Philippines' (OG-PI) innovations.

Extractive industries like mining require large amounts of water to process mineral products. OGPI is taking the lead in using clean and sophisticated technologies, making it one of the best in the world in terms of water management.

"In 2016, the company recycled an average of 75% of the process plant's water requirements. We reduced abstraction of water from local catchments and overall operating costs. As of December 2018, our continuous efforts to improve the water recycling rate resulted in an increase of 90%," David Way, OGPI General Manager noted.

The company has a PHP 268 million (USD 6.1 million) water treatment plant (WTP), where water from tailings storage facilities (TSF) go through before being discharged to the receiving water body. This WTP has an operating cost of PHP 6.38 million (USD 128,000) per year and has a treatment capacity of 1,980 m3 per hour.

Non-toxic tailings dam

The Didipio Mine is among the 10% of mining companies in the world that does not use cyanide and mercury in gold processing. Therefore, the resulting tailings stored in the tailings dam is non-toxic and non-hazardous to the surroundings. The design of the mine's Tailing's Storage Facil-

ity (TSF) maintains a robust dam wall capable of containing the mill tailings in a mountainous terrain which experiences rainfall up to 3,000 mm per year.

To meet international engineering standards, the tailing's dam foundation was stripped of all alluvial material down to base rock and keyed in to reduce seepage. Based on the bathymetric survey conducted in June 2018, the actual volume impounded is 12,572,851 cu.m. This is 34.5% of the TSF's design volume capacity which is 36,351,006 cu.m.

Fish that thrives in the TSF is one biological evidence of the water's non-toxicity. There are also migratory birds and wild ducks that prey in the area.

Surface water management

At the mine, separate drain systems were created to intercept mine runoff from haul roads and slopes; drains for clean water runoff from seeps and streams. Mine water is then diverted towards sediment ponds before being discharged into the environment, while clean water is channeled directly towards the river.

OGPI aims to minimize surface water runoff in the Didipio Mine as this reduces pumping costs; decreases risk of slope failure; improves mine safety and production; and maximizes clean water that goes to rivers.

"OGPI is an environmentally and socially responsible community member. We only use world-class technologies to ensure the safety and effi-

ciency of our operations. Rest assured, we will continue to operate with the highest levels of safety and cleanliness, and with the benefit of our community in mind," Way concludes.

In addition, the Didipio Mine's environment team strictly implements washing only on designated vehicle wash bays equipped with oil and water separators. Water quality monitoring and maintenance are being conducted regularly to ensure efficiency of oil and water separator.

Sharing the technology

Recently, OGPI began collaborating with the International River Foundation (IRF) to bring coaching and mentoring to community members, leaders and regulators to help improve water quality in Didipio. It also partnered with the Isabela State University (ISU) and the Quirino State University (QSU) to conduct a study on the Integrated Watershed Management of Addalam Basin and to establish a Biodiversity Reservation Area.

Recognizing the significance of water to its operation and its surrounding communities, the Company is currently constructing the Didipio Water System Project which includes water storage, treatment and supply infrastructure. This will ensure potable water supply to each household and other institutions within the Didipio community. On completion, the system will have the capacity to provide water for up to 11,000 individuals or about 2,400 households.



Palace denies hand in fisherfolk's withdrawal from West Philippine Sea case

MALACAÑANG ON Thursday denied that the government had a hand in the Filipino fishermen's withdrawal from the case before the Supreme Court seeking government's strict implementation of environmental laws and protection of the West Philippine Sea. Referring to Lawyer Jose Manuel "Chel" I. Diokno's accusation that the government influenced the fisherfolk to withdraw their petition for Writ of Kalikasan, Presidential Spokesperson Salvador S. Panelo said it is actually "the other way around." In a briefing at the Palace, Mr. Panelo said, "I think it's the other way around. He should ask himself in the mirror because that question applies to him. Because if we are to believe the affidavit of the fishermen, it's them (lawyers) that influenced or manipulated them (the fisherfolk)," the spokesman said. He continued, "The very reason why the fishermen went to them is because their houses were being demolished and they had a problem not in regard to that, and then they were asked to sign documents, *iyon pala petition na, iyon ang istorya ng mga* (then it turned out to be the petition, that's the story from the) fishermen." — **Arjay L. Balinbin**



Unprecedented climate conditions projected for tropical cities by 2050

WASHINGTON (AFP) — By the year 2050, London's climate will resemble Madrid's today; Paris will be more like Canberra; Stockholm like Budapest and Moscow like Sofia, according to a new analysis published on July 10 that relied on optimistic projections.

The changes will be even more dramatic for the world's major tropical cities like Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta and Singapore, which will experience unprecedented climate conditions, resulting in extreme weather events and intense droughts.

The study was carried out by scientists from ETH Zurich and published in PLOS ONE on Wednesday.

Researchers examined the climate of the world's 520 major cities using 19 variables that reflect variability in temperature and precipitation.

Future projections were estimated using established modeling that was intentionally optimistic, meaning it assumed carbon dioxide emissions would stabilize by the middle of the century through the implementation of green policies, with a mean global temperature increase of 1.4 deg C.

The team then compared climate similarity of current and future cities to one another, and the results make for dire reading.

Across the northern hemisphere, cities in 2050 will resemble places that are over 1,000km farther south towards the equator.

Those closer to the equator won't see drastic warming but will likely have more extremes of drought and rainfall.



A farmer cuts down a failed rice paddy crop due to drought in Aceh province in Indonesia yesterday.



STRATEGIC
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Whale sculptures made from plastic waste recovered from the ocean are on display at the parliament building in Budapest, Hungary on Tuesday. The temporary installation was erected by Greenpeace as part of the international environmental movement Plastic Free July to protest against polluting the world's oceans with plastic.

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#bworldfeed



H Fisk Johnson, Ph.D.

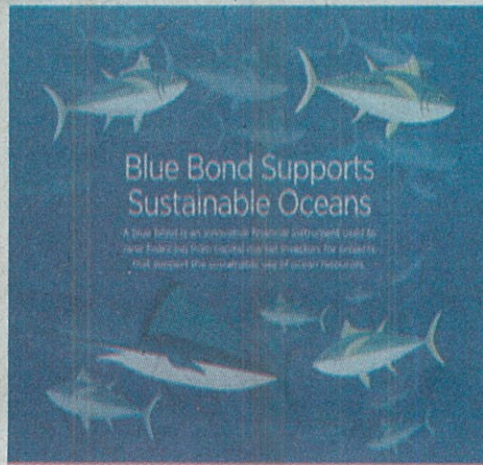
@HFiskJohnson

Delighted to visit the Toplun plastic processor in Manila. Energized by their mission to keep the ocean clean. Love the shirts!



World Bank @WorldBank

What is a Blue Bond?





Daigdig

Earth, patuloy na umiinit

Inasahang sa taong 2050, ang temperatura sa London ay magiging kahalintulad ng klima sa Madrid sa kasalukuyan; naging katulad ng Paris ang Canberra; ang Stockholm sa Budapest at ang temperatura sa Moscow ay maging kagaya ng Sofia, inihayag sa bagong pag-aaral.

Magiging mas malala ang mga pagbabago sa mga tropical city gaya ng Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta, at Singapore which, na makararanas ng kakaibang kondisyon sa klima, na magresulta sa labis na paglamig at pag-init.

AFP

6 usa, patay nang makakain ng plastic

Siyam na usa ang binawian ng buhay makaraang makakain ng mga plastic bag sa Nara Park sa Japan, ayon sa isang wildlife group nitong Lunes. Isinisi ng grupo ang insidente sa paglakas ng turismo sa lugar.

Ayon sa Nara Deer Preservation Foundation, ilang plastic bag at snack packet ang natakpuan sa tiyan ng mga usa na binawian ng buhay noong Marso hanggang Hunyo ngayong taon.

Ang naturang parke ang tahanan ng mahigit 1,000 usa, na minsan ding namamataang palakad-lakad sa kalye habang naghahanap ng pagkaing iniaalok ng mga turista.

Pinagbabawalan ang mga turista na pakainin ng kahit anong pagkain ang mga usa maliban sa crackers, ngunit may mga dayuhang nahuling pinapakain ng ibang klase ng snack ang mga ito.

Dahil dito, maaari umanong pinagkamalan ng mga usa na pagkain ang plastic bag.

Ang mga usa sa parke ay na aabot sa 1,200 ay pinoprotektahan bilang national treasure.

AFP