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IN THE NEWS

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DENR eyes Panay Island as PH center for bamboo production

By **ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ**

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is eyeing the transformation of bamboo-rich Panay Island into the country's "bamboo capital."

DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu said transforming Panay Island as the center for bamboo production will be the agency's major contribution to the National Convergence Initiative for Sustainable Rural Development.

"We will adopt the latest technology in producing lumber and timber out of the bamboo stands. This can usher in inclusive development in the island and

provide income and livelihood not only to the marginal farmers, and promote Panay as the country's bamboo capital," he said.

Cimatu directed DENR-Western Visayas Regional Executive Director Francisco Milla Jr. to conduct an inventory of all existing bamboo plantations on the island, and to fast-track the establishment of bamboo processing plants that would produce engineered bamboo products.

He also instructed Milla to plant bamboo in identified denuded areas around the island.

DENR-Western Visayas had initially identified 60 hectares for the propagation of bamboo in Panay Island, where

more than 6,100 hectares of plantation currently exist.

The agency has committed to plant 13,500 hectares of industrial bamboo species such as bamboo tinik, giant buho, bayog, and bolo by 2020.

To achieve this, some ₱10 million has been initially earmarked in the 2019 budget for the production of planting materials and capacity-building of farmers.

Bamboo is envisioned as a way to address the country's wood requirements as an alternative for high-value forest products. It is one of the species selected for use in reforestation activities under the government's National Greening Program.



Panay eyed center for bamboo production

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is eyeing Panay Island as the center for bamboo production in the country.

This developed as DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu expressed his and the agency's support to the National Convergence Initiative for Sustainable Rural Development (NCI-SRD) when it recently held its third summit in Iloilo City.

As part of the DENR's commitment to the convergence, Cimatu said that with Panay Island being naturally abundant with bamboo, he would "transform (it) as the center for bamboo production and make it the DENR's major contribution to the NCI-SRD."

"We will adopt the latest technology in producing lumber and timber out of the

bamboo stands. This can usher in inclusive development in the island and provide income and livelihood not only to the marginal farmers, and promote Panay as the country's 'bamboo capital,'" he said.

The environment chief then directed DENR Western Visayas Regional Executive Director Francisco Milla Jr. to

conduct an inventory of all existing bamboo plantations on the island, and to fast track the establishment of bamboo processing plants that would produce engineered bamboo products.

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Bamboo is envisioned as one way to address the country's wood requirements as an alternative for high-value forest products. It has been included as selected species to use for reforestation activities under the government's National Greening Program (NGP).

Under the NGP, farmers would be capacitated on scientific methods of harvesting bamboo. They would be entitled to regular salaries while caring for bamboo plantations prior to harvest season.



BAMBOO PRODUCTION PALALAKASIN NG DENR SA PANAY ISLAND

PINILI ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang Panay Island upang gawing sentro ng bamboo production sa bansa.

Ayon kay DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu, nakikita ng ahensiya ang potensiyal ng probinsiya para makagawa ng iba't

ibang produkto na mula sa kawayan kung kaya't dapat palakasin ang pag-nenegosyo ng kawayan sa naturang lugar.

"We will adopt the latest technology in producing lumber and timber out of the bamboo stands.

This can usher in inclusive development in the island and provide income and livelihood not only to the marginal farmers, and promote Panay as the country's 'bamboo capital,'" saad ni Cimatu

Napag-alamang sa inisyal na pag-aaral, natukoy ng DENR Western Visayas na may 60 hectares ng Panay Island ay maaaring ilaan sa pagtatanim ng mga kawayan habang mahigit sa 6,100 hectares naman ay kasalukuyang mayroon ng plantasyon ng bamboo sa lugar.

Kasunod nito, inatasan na ng DENR chief si DENR Western Visayas Regional Executive Director Francisco Milla, Jr. para matukoy ang iba pang lugar na maaaring mapagtamnan ng mga kawayan sa Panay Island gayundin ang pagtatayo ng bamboo processing plants para makabuo ng engineered bamboo products.

Layon din nitong ma-

palakas ang industriya ng kawayan kapalit ng mga kahoy kung saan unti-unting nauubos ang mga punong kahoy sa mga kagubatan bilang suporta na rin sa National Greening Program (NGP) ng pamahalaan.

Sa ilalim ng NGP, mabibigyan ng kabuhayan sa bamboo plantation ang mga magsasaka bilang kanilang kabuhayan sa pamamagitan ng pag-anim ng kawayan na may karampatang regular na suweldo.

Nabatid na target ng DENR na makapagtanim sa 13,500 hectares ng industrial bamboo species katulad ng bamboo tinik, giant buho, bayog at bolo sa taong 2020.

Tinataya namang nasa mahigit P10 milyon ang tinukoy ng kagawaran para sa 2019 budget para sa production ng planting materials at capacity building ng mga magsasaka.

**BENEDICT
ABAYGAR, JR.**



MASAYANG tinanggap ni DENR Usec. Benny Antiporda ang plake ng papuri at pagkilala na iginawad sa kanya ng Police Community Affairs and Development Group (PCADG) dahil sa suportang kanyang ibinibigay sa KALIG-KASAN program nito. Ang guest of honors ng okasyon na sina Sen. Bong Go at Sen. Bato dela Rosa ang nag-abot ng plake kay Antiporda.



Sa pagliligtas sa kalikasan



DENR USEC ANTIPORDA PINURI NG PNP

Sa pagliligtas sa kalikasan

DENR USEC ANTIPORDA PINURI NG PNP

PINURI at binigyan ng pagkilala ng Philippine National Police si Department of Environment and Natural Resources Undersecretary Benny Antiporda dahil sa ibinibigay niyang suporta sa "Kalig-Kasan" program ng pulisya.

Iginawad kay Usec. Antiporda ang pagkilala sa ika-27 founding anniversary celebration ng Police Community Affairs and Development Group sa Multi-purpose Center, Camp Crame, Quezon City kamakalawa.

Ang kaibigan niyang si Sen. Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go na nagsilbing panauhing pandagal ng

okasyon, ang nag-abot ng plake kay Antiporda.

Sa kanyang pahayag, sinabi ni Sen. Go na binabati niya si Usec. Antiporda sa ibinigay na papuri ng PNP. Anang senador, ang mga kagaya ni Usec. Antiporda na may tunay na nararapat lamang na kilalanin at parangalan.

Ang "Kalig-Kasan" program na layong iligtas ang ating kalikasan sa pagsama-sama at pagtutulungan ng mga pulis ay sinimulan ng PCADG sa pangunguna ni General Rodel Sermonia sa panahong sinisimulan din ng DENR na ligin ang isla ng Boracay.

Sa simula ay walang na-

niniwala sa adhikain ng PCADG at ni Gen. Sermonia na maging ehemplo ang mga tauhan ng PNP sa pagbabantay sa kalinisan at mailigtas ang kalikasan pero sinuportahan ito ni Usec. Antiporda.

Naging bahagi si Usec. Antiporda sa pagsusulong ng programa hanggang sa marami na ring lumahok at naniwala sa adbokasiya ni Gen. Sermonia.

Ayon kay Usec. Antiporda, naniniwala kasi siya na malaking tulong ang ating mga pulis sa pangunguna sa pag-iingat at pagliligtas sa ating kalikasan kaya lalo niyang itinulak at sinuportahan ang programa.

"Mapakikinabangan lamang natin ang kalikasan kung ligtas ito. Ang mga pulis ang ating tagapagpatupad ng batas hinggil sa kung paano natin iligtas ang ating kapaligiran. Palaging mag-katuwang ng PNP ang DENR sa pagpapatupad ng mga alituntunin para magkaroon ng katuparan ang maaliwalas at ligtas na kalikasan," ang pahayag ni Antiporda.

Bukod sa Boracay Island, katuwang ng DENR sa pamumuno ni Sec. Roy Cimatu, ang PNP sa ilalim naman ni Gen. Oscar Albayalde maging sa isinasagawang rehabilitasyon sa Manila Bay, sa

Pasig River at sa mga estero sa Metro Manila.

Lubos ang kagalakan ni Sec. Cimatu dahil sumusuporta na rin sa kanilang ginagawang paglilinis at pagliligtas sa kalikasan ang mga lokal na pamahalaan.

Sa kanyang panig, sinabi ni Sen. Go na bilang senador ay patuloy niyang susuportahan ang PNP sa pamamagitan ng pag-aakda ng mga batas na nakatutok sa kapakanan ng mga pulis. Naging panauhin din sa okasyon si Sen. Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa at nagsabing hindi niya iwanan ang PNP lalo ngayong siya'y nasa Senado na. **RNT**



PAGPUPULONG PARA SA FORESTRY COOPERATION. Sa kanyang pambungad na pananalita sa naganap na 22nd Meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Senior Officials on Forestry (ASOF) noong Hulyo 18, 2019 sa Makati City, ipinahayag ni Department of Environment and Natural resources (DENR) OIC Assistant Secretary for Staff Bureaus and Biodiversity Management Bureau Director in concurrent capacity Ricardo Calderon ang paglago ng forestry sa mga bansang kasapi sa Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Binigyang diin ni Calderon na ang deforestation at ang pagkawala ng biodiversity sa Timog-Silangang Asya ay isang malaking hamon sa mga pinuno ng ASOF at dialogue partners nito sa pagpapatupad ng strategic direction and action plans sa pambansang antas.



DENR KATUWANG ANG LOKAL NA PAMAHALAAN NG COMPOSTELA VALLEY SA REHABILITASYON NG NABOC RIVER

MAGIGING magkatuwang ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at ang lokal na pamahalaan ng Compostela Valley para sa isasagawang rehabilitasyon ng Naboc River na matatagpuan sa Barangay Mt. Diwata, Compostela Valley na naging madumi dahil na rin sa mga latak na nagmula sa pagmimina.

Noong Hulyo 17, nilagdaan ang Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) sa pagitan nina DENR OIC Assistant Secretary for Field Operations-Eastern Mindanao at kasalukuyan ding Region 11 Executive Director Ruth Tawantawan at Compostela Valley

Governor Jayvee Tyron Uy sa opisina ng DENR Region 11 sa Davao City.

Sa kanyang mensahe matapos ang MOA signing, sinabi ni Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu na huhukayin ang ilog (dredging and desilting) upang matanggal ang dumi dulot ng pagmimina sa naturang lugar. Sa pamamagitan nito ay maisasaayos ang daloy ng tubig at matatanggal ang mga dumi na sanhi ng polusyon.

"We will not allow this river to die and we will relentlessly exhaust all means to bring it back to life, just as what we have successfully done in Boracay," sabi pa ni Envi-



ANG INYONG LINGKOD

DR. HILDA C. ONG

ronment Secretary Cimatu.

"At the same time, never again shall we allow irresponsible mining operations to thrive in the area," dagdag pa nito kasabay ng pagsasabi na ang rehabilitasyon ng Naboc River ay isa sa kanyang pryoridad na programa bilang kalihim ng DENR.

Sinabi pa ni Cimatu, na sa nakalipas na 25 taon ay naging catchment basin ang ilog ng mga nakalalasang kemikal mula sa gold mining at iba pang gawain ng mga tao sa Mt. Diwalwal. Dahil din sa abusadong paggamit ng ilog ay nalason ito ng kemikal partikular na ng mercury. Mayroon na rin itong fecal coliform

o dumi ng tao at hayop

Ang Naboc River ay nagmumula sa itaas na bahagi ng Mt. Diwata at dumadaloy sa anim na barangay sa mga munisipalidad ng Monkayo at Compostela. Kabilang dito ang mga barangay ng Babag, Mt. Diwata, Naboc, Tubo-Tubo, Upper Ulip at Mangyan.

Ayon pa kay Cimatu, ang Mt. Diwalwal ay naging biktima ng kasakiman at irresponsableng pagmimina ng mga tao sa naturang lugar sa loob ng dalawang dekada.

"The system goes green and in full swing. I have no doubt we will succeed in the same way we succeeded in rehabilitating Boracay," sabi ni Cimatu matapos ang paglagda sa MOA.

Sa kanyang State of the Nation Address noong 2017, hinikayat ni Pangulong Rodrigo Roa Duterte ang mga mambabatas na bisitahin ang isang ilog sa Diwalwal, bilang pagtukoy sa Naboc River, na dating napakalinis ngunit naging kulay itim na.



(Photo taken from the facebook of Gov. Jayvee Tyron Uy)



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EPEKTO NG CLOSURE NG 4 EL NIDO BARANGAYS MINALIIT

MAGIGING maliit lamang ang epekto ng panukalang pagpapasara sa ilang bahagi ng El Nido, Palawan sa turismo ng munisipalidad, ayon sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

“Well, of course, maapektuhan ‘yan if in case na masara nga... but hindi naman ganoon kalaki unlike Boracay kasi ‘yung Boracay kung saan ‘yung project na dapat linisin doon din mismo ‘yung swimming area, dito [El Nido] hindi kasi dito lang ‘yung loading area going to islands,” wika ni Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda.

“Kasi ang pinakabuhay ng El Nido is the island hopping,” paliwanag ni Antiporda.

Ang pagpapasara sa apat na barangays sa El Nido - Masagana, Buena Suerte, Corong Corong, at Maligaya - ay bunga ng napakataas na lebel ng fecal coliform sa outfalls ng nasabing mga lugar.

Ayon kay Antiporda, maglalabas sina Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat, at Interior Secretary Eduardo Año ng desisyon sa rekomendasyon na isara ang naturang mga barangay para sa swimming activities sa Agosto 1.



El Nido, isasara o hindi?

ILALABAS sa Agosto 1 ng El Nido Inter-Agency Rehabilitation Task Force Ang desisyon kung isasara o hindi ang ilang bahagi ng El Nido sa Palawan.

“Every angle will be considered, first of all, the economic impact, the tourism impact and of course, the environmental impact,” ani Undersecretary Benny Antiporda ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa “Saturday Forum at Annabel’s Kapihan sa Quezon City.”

Ang task force ay kinabibilangan ng DENR, Department of Tourism at Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). Binuo ito upang pag-aralan ang sitwasyon

sa tourist spot, na ayon sa mga lokal at banyagang turista ay mayroong “poor water quality.”

Sumulat na ang DILG kina Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu at Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat upang isara ang Bacuit Bay at Corong-Corong Outfall dahil sa dami ng algae.

“However, the task force would still have to discuss whether the four outfalls, which includes three in Bacuit Bay and one in Corong-Corong, would be closed temporarily.

As a temporary precaution, we have asked the help of the Philippine National Police to keep swimmers out of areas with high levels of coliform,” aniya. — *Inquirer*



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Another power battle

Locked in a protracted legal battle to take-over the power distribution assets of 97-year-old Panay Electric Co. (PECO), the same group that was able to secure a congressional franchise to supply power in Iloilo City and three other municipalities is now setting its sights on another electric company, this time based in Palawan.

It will be recalled that MORE Power, owned by businessman Enrique Razon, earlier secured a congressional franchise to distribute electricity in Iloilo City and nearby areas. However, it has yet to secure a certificate of public convenience (CPCN) from the Energy Regulatory Commission and is currently battling a case filed by PECO preventing MORE from expropriating the former's assets.

HIDDEN AGENDA



**MARY ANN
LL. REYES**

In the meantime, PECO was allowed to continue distributing electricity by the ERC and Department of Energy in the interim until all legal issues are resolved, including the expropriation case filed by MORE before the Iloilo Regional Trial Court to acquire PECO's assets for P480 million.

According to reports, during the last Congress, House Bill 8829 was filed by Palawan Reps. Frederick Abueg and Gil Acosta for the grant of a 25-year congressional franchise to MORE Reedbank Corp., a subsidiary of Prime Metroline Holdings Corp. where Razon sits both as board chairman and chief executive officer, to distribute electricity in Palawan.

Although the bill was not acted upon during the 17th Congress, it is expected to be refiled when the 18th Congress opens its sessions this month. The bill reportedly has the full backing of Palawan Governor Jose Alvarez and other provincial officials.

At present, it is 45-year-old Palawan Electric Cooperative (Paleco) that has the franchise to distribute electricity in the province. But Razon's group is expected to encounter less difficulty in taking over Paleco which had been included in the list of some 17 electric cooperatives nationwide which are underperforming, and financially and technically distressed.

Paleco is a non-stock, non-profit electric cooperative established in 1974. Its last registration with the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) in 2010 gave it a term of another 50 years while its franchise as a power distributor will expire in 2029, according to its board chairman, Jeffrey Tan-Endriga.

Paleco's service area includes Puerto Princesa City and the towns of Aborlan, Narra, Espanola, Brookes Point, Bataraza, Quezon, Rizal, Balabac Island, Roxas, San Vicente, Taytay, El Nido, and the islands of Dumaran, Araceli, Cuyo, Magsaysay and Cagayancillo.

According to reports, Paleco is owned by its residential and commercial customers who have been receiving meager dividends.

These same customers are questioning why Reps. Abueg and Acosta or the provincial chief executive never bothered to consult their constituents prior to the filing of the bill. It is expected that just like the owners of PECO, those behind Paleco will also exercise their legal remedies to stop the MORE group from taking over.

The reports also revealed that the bill was filed on the same month that Department of Energy (DOE) chief Alfonso Cusi sent a letter to Congress, calling for the revocation of the franchises of 17 existing electric cooperatives in the country, include Paleco's, due to underperformance as well as financial and technical problems. Cusi reportedly later withdrew his position and instead approved the creation of Task Force Palawan Power to conduct a comprehensive audit of Paleco.

While Paleco's fate appears to be sealed already, PECO's is a different story.

PECO has criticized reports saying that the President plans to intervene to make sure that MORE is allowed to expropriate PECO's assets.

PECO administrative officer Marcelo Cacho said in a media interview that reports that no less than Duterte plans to ask the Supreme Court to not use the TRO mode to prevent MORE from expropriating PECO's assets are not true.

Cacho said while the Chief Executive statement in his 2017 State-of-the-Nation Address cautioned the SC on the issuance of a TRO against the government's reproductive health program and in the implementation of vital government projects, many of which were delayed to the detriment of public service and convenience due to the issuance of TROs by certain courts, nowhere in that speech did the President say that even on private matters where the crucial issue of justice and legality are involved, he wants the courts to abstain from protecting the constitutional rights of any of the involved parties.

Not so hidden agenda

SKAL International Makati chairman Robert Lim Joseph and president Jaime Bautista announced the 2019 SKAL Tourism Personality Awardees in connection with their 38th Founding Anniversary celebration and 29th SKAL Tourism Personality Awards on Aug. 22 at the New World Hotel Makati.

According to Bautista, former Philippine Airlines president, this annual prestigious awards are given to persons who gave their utmost services to promote and develop tourism industry.

Awardees this year include **Philippine STAR** president and CEO Miguel Belmonte who will be conferred the SKAL Star Legacy Award, Emmanuel Gonzalez of Plantation Bay Resort and Spa (food tourism award), Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu for eco tourism, Interior and Local Governments Secretary Eduardo Año and Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo Puyat for eco-tourism, Suzie Moya Benitez of Bayanihan (heritage and cultural tourism), Corregidor Foundation Inc. chair and CEO Cynthia Carrion for historical tourism development, Pampanga Vice Governor Lilia Pineda for domestic tourism development, Globallink MP Events CEO Patrick Lawrence Tan for exhibition tourism, SM Hotels and Convention president and chair Elizabeth Sy (hotel awards), *Manila Bulletin's* Arnel Patawaran for print media, PAL's Dina May Flores (airline category), Kamia Bay's Michelle Tiotangco (resort category), MAD Travel's Rafael Dionisio for cultural and ecological adventure tourism, *Eat Bulaga's* Ms. Millenium Philippines for TV program segment and Jaime Bautista (SKAL leadership award category).

SKAL is a professional organization of tourism leaders around the world, promoting global tourism and friendship and is the only international group uniting travel and tourism executives at the local, national, regional and international levels to discuss and pursue topics of common interest.

SKAL International has over 15,000 members in 356 clubs in 80 countries. Its general secretariat is based in Torremolinos, Spain.

For comments, e-mail at mareyes@philstarmedia.com



The truth about coastal clean-ups

The Philippines ranked first among the countries that joined in international coastal clean-up drives, according to the Ocean Conservancy Report in 2018.

Over 200,000 volunteers from the country collected more than 230,000 kilograms of wastes from beaches and waterways or equivalent to over 1,200 kilometers of trash.

In 2017, nearly one million food wrappers were found in our shorelines, making it the most common coastal trash in the country today, while other common items found include plastic grocery bags, straws, stirrers, and takeaway containers.

Waste management remains a huge challenge in the country, especially in urban areas like Metro Manila. Mounds of trash wash up on our shores after every typhoon, while plastics and other non-biodegradable wastes block our drainage systems that cause deadly flashfloods.

TINY TRASH, BIG IMPACT

Convenient, low cost and durable, plastics are a wonder material introduced in the 20th century. Despite its benefits, however, plastics take centuries to rot and they remain in our environment for much longer than their intended use.

An endangered *pawikan* or a sea turtle was recently found dead in Quezon province with plastic garbage lodged inside its throat. The same report by the Ocean Conservancy showed that plastic pollution in our marine ecosystem not only choke and entangle sea life, but also causes various diseases among coral reefs.

Larger items break apart into tiny bits and pieces called microplastics until they become small enough for many wildlife to mistake them for food. Often colorful and tempting, many marine and bird species mistake plastic for food and end up starving to death with a fake full stomach.

It is with increasing concern that many of the fish that we now eat may also contain plastics and its toxins.

HOW DO COASTAL CLEAN-UPS HELP?

Various programs are carried out by the government and other civil society groups to help curb the impact of our



Coastal clean-up drives aspire volunteers to change personal habits.

waste problem.

But with tons of garbage polluting our oceans, do coastal clean-ups by individuals really make a difference?

At the root of the waste problem is the lack of public awareness. A coastal clean-up drive exposes the participant to how the trash we dispose of everyday impact the ocean we share together, igniting consciousness and inspiring changes in behavior (i.e. consumption, segregation, etc.).

For instance, the sight of hundreds of plastic straws along the shores would hopefully encourage the use of other alternatives, or the practice of "refuse." Collecting different generations of shampoo sachets would hopefully push individuals to buy bigger bottles to reduce waste, while recording unusual and big items like luggage or foam mattresses brings the importance of reusing and recycling.

Coastal clean-up drives intend to bring people closer to the waste problem in order to stem it at the source. More than collecting trash that litter our coastlines, it aspires to change personal habits.

By influencing the use of less disposables by consumers, demand for them will also drop and prompt industries to find alternatives. Change starts with the individual and small continued acts can create a ripple effect.

To organize a coastal clean-up activity for your group or company, send an e-mail to partnerships@haribon.org.ph or call (02) 421-1209.



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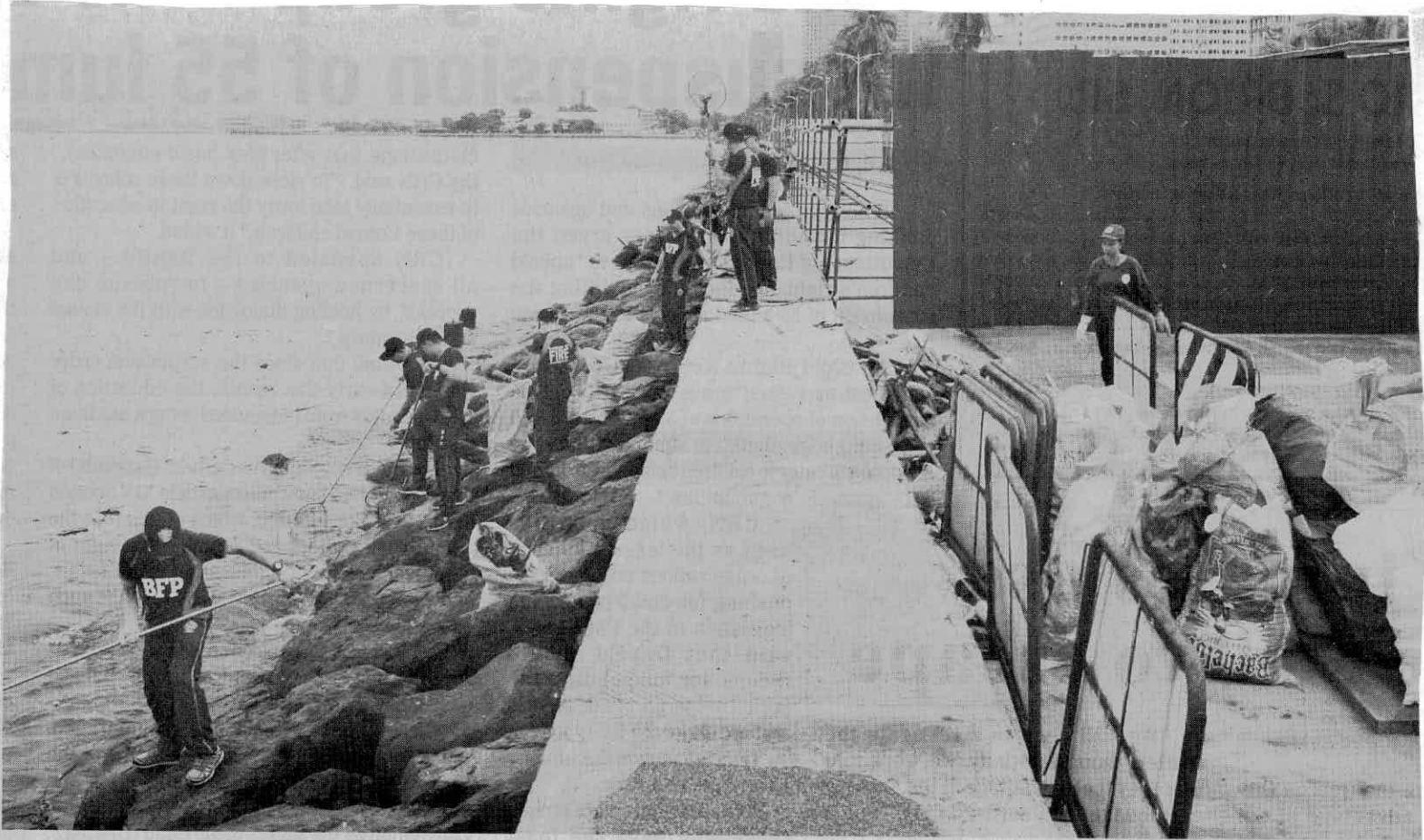
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Members of the Bureau of Fire Protection remove trash at the breakwater of Manila Bay during a clean-up operation, Saturday. (Mark Balmores)



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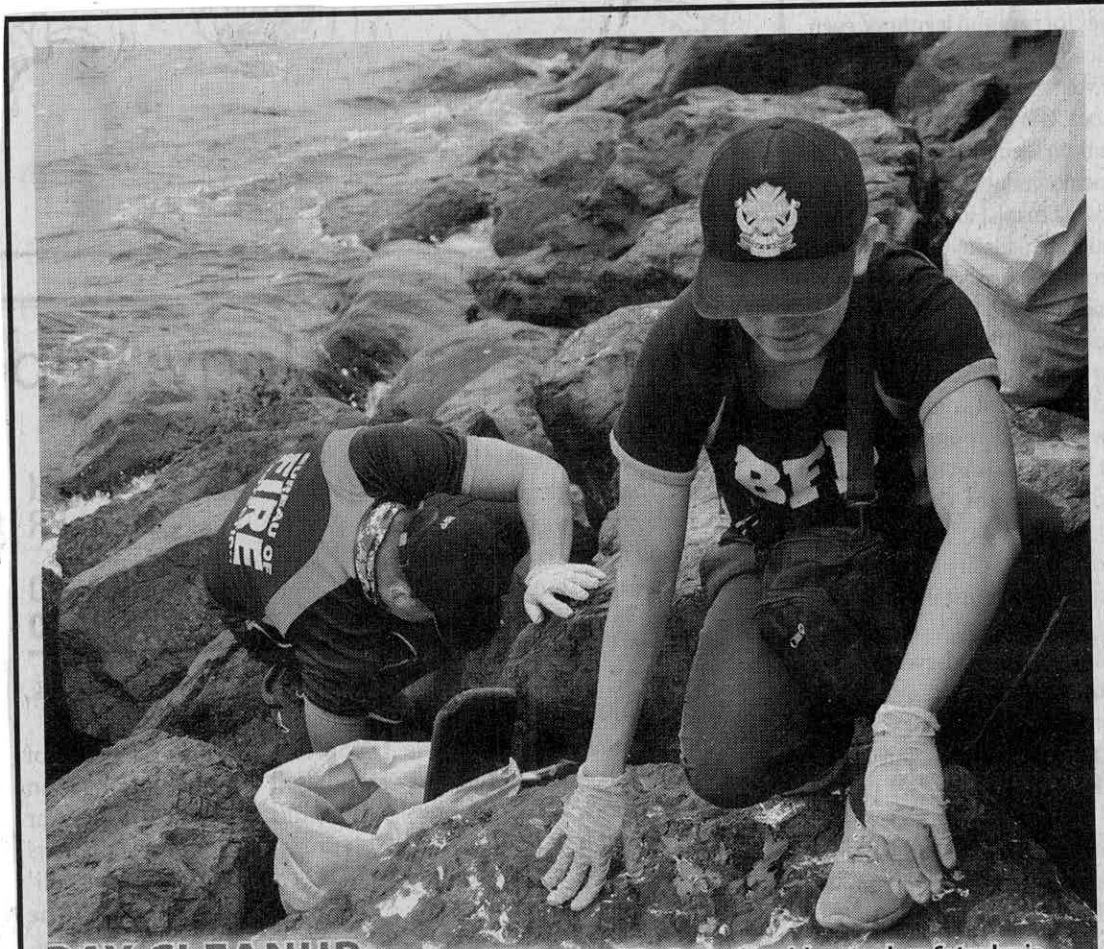
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BAY CLEANUP Personnel of the Bureau of Fire Protection pick up trash on Saturday in Manila Bay as they participate in the cleanup drive, part of efforts to save the bay.
PHOTO BY ENRIQUE AGCAOILI



CLEAN-UP OPERATION Tulung-tulong na nilinis ng mga tauhan ng Bureau of Fire Protection ang dalampasigan ng Manila Bay sa ikinasang clean-up operation, sa Manila City, kahapon.

MARK BALMORES



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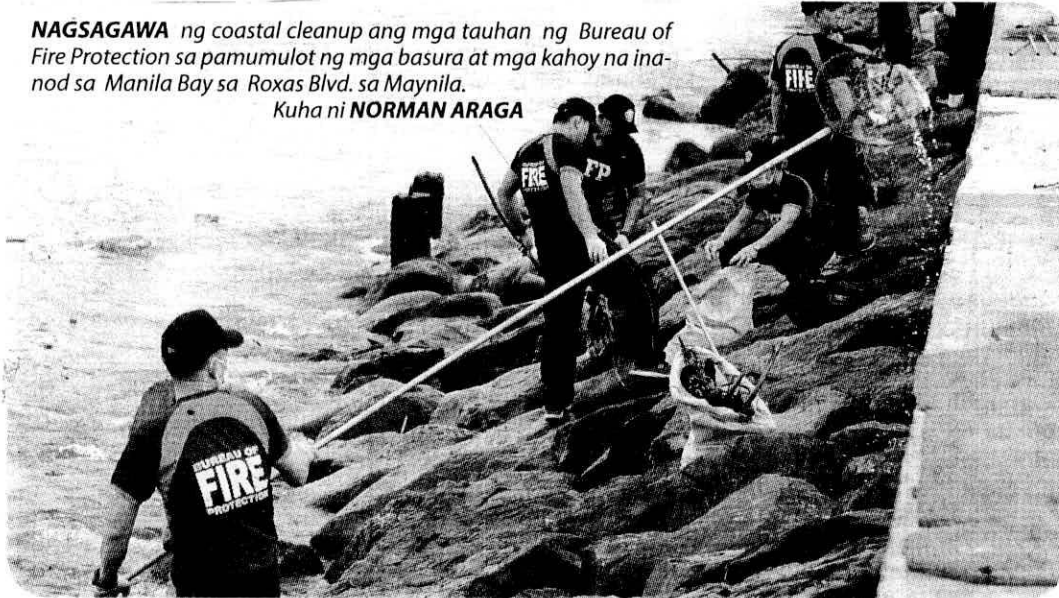
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NAGSAGAWA ng coastal cleanup ang mga tauhan ng Bureau of Fire Protection sa pamumulot ng mga basura at mga kahoy na inatod sa Manila Bay sa Roxas Blvd. sa Maynila.

Kuha ni **NORMAN ARAGA**





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Baguio City to relocate night market

By **ZALDY COMANDA**

BAGUIO CITY - The City Engineering Office and the City Environment and Parks Management Office (CEPMO) is now tasked to immediately identify the possible relocation site of the night market area to ensure the safety and security of the night market vendors and the public patronizing the nightly activity of the city.

Mayor Benjamin Magalong, who ordered the relocation, said what was important to him was that the vendors adhere to the prevailing health standards in the conduct of their trade aside from them being assured of their safety through a secure area that will serve as the permanent site for the night market operations.

He recognized the contribution of the night market operation in the generation of income for the over 1,000 vendors participating in the night market activity that is now over a decade old. A portion of Harrison road is closed every night for this night market operations that has become popular among visitors.

City Building Official Engr. Nazita Bañez claimed the

public works department already sent the required notice to the city for the relocation of the ongoing night market operations along Harrison road as the same is a national road where such activities are actually prohibited with the temporary closure of the road for the said purpose.

Magalong said, investigation was also underway on the alleged anomalies in the distribution of slots for interested night market vendors where some presidents of associations of night market vendors have been investigated for such illegal activities in the allocation of slots in the night market area.

He gave concerned offices of the city government two weeks to prepare the plans on the proposed relocation site of the night market within the concrete portion of the Baguio Athletic Bowl wherein the same will be presented to the members of the local legislative body for appropriate action.

City Accountant Antonio Tabin disclosed the night market operations generate some P14-million to P16-million income to the city coffers from the collection of the regulatory fees from the vendors.



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**BERNADETTE
ROMULO-PUYAT**

TELLING OUR *Stories* SUN, SAND AND SUSTAINABILITY

EVERYTIME I go abroad, there's always someone who can't wait to tell me about Boracay. This was even before I was appointed Secretary to the Department of Tourism. It usually happens after they find out I'm Filipino.

It's then that they share a favorite memory of visiting the island. Their tales and anecdotes, some going as far back as the early 1980s, are always told with such warmth and nostalgia that you can already anticipate the inevitable conclusion of stories like these: that Boracay, as they knew it, is gone.

Such is the fate of most Edens. At least in the stories we've been told and that we tell.

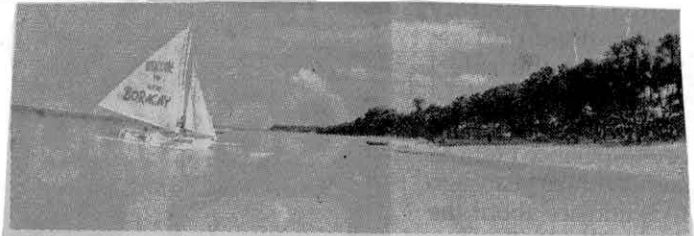
Things have changed though since we closed Boracay last year to rehabilitate the island. Since then, the stories have started to take on a different tone, one of hope and excitement to visit again. It is no longer a paradise lost.

In the span of one year, Boracay has gone from a toxic environmental disaster-in-the-making to the country's shining example of sustainable tourism. At every tourism event that I attend, the Philippines is applauded and recognized for how we've handled the rehabilitation. During the 22nd ASEAN Tourism Ministers Meeting in Vietnam last January, overtourism was the main issue. Popular destinations like Phuket and Bali are also coping with the effects of poor sewage management and unregulated construction, much like it was in Boracay before the closure. We didn't need to say we were already implementing the necessary policies and measures, they knew we were already. While other countries are still focusing on cleanup, the Philippines has set the carrying capacity of the island and enforced the easement rule, which prevents any structures from being set up 30 meters from the highest tide measured inland.

If there was something I kept hearing, it was the hope that other countries would do the same.

I am always asked how we were able to do it and actually close an island paradise during its peak season.

My answer is always the same. You just have to do it.



Boracay after it reopened last year, following a six-month closure to rehabilitate it.

After all, tourism isn't just about marketing our spectacular landscapes and driving up the number of international arrivals. It's also about making difficult decisions that may be unpopular in the short term but with far-reaching benefits. That takes a lot of political will as well as cooperation between agencies.

In the case of Boracay, we at the Department of Tourism worked closely with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources headed by Secretary Roy Cimatu, the Department of the Interior and Local Government headed by Secretary Eduardo Año, and the Department of Public Works and Highways headed by Secretary Mark Villar. Our orders were clear and everyone worked together to follow them.

That's the only way you can do it.

But tourism isn't just about Boracay. It is an entire industry that has developed provinces, built cities, created businesses and provided jobs.

Tourism spurs development of rural areas and the countryside. Tiny islands in our archipelago progress because of infrastructure development. Imagine, many areas that were isolated from the rest of the country are now places worth traveling thousands of miles for. The residents of these far-flung areas no longer have to bear the hardship of having under-developed connectivity, inadequate power, and the lack of health and safety facilities. More importantly, they now have ensured livelihoods that can feed families and put children to school.

That said, tourism should also play a role in preserving local culture. Heritage sites like our Baroque churches in the Ilocos region or natural wonders like the Cordillera rice terraces have been spared from urbanization through cultural tourism. In the Visayas, Silay City has distinctive and well-preserved heritage houses that



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Telling our Stories

are a link to our colonial past. Homeowners have converted these into museums or bed and breakfast accommodations that showcase our history and prevent our important heritage structures from being destroyed. Even traditions such as the T'nalak weaving traditions of the T'boli people of Lake Sebu in South Cotabato continue to thrive because of government support and tourism.

Looking to the future, there are many more plans that I want to implement and programs I want to see take effect.

Farm tourism is one of them. R.A. 10816, also known as the Farm Tourism Development Act of 2016, institutionalizes the farm tourism programs of the government and opens new perspectives for inclusive and sustainable agricultural and rural development.

It's a program that's very close to my heart.

When I was working as an undersecretary for the Department of Agriculture, I spent years traveling around the country, talking to farmers

and hearing about how their struggle to do one of the nation's most important jobs. Spend a day with a farmer and you will begin to appreciate how much it takes to feed a nation. It makes you grateful for the food on your plate and the workers who till the land. Besides giving farmers much needed additional income streams, farm tourism will allow the rest of us to truly appreciate their work and how much it contributes to our entire nation.

If there's anything that tourism can really do it's to engender and evoke empathy and compassion. That's something I learned early on, from my father. He traveled the world long before he left his hometown, Camiling, Tarlac. Going to the school library, he would read about other places and their people. My dad read so much that by the time he did get to fly to other countries he would know more about it than its citizens. But he always encouraged us to travel if we could.

Being there, wherever that is, completed the story.

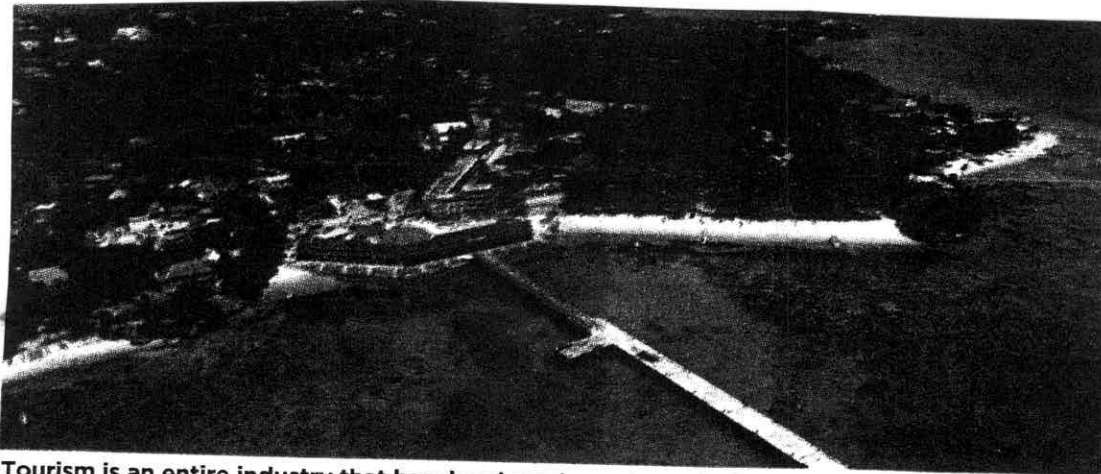
He told me that visiting other countries and experiencing different cultures makes you truly appreciate how diverse and complex the world

is, yet also makes you see how similar we all are.

The same can be said of our own archipelago.

We are a diverse culture. That's something we don't always know what to make of, but we should celebrate it. It's that diversity that makes us different, it's what sets us apart, and makes us more fun.

Now that's the story we can tell.



Tourism is an entire industry that has developed provinces, built cities, created businesses and provided jobs.

Photo by WALTER BOLLOZOS

(Berna Romulo-Puyat was appointed Secretary of Tourism in 2018. She joined government in 2005 and, prior to her appointment, served as undersecretary for the Department of Agriculture. Her father is the statesman Alberto G. Romulo.)



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The Pasig River: Our nation's lifeline



**GEORGE
DE LA RAMA**

In the 1990s, many of us bore witness and have been part of a crusade to save the Pasig River, one of the most important natural legacies of Mother Earth to us situated in the heart of Metro Manila.

During that era, you must have sang the hit song *Anak ng Pasig* (Child of Pasig) popularized by Geneva Cruz of the group Smokey Mountain and used its famous line *Anak ng Pasig naman kayo!* in several instances. Years later, you also probably donated a portion of your savings for the national fund-raising movement *Piso Para sa Pasig* (Peso for the Pasig) which began in 1995. You may have also participated in the marathons for the benefit

of the Pasig River which took place in the years after.

Do you remember why we did those? Well, it was actually the decade when our Pasig River was declared biologically dead and reached a state where no living creature can survive its waters.

How did the Pasig River end like that?

Unfortunately, rapid urbanization and industrialization over the previous decades coupled with poor urban planning and failure to enforce environmental laws resulted to the gradual demise of the once pristine and beautiful river.

The Pasig River mirrors our country's rich and noble history and played a pivotal role in many of the historic events that shaped our people and nation. Like many great civilizations which started by the river such as Egypt on the Nile, Mesopotamia along the Tigris and Euphrates, China by the Yellow River, among many oth-

ers, the Pasig River also follows this riverine tradition as it is considered to have given birth to the early civilization of Manila. Accordingly, the early settlers of Manila came to be known as *Tagalog* because they were *taga-ilog* or those who live from or by the river.

Over the centuries, the Pasig River and its tributaries proved to be the most important means of transport and became the lifeline of the city as well as the center of economic activity, development, cultural, and religious exchange. Pasig River made Manila famous worldwide as it connected to the western world via the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade which lasted for 250 years (1565 to 1815). Structures such as bridges, churches, ports, government offices, communities, and edifices were erected by the banks of the Pasig River.

Prior to large-scale development, the Pasig River was compared to the Grand Canal of Venice due to its serpented and clear waterways. However, the turn of the century saw the Pasig River neglected by many and becoming a dumping ground of waste and pollution.

Hence, on January 6, 1999, the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) was created by virtue of Executive Order No. 54, as amended by Executive Order No. 65, as the President's flagship project for the environment to ensure that the Pasig River is rehabilitated to a condition that can support and sustain aquatic life and resources, and be conducive for transport, recreation, and tourism.



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The Pasig River: our Nation's lifeline

Thankfully, the PRRC led the harmonization of the multi-faceted and comprehensive rehabilitation of the 27-kilometer Pasig River which include quality projects, programs and activities in easement recovery, riverbanks development, waste and water quality management, and public awareness.

After 20 years, PRRC and its partners have already accomplished so much for the once dead Pasig River. Almost 20,000 informal settler families (ISFs) have been resettled to safe and decent houses. More than 41,000 linear meters of environmental preservation areas have been developed in the form of linear parks, walkways, and greenbelts, and the Pasig River Ferry Service was revived in 2007 to enhance east-west connectivity. In addition, 17 of the 47 identified tributaries have already been rehabilitated. More than 30 million kilograms of solid waste have been diverted from the Pasig River and its waterways through daily clean-up since 2012.

Biodiversity in Pasig River has already returned. Now, it has 118 species of trees and vegetation, 39 species of birds, eight species of fish, and several aquatic plants.* PRRC's multimedia information, education, and communication (IEC) campaigns have transformed communities into environmentally responsible and law-abiding citizens.

These accomplishments have significantly improved the lives of the people in terms of health, environment, peace and order, economy, and tourism based on impact assessment studies and led to the Philippines' Pasig River being conferred with the inaugural Asia Riverprize award by the International River Foundation (IRF) and sponsored by the Australian Water Partnership (AWP), on October 16, 2018 in Sydney, Australia during the 21st International Riversymposium (IRS), besting China's Yangtze River.

Our Ilog Pasig is no longer just a thing of the past. Now, our Pasig River is an award winning river and posts a promising future which will also help the larger ecosystems of the Manila Bay and the Laguna Lake, thanks to the inspiring restoration efforts and impressive accomplishments we have undertaken together over the years.

Winning the first ever Asia Riverprize is very important to all of us because it validates the great things we have done for the Pasig River and inspires us to continue the good fight.

We wish to extend our sincerest gratitude to all our stakeholders since Day 1 and most especially to former First Lady Amelita 'Ming' Ramos for teaching us that every *Piso Para sa Pasig* counts; to former PRRC Chairperson Regina Paz 'Gina' Lopez who enlightened us that through *Kapit Bisig Para sa Ilog Pasig* (Linking Arms for the Pasig River), the impossible can be possible; and to our very own Executive Director Jose Antonio 'Pepeton' Goitia who tells us that the key to the success of the rehabilitation programs is our *Puso Para sa Ilog Pasig* (Love for the Pasig River).

This is the compelling story of our Pasig River — a river which refuses to die. It will continue to live for as long as we commit to save and protect it. There is a long way to go, but with your continued support, our dream of a clean and alive Pasig River is within reach!

*"Biodiversity Assessment of Pasig River and its Tributaries: Ecosystems Approach 2008-2009" study by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (DENR – ERDB).

George Oliver G. De La Rama is the head of Public Information, Advocacy and Tourism Division of the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC). He has been in the government service since 2016 and also acts as PRRC's spokesperson, and editor-in-chief of the Commission's publications.



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SSS, DENR INK DEAL FOR 'JOB ORDER' STAFF

THE state-run Social Security System and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources recently signed a Memorandum of Agreement formalizing the SSS membership of 450 job order workers at the DENR's central office.

Under the agreement, job order workers will be registered in SSS as self-employed members, while the DENR, as a collecting partner, will remit their monthly SSS contributions through a salary-deduction scheme as part of the KaltaSSS-Collect Program.

SSS president and chief executive officer Aurora C. Ignacio expressed optimism in the partnership that will

not only increase SSS membership but also provide more workers with social security protection.

"Government job order workers are not covered by the Government Service Insurance System due to their employment status. Through the KaltaSSS-Collect program, they will be covered by the SSS, and avail themselves of the System's benefits in times of contingencies," Ignacio said.

As SSS members, they will be entitled to benefit programs being offered by the pension fund in times of sickness, maternity, retirement, disability, death, and funeral provided

that they meet the qualifying conditions of each benefit.

Aside from benefit programs, the pension fund also offers loan programs such as salary, calamity, housing, educational, and pension loans.

"It is important for a worker to have social security so that in times of contingencies that result in loss of income or financial burden, the worker will receive assistance. This motivates us to encourage more workers to be members of the SSS," Ignacio said.

The SSS and DENR's agreement will be replicated in other DENR regional offices and branches nationwide.



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Think tank seeks EO to expedite renewable energy dev't

By DANESSA RIVERA

An environmental think tank is urging President Duterte to issue an executive order (EO) that will lay down the framework to fasttrack the country's renewable energy development and to reduce dependence on coal.

Energy and environmental think tank Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development (CEED) cited the need to issue an EO since current energy

policies largely favor coal, which is contrary to Duterte's pronouncement in his State of the Nation Address (SONA).

"We urge the President to formalize in an EO the marching orders he gave during his speech to provide clear policy directions to the DOE and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)," CEED executive director Gerry Arances said.

During his SONA, Duterte said the government recog-

nizes the urgent need to ensure the sustainability and availability of resources and the development of alternative sources of power.

"In this regard, I trust that Secretary Cusi shall fasttrack also the development of renewable energy sources, and reduce dependence on the traditional energy sources such as coal," Duterte said.

At present, the country's power mix is dominated by the share of coal at 51 percent.

This is set to continue to grow given the 30 coal-fired power plants still in the pipeline, CEED said.

The Department of Energy (DOE) also projects that coal will only increase for at least two decades more, according to the latest Philippine Energy Plan.

In the point of view of the private sector, Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) president and chief executive officer Ray Espinosa said there would come

a time generating companies will start shifting away from coal development.

"But the grid has to be ready for this type of power," he said.

Meralco - through subsidiary Meralco PowerGen Corp. (MGen) - has several coal-fired power projects. However, it's 1,200-megawatt (MW) coal-fired power plant in Atimonan, Quezon was stalled after the Supreme Court struck down its power supply agreement.

But last month, Meralco announced plans to build 1,000 MW of renewable energy projects in the next seven years in its bid for cleaner and more cost-competitive power supply in its franchise area.

Through subsidiary Meralco PowerGen Corp. Meralco formed MGen Renewable Energy Inc. to serve as the platform for the strategic push to develop renewable energy projects, primarily solar, wind and run-of-river hydro.



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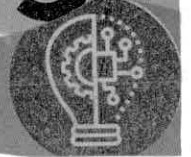
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FEDERICO
LOPEZ

Winning the war on climate change

INNOVATION AND
SUSTAINABILITY



As we enter the decade of the 2020s and beyond, I'm certain it will not look like life the last few decades. In the 2020s, we will begin to feel, in no uncertain terms, the impact industrial civilization has had on the planet. I remember back in a high school Science class in the 1970s, listening to the teacher talk about climate change and the greenhouse effect. Back then it seemed like something theoretically possible, maybe uncertain in scale, and something mentally relegated to a very distant future.

But these days, we watch the nightly news and those speculative effects scientists merely hypothesized about are now unfolding before our very eyes like a biblical apocalypse. From the record temperatures being set all over the world year after year to all the one-in-500-year droughts, heatwaves, wildfires, floods, and hurricanes striking everywhere with punishing regularity. The words of embattled North Carolina Gov. Ray Cooper captured it perfectly after his state was pummeled in succession with record rainfall and flooding by Hurricane Matthew in 2016 and Hurricane Florence a mere two years later in 2018: "When you have two 500-year floods within two years of each other, it's pretty clear it's not a 500-year flood."

The climate crisis that's unfolding globally is startling in the scale, intensity, and speed at which its effects are being felt. The most noticeable are extreme weather events and the strain on infrastructure that's been designed for a world we've now irreversibly left behind. But other climate-related consequences will range from an increase in vector-borne diseases like Malaria and Dengue, to falling crop yields, irreversible loss of species and important ecosystems including upwards of 99 percent of all coral reefs, just to mention a few. The socio-political and economic consequences of all these will be staggering. We can already foresee how this will make it increasingly more difficult to lift billions of people from poverty and address growing inequality. I can already imagine the massive strain it will place on limited government and humanitarian agency's resources.

The one million Syrian immigrants flooding Europe since 2011 were fleeing a civil war made possible by

one of the worst droughts in the last 500 years. The drought of 2006 killed 85 percent of livestock and caused the failure of more than 75 percent of farms in the years leading up to 2011, forcing 1.5 million farmers and their families to migrate to urban areas in search of livelihoods that didn't exist. Although the Syrian civil war had many proximate causes, extreme weather events like this severe drought are called "threat multipliers" which create the incendiary environment for conflict. The wave of populism and border tightening throughout Europe was heavily shaped by this mass migration. Which also raises the question: what will rich countries do as more desperate and needy communities come knocking on their doors in search of safety and security?

The World Bank and the United Nations (UN) separately estimate that there could be as many as 140 to 200 million climate refugees in the next 30 years. The high end of the UN projection fears as much as one billion or more vulnerable poor who will have little choice but to fight or flee. Syrian immigrants flooding Europe is just the beginning of a phenomenon that could be 200 times greater.

Reports from the UN Intergovernmental Panel On Climate Change (IPCC) are considered the "Gold Standard" of climate change assessments but they're somewhat conservative to a fault. Probably for good reason. However, last October 2018 they released a very important one urging dramatic action to limit global warming to less than 1.5 degrees Celsius if we wish to avoid a dangerous, irreversible, and game-

over climate crisis which threatens humanity. It calls for cutting our current CO₂ emissions to half by 2030 and down to zero by 2050. The enormity of reduction in CO₂ emissions is still possible but unprecedented in scale and in the words of Piers Forster, one of its lead authors, requires us to "do everything and do it immediately." Another lead author of the landmark report, Helen Oinnik is quoted as saying "we don't need any fancy new technologies, but it will require unprecedented rates of transformation." In so many words, we already have the means, we just need to muster the political will and focus to make it happen fast. It calls for a global mobilization effort that does not have any precedent historically. You cannot halfway your way to solving an existential crisis this large, and, given the time constraints, "winning slowly will be just as good as losing."

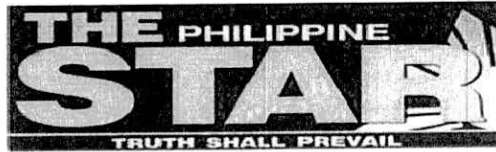
This is why I believe we are living through one of history's great paradigm shifts. Unbridled capitalism that spurs mindless consumerism and the mindless pursuit of growth and the bottom line above all else, has brought us to the point where on the average the world's population uses up 1.7 Earths every year¹ — way beyond our planet's carrying capacity to regenerate (note: American lifestyles, which many aspire for, use four Earths each year). Over the last two centuries we've used up more than the Earth can afford. That bill is now falling due and we can no longer kick the can down the road without lethal consequences to our own children. Quite a few astute world leaders have correctly said: "we're the first generation to feel the impact of climate change and the last that can do something about it."

One major component of this paradigm shift is in how we use energy and how we power our lives. There's a massive transition happening in the energy industry today, and the urgent need for low carbon power sources is being helped by the fact that renewable sources like solar and wind are getting cheaper and penetrating our lives quite fast. Over the last five years, close to 2,000 megawatts worth of solar panels were imported into the

country and have probably found their way onto rooftops and grid-connected solar farms. The first quarter of 2019 alone saw more than 200 megawatts of panels come in. The use



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Winning the War on Climate Change

**WE DECISIVELY
SHUT THE DOOR ON
COAL AND NEVER
LOOKED BACK NOR
EVER REGRETTED
MAKING THIS
DECISION.**

of solar PV panels is accelerating and unlike traditional power plants which take years to build and commission, it doesn't take long for them to be installed and generate electricity. Each kilowatt of electricity generated by those panels will be one less kilowatt drawn from the electricity grid. Add them up over a few more years and it will have a profound effect on the shape of demand from traditional grid-connected power generators, both on a seasonal basis and on an hourly basis. The intermittency of electricity produced by solar and wind sources (since the sun is not always shining and the wind not always blowing) must therefore be complemented by more and more forms of energy storage and traditional generating plants that can follow these swings and rapidly ramp up and down throughout the day.

Coal-fired power plants, aside from being undesirable in a world that needs to decarbonize urgently, are not built for this type of flexible operation. Precisely why they have the highest risk of becoming stranded assets. Running them flexibly will cause thermal fatigue of components, of materials, and corrosion that negatively impact efficiency and emissions even more.

Flexible combined cycle power plants running on natural gas, on the other hand, fit this role perfectly. Today they can even beat the costs from coal-fired plants not only on a peaking and mid-merit basis but at baseload as well. All while emitting only less than half the carbon emissions per kilowatt-hour of a similar sized plant. For reference, compared to a similar sized coal plant, First Gen's power plants and Kepco's Ilijan plant running on Camago-Malampaya natural gas saved the country more than 12.2 million tons of CO₂ annually over the last 18 years. That's the equivalent of keeping 2.6 million cars off the

road — practically the entire Metro Manila transport vehicle population each day!

Natural gas-fired power plants are a perfect low carbon complement to the unstoppable trend of more intermittent renewable energy penetrating our lives. Of course, natural gas is still a carbon-emitting power source that

should no longer operate beyond the point when it's possible to be powered fully by renewable energy with enough storage. If the stars align, that will happen way before the IPCC goal of net zero CO₂ emissions in 2050.

The fury and damage wrought by Typhoon Yolanda gave the world a glimpse of what's in store for the planet if we fail to curb global temperature rise. It also painfully demonstrated to us why we're among the top five most vulnerable nations to the climate crisis engulfing the world. This is precisely why the Philippines cannot be a bystander in the war against climate change. One-hundred eight million Filipinos and millions more to be born have so much more to lose if this fight doesn't go well. All of us have a duty to fight that fight.

In those crucial days following Typhoon Yolanda, the suffering from history's most powerful typhoon became so terribly real. It devastated the lives of communities, families, and people we worked with, knew, and loved. Climate change was no longer some distant occurrence that happens to others. It's here, and it's hitting us now. It revealed to us the harsh limitations of any government's ability to respond to the forces about to be unleashed, but it also revealed to us boundless wellsprings of kindness and community that will be key to our survival and resilience in the coming

decades.

Our geothermal company Energy Development Corp.'s direct involvement, first as a casualty but later as a pivotal resource for the rescue, relief, and rehabilitation efforts on the island of Leyte, told us in no uncertain terms why we had to redirect mother company First Gen's resources and growth away from coal-fired power even if it meant closing the door to potential financial gain. We decisively shut the door on coal and never looked back nor ever regretted making this decision.

The energy industry is on the cusp of great change and the country has everything to gain by building an energy industry that transitions and powers us into the challenges of a carbon-constrained world. It is precisely at junctures like these when uncommon opportunities appear but it takes uncommon foresight and uncommon courage in order to seize them. As a nation we have that rare opportunity to build not with the past in mind but for the unique needs of a very different 21st century and a very changed world.

Federico R. Lopez is the Chairman and CEO of First Philippine Holdings Corporation. He is also the chair and CEO of First Gen Corporation and Energy Development Corporation — premier power generation companies at the forefront of clean and renewable energy development.

The green and sustainable powers of EDC

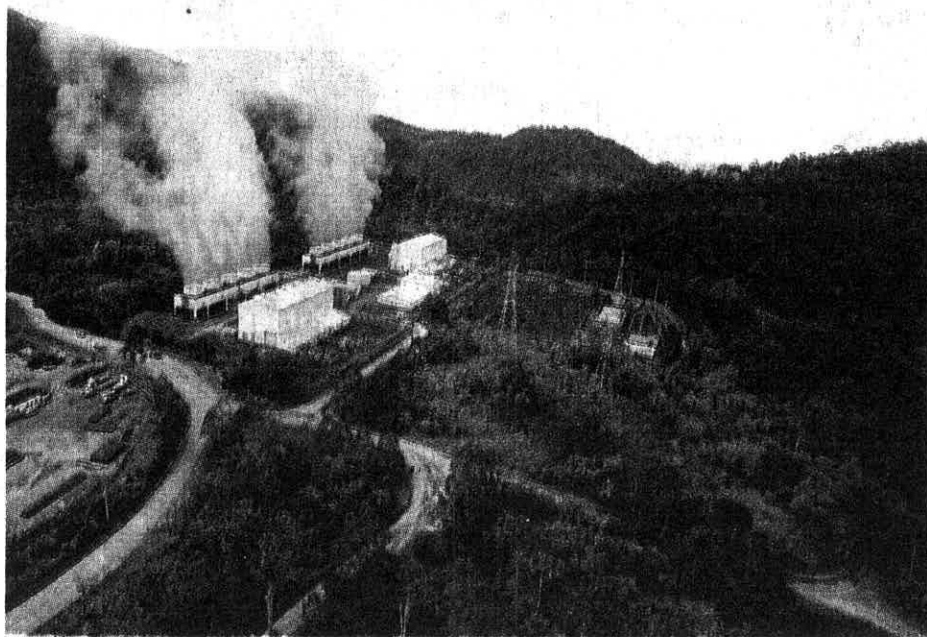
By ALIYYA SAWADJAAN

Have you ever noticed that it has been getting hotter and hotter these days? Do you sweat profusely even when you are just outside for five minutes? This extreme heat is caused by climate change, that is the result of human activities and products made by humans. If climate change is not curbed in the very near future, the world will continue to experience intense heat waves, if not worse.

The Philippines is one of the countries most vulnerable to climate change. In this year alone, the highest temperature was recorded at 51.7 degrees Celsius. Come monsoon season, the country experienced some of the most extreme natural disasters, with super typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) and Ketsana (Ondoy) as some of the most recent experienced by Filipinos.

Taking the lead in curbing the effects of climate change is the First Philippine Holdings (FPH), a member of the Lopez Group of Companies and whose major business is power generation and distribution. In 2016, through the leadership of its chairman and CEO Federico Lopez, the company decided not to invest in coal, which was a challenge because the country is still very much powered by coal.

FPH's renewable energy arm, the Energy Development Corporation (EDC), has managed to generate sustainable power from geothermal energy for over 40 years. In fact, it is the leader in



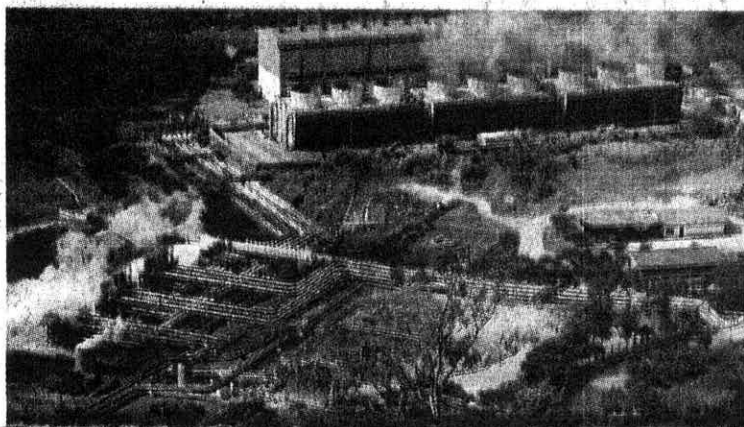
EDC's 106-megawatt (MW) Mount Apo geothermal facility in Kidapawan, North Cotabato is also home to the company's highest reforestation efforts.

geothermal technology and the country's largest 100% renewable energy company, operating 1,181 megawatts of geothermal energy, 150 MW of wind power, 132 MW of hydroelectric power, and 12 MW of solar energy totaling at 1,475 MW. These numbers account for 27 percent of the

country's total renewable energy output.

GEOTHERMAL ENERGY AND WATERSHED RESOURCES

As an archipelago, the Philippines has large reserves of natural energy sources. It is also the third largest producer of



Energy that comes from geothermal like EDC's biggest facility Leyte is the only form of RE that provides clean, reliable, uninterrupted power.



Forest protection is a huge part of EDC's geothermal operations, considering that it manages close to one percent of the country's land area and it is crucial to sustaining its geothermal resource.



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The green and sustainable powers of EDC

geothermal energy. Geothermal energy is renewable because it is generated from the Earth's heat; it is cost-effective, reliable, clean, and sustainable. Meanwhile fossil fuels like coal are not sustainable energy sources and are non-renewable.

EDC has significantly contributed to reducing the country's carbon emission by operating its geothermal fields and maintaining watersheds around its project sites.

As the leading producer of geothermal energy, the company relies on the health and stability of these watersheds. EDC protects and manages four geothermal reservations, which covers close to one percent of the country's land area. This initiative and its effective emissions management mechanisms enable EDC to maintain its carbon negative status each year. This means that EDC absorbs and sequesters more carbon than it produces based on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) definition.

GREEN LEGACY

EDC has an unwavering commitment to leading environmental efforts that are compliant with stringent environmental standards and regulations. Through BINHI, its forest restoration program, EDC aims to bring back 96 endangered native trees and to bridge forest gaps. It has since planted, protected, and maintained millions of trees including species of native trees that are endangered or threatened and is even propagating them in their Vegetative Materials Reproduction or automated tree nurseries in Negros Oriental and Antipolo

EDC is more than an energy company. It has become a company that has taken on the responsibility of undoing the damages caused by other industries — even those caused by humans, by promoting ways of harnessing energy that are sustainable and environment-friendly. By doing so, it has changed the minds of many of their customers — big companies and even individuals into more responsible beings when it comes to the welfare of Mother Earth.



Pagtaas ng kaso ng dengue dahil sa climate change?

Isinisi ng mga eksperto ang pagtaas ng kaso ng dengue dahil sa global warming na nagresulta ng climate change.

Nabatid na lumala ang sitwasyon ng dengue sa maraming South Asian countries dahil global warming kung saan ang temperatura ay tumataas mula 27 hanggang 32 degrees Celsius, na ideyal para sa Aedes mosquitoes na siyang carrier ng dengue virus na magparami.

Nabatid sa eksperto na ang Dhaka sa Bangladesh na may mataas na temperatura at paulit ulit na pag-ulan kaya malimit ang dengue outbreak.

"Climate change is a key reason for the rising prevalence of dengue in Bangladesh. Warmer and humid weather along with irregular rainfall helps Aedes mosquitoes breed and Dhaka is a perfect place for that," ayon kay MM Akhtaruzzaman, manager ng Directorate General of Health Services' malaria and dengue program.

Sinabi ni Dr. SM Munjurul Han-

nan Khan, additional secretary ng environment, forest and climate change ministry, ang climate change ay lumilikha ng paborableng desisyon sa maraming vector-borne diseases, kabilang na ang dengue.

"As weather pattern is changing in Bangladesh, the prevalence of vector-borne diseases is increasing. Besides dengue, many such diseases may become more common in the country," dagdag pa ni Khan.

Ilang pag-aaral sa mundo ang nagugnay sa global warming at dengue.

Sa pag-aaral ng US-based Public Library of Science (PLOS) noong Mayo inilalagay umano sa panganib ng global warming, ang may isang bilyong tao sa mundo dahil nakalanat sila sa lamok na may dalang virus sa susunod na 50 taon.

Nabatid na ang pangkaraniwang sakit na lumilipat mula sa lamok ay ang Aedes aegypti at Aedes albopictus—na nagdadala ng dengue, Zika at chikungunya. **(Juliet de Loza-Cudia)**