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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



Navotas told: Clean up filthy river

DENR gives city officials until yearend to reduce coliform levels in waterway linked to Manila Bay

By **Jhesset O. Enano**
@JhessetEnanoINQ

The Navotas City government has been given until the end of the year to clean up the Bangkulasi River, which the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) earlier identified as one of the filthy waterways draining into the heavily polluted Manila Bay.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu ordered the DENR team in charge of the Malabon-Navotas river system to "produce [a] drastic improvement" by December to reduce the levels of fecal coliform—bacteria from human and animal feces—in the bay.

"Cleaning up the Bangkulasi River ... is an essential part of the Manila Bay rehabilitation program," Cimatu said.

In a meeting with Navotas government officials earlier this month, the DENR warned that it would issue cease-and-desist orders against establishments



'ESSENTIAL PART' In line with the rehabilitation of Manila Bay, the national government has also ordered the cleanup of waterways that empty into the bay. —MARIANNE BERMUDEZ

in the city that lack proper sewerage treatment plants (STPs).

One-stop shop

"The Interagency Task Force [on Manila Bay] will also be providing the businesses with technical assistance [in their STPs]," said Environment Undersecretary

Benny Antiporda.

There were also plans to put up a one-stop shop for business owners in the city to help them comply with requirements set by environmental laws.

Reached for comment, Navotas Mayor Tobias Tiangco told the Inquirer that city offi-

cials were "very committed" to the Bangkulasi River cleanup.

According to Tiangco, Antiporda told him during a meeting on Aug. 5 that the stretch of the waterway between Lapu-Lapu Avenue and C3 should be prioritized because it had the highest concentration of fecal coliform.

Tiangco said they would start by clearing the river of boats, floating houses and sunken vessels since these were the source of garbage found in the waterway.

He added that they would also coordinate with the Navotas Fish Port Complex so that boats could dock at Manila Bay instead.

The next move, Tiangco said, would be the removal of sunken vessels in the river. However, the city would need financial assistance and equipment like cranes in dredging and removing the vessels.

The DENR has set an ambitious target to make Manila Bay

safe for swimming and other public activities by yearend, mainly by bringing down its coliform contamination to acceptable levels.

High coliform levels

Before the start of the rehabilitation program earlier this year, the highest fecal coliform level recorded in the bay was at 330 million most probable number (MPN) for every 100 milliliters. The acceptable level for recreational water is 100 MPN per 100 ml.

Recent samplings, however, have shown reduced levels in several drainage outfalls, after the DENR clamped down on establishments discovered to be dumping untreated wastewater directly into the bay.

The closure of Manila Zoo, which was earlier identified as a major polluter, also contributed to decreased levels of contamination in Manila Bay.

—WITH A REPORT FROM NIKKA G. VALENZUELA INQ



DENR wants Navotas to be model city via river cleanup, rehabilitation

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is eyeing to put up a one-stop shop for businesses in Navotas City as it gears up to clamp down on erring companies that violate various environmental laws.

The DENR said orders to cease-and-desist would be issued to erring companies that will require them to seek new environmental permits.

The agency's Environmental Management Bureau-National Capital Region Office and the North Field Office will help expedite the processing of environmental permits.

This will ensure that there will be no disruption of business activity in the area once the rehabilitation of the Bangkulasi River, one of the important water bodies that directly drain into Manila Bay, begins.

This after Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu has given the green light for the DENR to begin the river's rehabilitation and wants it done by

December this year.

Cimatu, it was learned, wants Navotas City to be a model city with law-abiding businesses as development partners, through the rehabilitation of the Bangkulasi River. Part of the Malabon-Navotas River System, the Bangkulasi River is an essential part of the ongoing Manila Bay rehabilitation program, the DENR said.

So far, a DENR team has been assigned to the river system to "produce drastic improvements by December this year" in order to reduce the fecal coliform levels in Manila Bay by yearend, according to a DENR official.

The team would "aim to prevent more wastes from flowing into the river system before cleaning it."

During a meeting, Undersecretary Benjamin D. Antiporda informed local officials that the DENR will be issuing cease-and-desist orders against establishments that have no proper sewage treatment plants. *Jonathan L. Mayuga*



NEED FOR SAFEGUARDS

DENR TO ISSUE TEMPORARY ORDER AGAINST WASTE IMPORTS

By **Jhesset O. Enano**
@JhessetEnanoINQ

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) will soon come out with an administrative order that would impose a three-month moratorium on waste-related imports, following the long-standing controversies on waste imported by the country.

The order, expected to be issued within the month, would also implement a P3-million security bond for every permit issued to importers, which could cover potential export expenses should violations be found in the scrap materials shipped from other countries.

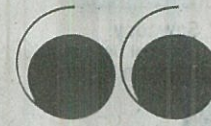
Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said the

moratorium would cover recyclable materials, including scrap metals, plastics, electronic waste, used oil and fly ash. At present, these are allowed to enter the country through a DENR administrative order issued in 2013.

"We need to come up with safeguards on the importation of recyclable materials," Antiporda said in an interview.

The moratorium period, he said, will allow deliberations among government agencies, industries and other concerned parties on crafting long-term policy for accepting scrap materials, which mostly come from rich countries.

"We have to take into consideration as well the industries that benefit from these waste-



We have to take into consideration as well the industries that benefit from these waste-related imports

Benny Antiporda
Environment Undersecretary

related imports," he added.

Antiporda said processed engineered fuels (PEF) would also be covered by the order. In May, shipments from Australia containing these materials were intercepted at a port in Misamis Oriental province.

These materials were reportedly going to be used in cement production.

Calls for stronger policies concerning the illegal entry of waste came after President Duterte lashed out at Canada for its delay in taking back the

2,500 tons of trash wrongly declared as recyclable scrap when it was shipped to the Philippines some five years ago.

The containers, which were left in the country's ports for much of that time, were found to contain household garbage, including used adult diapers, unsorted plastics and electronic waste.

Similar waste imports were found to have arrived in the country from other parts of the world, including South Korea and Hong Kong.

In response to the Duterte administration's call to ban foreign waste, the Bureau of Customs has formed a unit to monitor the entry of such hazardous materials.

Environmental groups have

been pressuring wealthy countries against dumping their garbage elsewhere, including countries in Southeast Asia.

Greenpeace Southeast Asia-Philippines has pointed out the "pattern of misdeclaration, falsified documents, fake business and loose regulatory systems" that allow the illegal entry of garbage into the country.

EcoWaste Coalition also called for the country's ratification of the Basel Ban Amendment, which would prohibit the export of hazardous waste from rich countries to developing nations for any reason, including recycling.

Top waste exporters were identified as the United States, United Kingdom, Germany and Japan. INQ



In Boracay, visitors urged to obey rules

Section of 4-kilometer beach reopened after 'toilet' incident

Stressing it was "unhappy and offended" over the video of a tourist allowing her child to defecate on a beach on Boracay Island, Malacañang on Thursday called on visitors, foreigners and Filipinos alike, to follow the rules and regulations in the recently rehabilitated tourist destination.

Presidential spokesperson Salvador Panelo also called for the installation of more restrooms and portable toilets where visitors can relieve themselves while on the island's pristine beaches.

"It's a violation ... Of course we are not happy about that. It's unsightly. We're supposed to be cleaning it up, then some people are messing it up. It's not good," Panelo told a press briefing.

He added: "Whether it was a Filipino or a [foreign] tourist, it's offensive to the sight. It's not a good scene."

Viral video

The Palace issued the statement a day after the Boracay interagency task force closed a 100-meter span of the 4-kilometer white beach at Station 1 at the northern end of the island to pave way for a cleanup. Swimming in the area was also temporarily prohibited.

Earlier this week, a video clip of a tourist allowing her child to defecate on the beach went viral on social media. It showed the woman washing



ALERT A man puts up a sign to alert visitors that a 100-meter span of Boracay Island's 4-kilometer beach has been closed for cleanup after a video of a mother allowing her child to defecate on the beach went viral on social media. The area was opened on Thursday afternoon. —PHOTO FROM FACEBOOK PAGE OF BIARMG

her child's buttocks and even burying a soiled diaper in the sand.

But on Thursday, the area was reopened to the public after test results showed the

water quality there was within normal levels of coliform bacteria.

Natividad Bernardino, general manager of the Boracay Interagency Rehabilitation Man-

agement Group, said Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu directed the reopening of the area.

An ordinance of Malay town prohibits defecating in public places. The offender in the Boracay beach incident has not yet been caught.

Info campaign

The incident came more than a year after President Duterte ordered a six-month closure and rehabilitation of Boracay in April 2018. The island reopened in October.

Panelo urged the putting up of more restrooms and portalets, noting that "you have nowhere to go if you are on the beach and you want to relieve yourself."

"We also have to help out our tourists," he said.

Bernardino said the Department of Tourism would distribute leaflets to foreign tourists and visitors giving information on prohibited acts while on the island.

Dionisio Salme, chair of the business group Boracay Foundation Inc., said business operators promised to enhance their information and education campaign among their guests.

"We also ask tour operators and tour guides to fully explain to their guests to follow strictly the environmental laws and rules on the island," he said.

—REPORTS FROM JULIE AURELIO AND NESTOR BURGOS JR. INQ



Boracay defecation incident saddens Palace

By **CHRISTINA MENDEZ**
and **JENNIFER RENDON**

Malacañang yesterday expressed displeasure at the reported defecation of a foreign tourist in Boracay, whose ecosystems and waterways have been under rehabilitation following environmental problems.

A footage surfaced earlier this week of a tourist letting her child defecate on a Boracay beach and burying the soiled diaper afterward, which prompted authorities to cordon off a portion of the beach from Wednesday to yesterday afternoon to dig it up, conduct tests and clean-ups.

The beach section was only reopened late afternoon yesterday after tests indicated water was safe and clear for swimming and related activities.

Presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo said the incident offends the sensibilities of Filipinos.

"It's a violation. We will not—of course, we are not happy about that. It's not good because we're supposed to be cleaning it up and then some people would just mess it up?" he said, stressing the act would be no less offensive if a Filipino had done it.

To prevent a repeat of what he called a disgusting incident, Panelo said local officials and police should always implement the rules and regulations in the island-resort.

"There are rules and regulations in that place. So everyone is expected—whether foreigner or Filipinos alike... tourist, whatever—they have to follow rules and that obviously is a

violation," he said.

Panelo, also chief presidential legal counsel, said the violators should be slapped with administrative sanctions.

"There is for instance, an ordinance prohibiting those kind of actions, then they will be sanctioned by local authorities. If there were ordinances like that, they could be sued or be fined," Panelo said.

He added that he has not discussed the matter with President Duterte but he must have been informed. "I have not talked about that with him, but I supposed he reads the news," Panelo said, recommending that concerned agencies place public bathrooms near the beachfronts.

Duterte last year intervened in Boracay's maintenance after seeing photos and videos of

its poor sewerage system and algae-strewn waters during a Cabinet meeting, publicly calling it a "cesspool" and threatening to close it to visitors, which he carried out in April 2018.

Establishments violating environmental regulations were then shut down, new rules on visitors introduced, and improvements to sewerage made. Since the closure was lifted, tourists have returned to Boracay, but subject to some regulations.

Boracay Interagency Rehabilitation Management Group (BIARMG) general manager Natividad Bernardino said the beach section was reopened following water quality testing done by the Environmental Management Bureau—Region 6 (EMB-6) showing coliform

level at less than 1 most probable number (MPN) per 100 milliliter (ml).

When Boracay Island reopened after a six-month rehabilitation in October 2018, the coliform level was at 18 MPN/100 ml, a significant improvement from "thousands or even millions" level prior to the closing of the island in April of that year, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu was earlier quoted as saying.

Coliform refers to a wide variety of bacteria that can be found throughout the environment, including human and animal feces. The standard coliform level is 100 MPN/100 ml.

Tracking the culprit

Police are now tracking down the tourist involved with

the help of local authorities and the Chinese embassy.

Police Major Jess Baylon, Malay police chief, said men have been deployed on the beaches to remind tourists to be mindful of prohibited acts, including throwing soiled items and cigarette butts.

While the Department of Environment and Natural Resources thanked the uploader of the video, it said it could have been better if the person was identified.

"It is just sad that with so many people on the beach, we were not able to catch the offenders in the act," he added.

The DENR maintained that once caught, the tourist will face penalties for violating environmental laws. — **With Louise Maureen Simeon, Rhodina Villanueva**



TITLE:

Malacañang 'insulted' by pooping sight

By MJ Blancaflor

MALACAÑANG felt "insulted" over the pooping incident in Boracay which was recently rehabilitated by the government, urging tourists to follow the "anti-littering" ordinance in the island.

"We feel insulted with such discourtesy done in the beautiful island this administration recently rehabilitated with intense and collective efforts employed by various departments and agencies of the government," Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo said.

Recently, a video circulated online showing a tourist letting her child defecate on the beach while the other was caught burying a diaper in the island's white sand.

Panelo said the tourists could face charges for their behavior, which he called "offensive to sight."

"Well, there are rules and regulations in that place. So everyone is expected to—whether foreigner or Filipino tourists alike. They have to follow rules and that obviously is a violation so they would be subject to suits," Panelo said in a Palace briefing.

"Of course, it's a violation. We are not happy about it because we are supposed to clean it up," he said.

Boracay was closed for six months as part of the government's efforts to rehabilitate the island, after President Rodrigo Duterte called it a "cesspool."

He then directed Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu to rehabilitate the island.

Waters along the beaches of Boracay have experienced algal bloom, an indicator of pollution and deteriorating water conditions.

In response to the pooping incident, a portion of Boracay's shoreline was closed Wednesday to conduct a 48 to 72-hour cleanup.

"We urge everyone—locals and foreign nationals alike—to help in making and maintaining our surroundings and our communities clean and safe for everyone's appreciation and pleasure," Panelo said.

The Palace spokesman also suggested that portable restrooms should be installed along the beachfront of the island which has been attracting thousands of tourists.

"Maybe we should ask also the Boracay, whoever are responsible for that place, to have available restrooms all over," Panelo said.

The authorities have yet to identify the tourists in the viral video.



Boracay poop culprits face raps

THE tourists who were caught on camera dumping human waste on the beach of Boracay might face charges, Malacañang said on Thursday, as it reiterated that foreigners are expected to follow the country's laws.

Palace spokesman Salvador Panelo made the statement after the viral video clip showed a foreigner allowing her child to defecate on the beach of Boracay's station 1, while another woman later buried the child's soiled underwear in the sand.

"Well, there are rules and regulations in that place. So, everyone is expected to[...] whether foreigner of Filipinos alike, tourists whatever, they have to follow rules; and that obviously is a violation, so they would be subject[ed to] administrative, rather, suits. So, we would advice them if they are here in the Philippines, they have to follow the rules," Panelo said during a press conference.

"If there is, for instance, an or-

dinance prohibiting those kinds of actions, then they will be sanctioned by the local authorities. If there is such an ordinance, they could be sued or fined," he added.

Panelo said Malacañang was dismayed over the incident, given that the government has closed the island resort for six months for rehabilitation and clean-up after President Rodrigo Duterte compared Boracay to a "cesspool."

"It's a violation. *Siyempre*, we are not happy about that. *'Di naman maganda rin 'yun kasi* (That is not good because) we are supposed to be cleaning it *pagkatapos* some people are messing up, *'di ba* (right)? *Hindi maganda* (That's not good)," he said.

"*Kahit na Pilipino 'yun*, whether Filipino 'yun [or] tourist (Whether they are Filipinos or tourists), it's offensive to the sight. It's not a good scene," Panelo added.

The Palace official suggested putting up portable toilets in the area to provide relief to tourists.

"Maybe there should be portable restrooms there. We also need to help the tourists," Panelo said.

Boracay Island reopened in October 2018 following a six-month closure that gave way to the rehabilitation of its sewage system.

On Wednesday, Tourism chief Bernadette Romulo Puyat said a portion of Boracay's shoreline was closed to conduct a 48- to 72-hour clean up following the incident.

Puyat then urged the public to report such incidents to authorities should they witness one to let them face penalties for violating environmental laws.

"This was an unfortunate incident, but we will not tolerate those who violate the law," the Tourism chief said.

"We encourage the public, who might witness similar incidents, to immediately report offenders to the proper authorities so that they can be promptly apprehended and fined accordingly," she added.

CATHERINE S. VALENTE



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Boracay pooping incident slammed

Malacañang was offended by the incident where a Chinese tourist allowed her child to defecate in the waters of Boracay, saying the government is working hard to clean the place but there are people who mess it up.

Presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo made the statement after a video of the incident went viral on social media last week. Another incident seen on video was another tourist burying the poop of her child on the island's white sand.

Panelo said they are not happy and offended by the incident.

"Siyempre, we are not happy about that. Hindi naman maganda rin 'yun. Kasi we're supposed to be cleaning it up pagkatapos some people are messing it up," he said. "Kahit na Filipino 'yun. Whether Filipino 'yun o tourist,

it's offensive to the sight. It's not a good scene," he added.

Panelo said that the act was an obvious violation and the people in the video can be held liable.

"Well, there are rules and regulations in that place. So everyone is expected, whether foreigners or Filipinos alike, tourists, whatever, they have to follow rules and that obviously is a violation. That will be a subject to administrative, rather, suits," he said.

"If there is, for instance, an ordinance prohibiting those kinds of actions then they will be sanctioned by the local authorities. Eh, kung may ordinance na ganoon, 'di baka idemanda sila o baka may fine pa," he added.

The Palace official reminded tourists in the Philippines to obey the country's laws. "So we would advise them to... if they are here

in the Philippines, they have to follow the rules," Panelo said.

Panelo suggested that the management of Boracay install portable toilets near the beach area to help the tourists when they get the call of nature. "Maybe we should ask also the Boracay, whoever are responsible for that place, to have available restrooms all over," he said.

"Pag gustong mag-relieve yourself, parang wala ka ring mapuntahan kung nandoon ka sa beach. Kailangan siguro merong mga portable restroom there. Kailangan din, tulungan din natin yung mga turista natin," he added.

Boracay was closed for six months to undergo rehabilitation after President Duterte called the island a "cesspool." It reopened in late 2018. **(Argyll Geducos)**



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Intensified dos and don'ts in Boracay after beachfront pooping incident

AN intensified information campaign on the "dos and don'ts" for tourists visiting the world-famous resort island of Boracay will be intensified in the wake of a viral beachfront pooping incident

Boracay Inter-Agency Rehabilitation Management Group (BIARMG) Director Natividad Bernardino said they are now looking into a video circulating on social media involving two female foreign nationals—one allowing a child to defecate in Boracay's waters and the other burying a used diaper in the white sand.

"This move should send a strong message to local and foreign tourists to uphold the government's advocacy for sustainable tourism and to observe the rules and regulations being implemented while enjoying the island paradise," Bernardino said.

According to Bernardino, the BIARMG is considering some new measures to help tourists comply with the rules and regulations in Boracay, particularly the anti-littering ordinance that prohibits littering, urinating, defecating, spitting and dumping trash in public places.

"We are planning to give pamphlets through the airline on the dos and don'ts on the island, especially on the proper way to throw garbage and the policy

against defecation at the Boracay beach," Bernardino said.

Bernardino said they are also planning the inclusion of other foreign languages in the signages installed at the beachfront against littering, smoking and carrying of glass bottles.

"Majority of the foreign visitors are from China and South Korea," Bernardino said.

"Considering the great proportion of Chinese and Korean visitors relative to the total number of Boracay's visitors, we should now perhaps include Chinese and Korean languages in the signages, which presently carry warnings only in English," Bernardino said.

Records from the Malay Municipal Tourism Office (MMTO) showed that out of the 619,934 tourists who visited Boracay from January 1 to April 15 this year, 357,041 or 57 percent were foreigners, majority of whom were Chinese and Koreans.

In the morning of Aug. 14, DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu gave instructions to cordon off the beachfront area in Station 1 where the viral video was taken.

The area was temporarily closed for swimming for 48 hours or until water quality tests show safe levels for human contact.

Cory Martinez



Dugyot na Tsino sa Bora di nakakatawa—Palasyo


KAILANGANG panagutin ang mga Chinese national na nakuhaan ng video habang binababoy ang Boracay, ayon sa Malacanang.

Sa isang briefing, sinabi ni Presidential Spokesperson at Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo na hindi nakakatawa ang

mga nangyaring insidente ng pagdudumi ng mga Intsik sa Boracay.

"Well, there are rules and regulations in that place. So everyone is expected, whether foreigner or Filipinos alike, tourist, whatever, they have to follow rules and that obviously is a violation, so they will be subject to suits," aniya.

Nag-viral ang isang video kung saan makikitang hinuhugusan ng isang Chinese ang anak sa dagat matapos dumumi samantalang isa pa ay nakitang nagbabaon ng ginamit na diaper sa buhangin ng isla. —*Bella Cariaso*



ISYUNG 'K'

NI MS. KORINA SANCHEZ

ISLA NG BORACAY, NILILINIS NG MGA PINOY, BINABABOY NG MGA TURISTA

NILILINIS natin ang Isla ng Boracay tapos bababuyin lang ng mga turista?

Kamakailan, nag-viral sa social media ang video kung saan pinadudumi ng turista ang kanyang anak sa mismong dalampasigan ng isla, samantalang, sa isa pang bahagi ng video, makikitang ibinabaon na ang gamit na diaper sa buhanginan. Tsk!

Kaugnay nito, pansamantalang isinara ang Station 1 kung saan naganap ang diumano'y pambababoy sa isla, kasunod nito ay ipinagbawal na rin ang paglangoy doon upang ma-examine ang tubig sa bahaging 'yun ng isla, sino ba ang may gusto niyan?

Samantala, inaalang na ngayon kung sino ang turista sa nasabing video. Ang tanong naman natin ngayon, bakit hindi sinaway ng kumuha ng video ang ginawang pambababoy? Mas mahalaga bang ikalat ito sa social media kaysa sitahin ang salarin at panatilihin malinis ang kapaligiran? Hindi ba, may "sin of commission" at "sin of omission", baka puwedeng itanong sa kumuha ng video kung anong nasyunalidad ng turista para mapadali ang paghahanap ng mga awtoridad?

Matatandaang, anim na buwan ipinasara ang isla para sa rehabilitasyon nito kung saan hindi biro ang nangyaring paglilinis kaya ang ganitong insidente ay nakadidismaya talaga!



tinakpan ang dumi gamit ang buhangin. Sa halip na sawayin, sinundan pa umano ng lola ng bata ang mag-ina para hugasan ang pinagdumihang underwear nito.

Ayon sa mga awtoridad, saklaw sa Municipal Ordinance Number 311 o Anti-Littering Law sa bayan ng Malay sa Aklan ang pagdumi, pag-ihing at pagdura sa mga pampublikong lugar tulad ng Boracay Island at dahil menor-de-edad ang bata, ang ina ang managot sa pagpapabaya nito sa kanyang anak.

Samantala, nagpahayag ng pagkadismaya ang Palasyo nang makarating sa kanila ang viral video.

Hirit ni Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo, magpakalat ng portable toilets para hindi mahirapan ang mga turista, gayundin, papayuhan nila ang mga ito na sundin ang mga batas sa bansa.

Sa totoo lang, nakababahala ang inasal ng mga turista dahil tila ginawa nitong CR ang isa sa mga itinuturing na tourist spots sa bansa.

Pero, paalala sa lahat, may rules and regulations ang bawat lugar sa Pilipinas kung saan inaasahan na sundin ito, anuman ang nasyunalidad ng bawat isa.



BOSES

NI RYAN B. SISON

Bora, ginawang toilet ng turista, Palasyo naalarma

Ipakita nating hindi dapat dumihan ninuman ang islang ipinagmamalaki natin, pero hindi lamang Isla ng Boracay ang dapat nating panatilihin malinis kundi ang buong bansa na rin.

Kaya ang panawagan sa publiko, turista man o hindi, maging responsable sa paligid dahil kung tutuusin, hindi natin ito pag-aari at dapat respetuhin ang anumang batas na ipinatutupad dito.

Para sa inyong opinyon, sumbong, hinaing o nais hingging tulong ito ang pagkakataong maringing ang inyong boses, sumulat lamang sa BOSES ni RYAN SISON at ipadala sa Bulgar Bldg. 538 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City o mag-email sa boses.bulgar@gmail.com.

TOURIST spot nga ba talaga? Ito ang tanong ng netizens matapos kumalat sa socmed ang video ng foreigner na ginawang instant CR ang Isla ng Boracay.

Kuwento ng nag-post na bakasyonista, nagtatampisaw sila sa Station 1 nang makita ng kanyang mga kaibigan ang dayuhan na pinadurumi ang anak sa buhangin.

Sa video, makikitang inalalayan ng foreigner ang bata sa paglalabas ng dumi sa baybayin ng dagat at pagkatapos nito ay



PRRC: Pasig river dinagsa ng isda

DINAGSA ng mga isda ang Pasig River na indikasyon ng matagumpay na 20-taon kampanya ng Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) na buhayin ito.

Gayonman, nagbabala si PRRC Chairman Jose Antonio E. Goitia na hindi pa maaaring kainin ang mga naturang isda dahil nagtaglay pa ng nakalalasong kemikals.

"We in the PRRC, are thankful to see the return of fishes, other aquatic life, and biodiversity in our beloved Pasig River. Their presence is a sign that the river has indeed improved after it was declared biologically dead in the 1990s," wika ni Goitia makaraan ang resulta ng "Biodiversity Assessment of Pasig River and its Tributaries: Ecosystems Approach" na isinagawa ng DENR.

Napag-alaman nabubuhay sa Pasig River ang walang klase ng isda kabilang ang Kanduli, tilapia, janitor, banak, bulaong, carpa at hito.

Nagbabala si Goitia na hindi dapat hulihin at kainin ang mga isda dahil may lason at mas makabubuting malaya silang mamuhay sa naturang ilog.

"We are reminding them of three important matters: first, to be careful in their consumption of fishes since studies show they are not yet generally safe to eat; second, let us

allow the fishes, especially the fingerlings, to grow, multiply, and proliferate so we can have more of them in the future – no to overfishing please; and

lastly, this is a lesson for all of us that if we work together to help save and protect the Pasig River, it will give back bountiful blessings and natural resources. Sama-sama nating ibigay ang ating puso para sa Ilog Pasig!"

Matapos ang pagsusuri sa laboratory, napatubayanang may malaking antas pa rin ng coliform ang mga isda bukod pa ang nakalalasong elemento tulad ng mercury, cadmium, lead, chromium, arsenic at microplastics.

Pinaiwas din ng PRRC ang maligo sa Pasig River dahil nananatili itong kontaminado ng mga itinatapong waste products ng mga pabrika.

"Due to the presence of contaminants in the fishes collected, the PRRC would like to inform the public that deliberate and large consumption of the fishes in the Pasig River System may pose health risks in due time. It is highly advisable to prevent any conduct of contact recreational activities and consumption of freshwater organisms until further notice once sufficient and comprehensive scientific research has been made," paalala ng PRRC.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

LIFE EXHIBIT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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SECURED - The green sea turtle's nesting ground in Buenavista town is secured by the CENRO team Tuesday. (Photo from Nasipit CENRO)

Giant sea turtle's nesting ground found in Agusan

By **MIKE U. CRISMUNDO**

NASIPIT, Agusan del Norte - A team from the Nasipit DENR-Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) on Tuesday found a nesting ground of the endangered green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas* sp.) at the coastal village of Sacol in Buenavista town, Agusan del Norte.

CENRO Officer Alijandra Buiser ordered the team to protect the 80 eggs left by the giant reptile on the beach.

"Yes, upon receiving that report I

immediately instructed the head of the wildlife section in my office to ensure the safety of the marine eggs on that beach from predators," Buiser told Manila Bulletin on Wednesday.

A group of fishermen who went to fish at dawn stumbled upon a hole on the beach and discovered it contained turtle eggs.

The fishermen said they saw the turtle crawling back to the sea, apparently after depositing the eggs on the beach.

It was the second turtle's nest that

the fisherfolk in the coastal village found this year.

"Perhaps, this could be the season where the giant turtles are coming back to the beach to lay their eggs," Buiser said. "The area should be declared a protected nesting site for the sea turtles," She lauded the fishers for informing the authorities of the turtle nest, "otherwise those eggs could have been eaten by stray animals in the area and worst, the eggs could have been consumed by men for a breakfast meal."



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REGIONS

PHOTO COURTESY OF OFFICE OF REP. JOSE ENRIQUE GARCIA III



BIRD HABITAT The Balanga Wetland and Nature Park in the Bataan capital city of Balanga is an important habitat for migratory birds, with at least 80 species recorded in the area facing the Manila Bay.

BALANGA WETLAND AND NATURE PARK

BIRDWATCHING PARK NOW AN ECOTOURISM ZONE IN BATAAN

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO— The Balanga Wetland and Nature Park (BWNP) in Bataan province, which is home to birds of different species, is now an ecotourism zone that offers livelihood opportunities to residents.

The park's new stature came following President Duterte's signing of Republic Act No. 11365 that declared that part of the coastal area at Barangay Tortugas in Balanga City as a "responsible, community-based ecotourism zone."

"The law will allow Balanga to further develop its wetland park through the support of the Department of Tourism (DOT). We have used this park to help educate our schoolchildren to better understand and care for the environment," said Bataan

Rep. Jose Enrique Garcia III, principal sponsor of the bill in the House of Representatives. Sen. Cynthia Villar sponsored the bill in the Senate.

The law gives BWNP "priority development by the Department of Environment and Natu-

ral Resources, DOT, Department of Public Works and Highway, and the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority."

The park covers 153,578 square meters of mangrove forest and 187,500 sq. m of

foreshore land. A least 80 species of mostly migratory birds have been recorded in the place, which faces the Manila Bay.

Since 2013, Balanga has been holding the annual "Ibong Dayo Festival." —TONETTE OREJAS INQ



CITY of Balanga Wetland and Nature Park.

Bataan park now ecotourism zone

By Jonas Reyes

BALANGA CITY, Bataan — President Rodrigo Duterte has declared the Balanga Wetland and Nature Park (BWNP) as a community-based ecotourism zone after signing Republic Act (RA) 11365 or the “Balanga Wetland and Nature Park Responsible Ecotourism Act” on 8 August.

This decree would include the BWNP in the priority development of the Departments of Environment and Natural Resources, Tourism, Public Works and Highways and the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority.

“The State is mandated to promote a tourism industry that is ecologically sustainable, responsible, participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable and equitable for the local community. Towards this end, the BWNP is hereby declared a special ecotourism zone,” the RA read.

Balanga City Mayor Francis Garcia will head the multisectoral BWNP development council that will monitor the area, which will be assisted by the said government agencies in the formulation of the ecotourism development and management plan.

These institutions will create a set of guidelines for a responsible, community-based ecotourism.

The plan must include a carrying capacity of the BWNP and its migratory birds, a specific site assessment, identification of strategic priorities, product development for local income generation, capacity-building for the local community, support for the formulation of local production groups and networks and marketing strategies that reflect the natural, social and environmental integrity of the BWNP.



We need more 'eco' in ecotourism



INTO THE
WILD

GAB MEJIA

TRAVEL. The guilt-free pleasures of wandering and exploring. The sound of crashing waves. The picture of a glorious fiery sunset. The sand sinking beneath your toes. The sea of clouds and fresh mist coming from a mountain top. The mix of scents and tastes of both exotic and native cuisines. The sight of intricate architecture and indigenous art.

Traveling is more intrinsic and natural to us humans than commonly perceived— setting forth into distant lands as early as the first human migrations in continental Africa, and navigating across rough open oceans by the Spanish conquistadors. We humans have been traveling and exploring both land and sea as early as 60,000 to 70,000 years ago, and still traveling to this day, albeit for disparate societal and personal reasons. Though undoubtedly, the rise of travel has led to a booming industry in itself: tourism. An industry across different nations that has led to great socioeconomic opportunities — providing livelihood, leisure and pleasure, infrastructure and businesses, intercultural exchange, and an unprecedented increase in globalization. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, tourism measured in terms of the tourism direct gross value-added (TDGVA), or “value added of different industries in relation to tourism activities of both inbound and domestic visitors in the country,” contributed about P2.2 trillion, or 12.7 percent to the annual gross domestic product (GDP) of the Philippine economy.

Tourism has never been as popular as it is today, much more accessible than we could ever have done in the 21st century, from the surge of low-budget airlines and the advancement of technology. Digital maps, language translators, food suggestions, cameras and tour operators could now all fit in your pocket — that was all impossible just

20 years ago. And with the rise of a new age in digital media, from Instagram posts in a white sand beach to a Facebook album of your friend’s family vacation in a different country, the call to travel has never been more enticing. Indeed, tourism could be perceived as an inherently beneficial industry for both the sociocultural and economic sectors of a country. Some hidden irreversible consequences, however, have recently come to light when it becomes just too much.

Overtourism has led to the severe degradation of mountains, coasts, beaches and forests, where prominent nature destinations are now filled with litter and trash, and where once pristine forested trails have been eroded by the relentless footsteps of hikers. Mountains have been burned, and wildlife disturbed. This rising issue in tourism asks the question: where do we draw the line between socioeconomic development coming from tourism, and environmental conservation? I read a recent investigative report in the *National Geographic Magazine* about “hidden stories” of the wildlife tourism industry, where animals such as Asian elephants, tigers and sloths are being exploited in developing countries like Thailand and Brazil to provide livelihood for local communities. A myopic view, however, could make a hasty judgment against these communities, because the larger picture shows an unfortunate reality regarding the disparity in nature conservation programs and sustainable tourism industries that leaves room for exploitation by capitalists and businesses. Movements and new business models, however, are finally starting and becoming more proactive in finding

innovative solutions to address this disparity between the ever-growing tourism industry and environmental conservation. One example in the Philippines is Eco Explorations, which is a sustainable tourism company committed to conserving the Philippines’ natural and cultural heritage and biodiversity through a low-impact, nature-based, immersive ecotourism experience for people. Another is Masungi Georeserve, which is an international award-winning conservation project committed to protecting the Sierra Madre through inclusive livelihood programs and tours with indigenous people who once lived there — an inclusive program that does not only protect the naturally rich landscapes and biodiversity of the Philippines, but has also evolved new, “disruptive” models in the fight for the rights of indigenous tribes when it comes to contentious governmental projects.

Today, it would be easy and convenient to follow the trend when it comes to tourism and travel. Everyone is going here, everyone is taking photos there, so why not follow suit. Even though there is nothing inherently wrong with the desire to travel to such popular and over-touristed places, because one cannot deny the beauty and allurement of nature. But we should still be mindful of the places we travel to — to have intent and to embrace new disruptive models that not only supports the local tourism industry but the preservation and conservation of nature. I remember with fondness many people sharing their dream vacations in nature places, but that dream trip will remain a dream if we don’t have nature in the first place.

Email: jgbmejia@gmail.com
www.instagram.com/gabmejia



AN Engongot indigenous man balances on a *yantok* vine as he crosses from one tree to another in Dipaculao, Aurora, which is part of the *Engongot* swidden farming.

UN PHOTO

Partners in conservation

This is consonant with the DENR's vision of inclusive conservation to protect the country's biodiversity

Indigenous peoples (IP) in the Philippines are increasingly involved in the national conversation about protecting and conserving the Southeast Asian country's key biodiversity areas, thanks to support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

It is estimated that some 85 percent of these areas are home to indigenous communities, who live in direct contact with nature and who have the traditional knowledge and skills to protect the environment.

But a combination of unsustainable tourism, poorly planned infrastructure development and the erosion of indigenous leadership in conservation have meant that

many habitats are under threat and biodiversity could be lost.

In 2017, Philippine Association for Inter-Cultural Development Inc. (PAFID) came up with this figure by comparing the data from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) on approved certificate of ancestral domain titles (CADT) and existing claims from IP communities with the remaining forest cover data of the Forest Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural

Resources (FMB-DENR).

This figure suggests that governance by IP communities is instrumental in protecting and conserving the remaining natural forests of the Philippines.

These areas are Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Conserved Areas and Territories (ICCA). ICCA may be sacred spaces or ritual grounds such as sacred forests and mountains, indigenous territories, and cultural landscapes or seascapes.

Indigenous peoples' rights have frequently been overlooked in conservation efforts, but since 2010 UNDP has been working with 16 indigenous communities in the Philippines to delineate

boundaries and map precious ecosystems, inventory resources, and document indigenous knowledge, systems and practices.

In 2016, the DENR, in partnership with the NCIP, launched the UNDP-supported, and Global Environment Facility-financed Philippine ICCA Project. The project is working to strengthen the conservation, protection, and management of key biodiversity sites by institutionalizing ICCA.

The DENR through the Biodiversity Management Bureau has been implementing projects to support and recognize the governance and management of ICCA in partnership with the UNDP-GEF. This is consonant with the DENR's vision of inclusive conservation to protect the country's biodiversity.





DENR, NutriAsia bring 'Refill Revolution'

Another refilling station was set up in a barangay in Bulacan on July 18 as part of the Refill Revolution campaign of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and its partners, including condiments maker NutriAsia Inc., to reduce plastic consumption in the region.

Residents of Barangay Caingin in Bocaue were able to buy NutriAsia products, such as Datu Puti vinegar and soy sauce, at much lower prices by bringing their own containers to the designated refilling station.

Refill Revolution aims to promote environmental protection by encouraging households to recycle their clean plastic bottles instead of disposing them right away. The initiative was launched by the DENR's Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) in Region 3 during the Earth Day celebration in Guiguinto, Bulacan, in March 2018.

According to EMB Central Luzon Director Lormelyn Claudio, the campaign is a practical solution to plastic pollution. It helps "cut back on plastic production, consumption and packaging and translate to less air and water pollution."

"Decreasing the amount of waste created by disposable packaging will be a very difficult task, but with the implementation of these different refill processes across Central Luzon, later on replicated in other regions, it may still be possible," she said. Claudio recognized the contributions of LGUs and companies in raising awareness of the refill concept and its benefits to the environment.

Claudio noted that NutriAsia was among the first companies to express full support to the campaign. "We hope that this recycling program becomes bigger than a one-day event. We hope NutriAsia can have more refilling stations in the future, and that they will be able to participate in our future events as well as similar events as Refill Revolution gets replicated by local governments and establishments," she added.

Since its launch last year, Refill Revolution has gained the participation and support of LGUs and at least 2,000 residents of Bulacan, Pampanga, and Bataan.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
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Baguio households, firms urged to practice composting

BAGUIO CITY (PNA) - The city government will soon require all households and establishments to have their own composting areas for biodegradable wastes, an official said on Wednesday.

Eugene Buyucan, city General Services Office (GSO) head, said anybody can compost their biodegradable wastes due to its simple procedure and requires only a minimal space even in houses without backyards.

"Makakagawa na tayo ng compost fertilizer pero dapat ang residente mismo mag-adopt pa rin ng waste management, magcompost ng nabubulok na basura (While we are capable of making compost fertilizer from biodegradable wastes, this is not our goal, we are still encouraging residents to manage their wastes and have their own compost)," said Buyucan, whose office handles the city's garbage issues.

If residents and establishments adopt composting methods, he said the city government does not have to collect biodegradable wastes.

Buyucan said the city collects an average of 50 tons of biodegradable wastes, mostly collected from the city market, which are processed at the city's

environment recycling system (ERS) located at the former Iri-san dumpsite. After processing, 12 tons of compost is produced.

The official said Republic Act 9003 or the ecological solid waste management act requires that residents manage their biodegradable wastes by having their own compost pits or bins.

The law also encourages residents to segregate their garbage - biodegradable, residual, recyclable. Business owners are also required to adopt composting methods.

Buyucan said backyard composting is the obligation of residents under the provisions of the law to help the concerned government agencies and local governments address the garbage disposal concerns in their areas of jurisdiction.

He said residents can go into urban gardening in their homes using the compost soil they are able to produce.

"If everybody will do compost, we can have successful urban gardening where residents would be able to produce simple vegetables for their consumption," he said.

He added that a simple composting method would only require any container where biodegradable wastes can be stored.



inside the

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EXCLUSIVE Third water player eyed

By Kristina Maralit

There may be a need for a third water concessionaire to avert another water supply crisis in the future, as well as ensure that consumers will not be unreasonably charged, presidential spokesman and chief legal counsel Salvador Panelo opined.

The Malacañang official made the comment following the recent order handed down by the Supreme Court (SC) for the government's Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) to impose fines of P921,464,184

with private concessionaires Manila Water Company Inc. and Maynilad Corp. for their noncompliance with the Clean Water Act.

"They've earned so much over the years, they have gypped us with so much billions. So, it's only timely and right for them to return the money," Panelo said during his appearance in the *Daily Tribune's* "Straight Talk."

MWSS, Manila Water, and Maynilad were supposed to provide wastewater

Turn to page A2



Class act President Duterte's versatile spokesman Sal Panelo provides the best voice literally for the Chief Executive preferably in belting a sentimental song.

They've earned so much over the years, they have gypped us with so much billions

From page A1

treatment facilities and connect all sewage lines in all establishments and household to a sewerage system. They, however, were found to have failed to put up the needed treatment facilities and sewage lines.

Compliance could have converted wastewater into bilge water that can be discharged back into the environment and be used for bathing, washing, and toilets, among others.

Said fines cover the period of 7 May 2019, five years since the Clean Water Act took effect up to the day the High Tribunal released its decision.

In an earlier exclusive interview with the *Daily Tribune*, President Rodrigo Duterte said water concessionaires Manila Water and Maynilad have been "duping" consumers for a long time since both do not have water treatment facilities but they still collect fees for these through the monthly bills.

Mr. Duterte said the public can even sue both private firms for "plunder" since they have been collecting fees for services that they do not provide.

It could have also cushioned the impact of the long El Niño spell felt in the country several months back when millions of consumers experienced days and even weeks of water supply interruption.

Those hardest hit were establishments and households being serviced by Manila Water in the eastern parts of Metro Manila and some towns and cities in Rizal province.

Panelo said maybe it is time for a third water utility player, just like in the telecommunications industry, to be considered to ensure the public gets the service it deserves.

Those hardest hit were establishments and households being serviced by Manila Water.

"Maybe it's time. It's needed to stop that foolishness," he expressed.

He also lamented the "ridiculous" provisions in the contracts entered into by the government with the water concessionaires which he said triggered the President's order for all agreements between the state and private entities to

be placed under thorough review.

What's water then?

"Well, there is a provision there that... for the purposes of reading that contract, water is not deemed to be a mineral. Can you imagine that? It's not a mineral," quipped Panelo.

"Number two, the President read a provision there which says that up to 20... I think 20 years, we will be paying if they don't make profit. If they don't make money, we will be paying them forever or something like that. That's what angered the President," he added.

Maybe it's time. It's needed to stop that foolishness.

Mr. Duterte since then has approved a draft "master plan" for an "integrated approach" for a long-term solution to water supply problems also being experienced in other parts of the country.

The blueprint aims to conduct a review of concession agreements with water distributors and cooperatives, address problems on sewerage and sanitation, irrigation, flood management, and watershed management.

It also seeks to reconstitute the National Water Resources Board into a body that will be responsible for policy making, direction-setting and the integration of all government efforts involving water.



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There is such a thing as unchecked development

“
The
reality
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is that our
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is growing,
so
inevitably
we will
need more
space for
people to
live and we
will need to
use more
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them.”

I woke to the horrible news this morning of a boy being snatched off a boat in Palawan by a saltwater crocodile. The saltwater crocodiles of Palawan are some of the largest reptiles in the world and are a protected species. There has been evidence to suggest that there were greater numbers of them all over the Philippines at one time, but in the last century or so they have been found mainly in “the last frontier” of Palawan. Now that Palawan is developing and its population growing, the habitat once reserved for saltwater crocodiles is shrinking – with the unfortunate consequence of greater interaction between crocodiles and humans.

In my reading prior to writing this column, I have several times come across the claim that interactions between humans and crocodiles do not always turn deadly. Crocodiles are revered by several indigenous groups throughout the



BRIEFING ROOM
Harry Roque

country, including the Molbog of Palawan, and there has been evidence to suggest peaceful coexistence between humans and crocodiles in the past. As with all animals with whom we must live, it's simply a matter of understanding how much we as a species can get away with before nature starts pushing back.

It isn't just dangerous predators we have to consider as we expand our use of natural resources. In Baguio (my happy place and the place I consider a second home), the conversation about how to stop the environmental decline has been going on for years. The first sign that things were going wrong, I am told by people who grew up there, was when they could no longer smell the pines. True enough, I was heartbroken when, on my way to Baguio, I could not in fact smell the pines as I neared the city. Year after year,

Baguio's famous pines have given way to condo after condo and the city that was originally meant for a transit population of 30,000 or so now has a population of over 500,000 at any given time.

Of course, I do not mean this column as an indictment of development in Palawan or Baguio or anywhere else in the country. The reality of the situation is that our population is growing, so inevitably we will need more space for people to live and we will need to use more resources to support them.

The challenge for all of us is finding a balance in order to avoid not just ecological disaster (i.e. the situation where our environment is degraded to the extent that it can no longer support us) but also unfortunate confrontations with the other species that live on this planet.

I think a good place to start is to stop

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I could not
in fact smell
the pines as I
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putting off critical measures like the National Land Use Act, which has languished in Congress for decades because no one seemed to understand how important it is. The President mentioned the National Land Use Act in his recent State of the Nation Address, so I hope that Congress will pay more attention to this measure. We need to set hard limits on what we can do with our limited space, and it is the government's job to set those limits. Beyond Congress, the local government units are in the best position to understand the capacity of the territories under their supervision. I urge our new crop of local government officials to consider the ecological impact of the projects they approve or undertake.

Finally, much of the burden also rests on the private sector. We need to cooperate with our authorities, sure, but more than that we also need to engage and suggest our own solutions. I certainly would be happy to hear my readers' thoughts. We all have a stake in this.



GOTCHA

JARIUS BONDOC



Isko Moreno simply fixing Manila's 'broken windows'

Filipinos marvel at new Manila Mayor Isko Moreno because he's a magician. All he did was hose down dirty roads, parks and markets. And presto! In the process he curbed street chaos and bureaucratic sleaze, and is making the national capital livable again.

Isko is only fixing Manila's "broken windows." "Only" makes it seem so easy. But a million and one blights demand attention. The city is so rundown by decades of neglect. Racketeers and squatters abound. Isko will need to remold the thinking of Manilans.

"Broken Windows Theory" holds that an epidemic of disorder is the result of little untidiness left to fester. American sociologists James Q. Wilson and George Kelling in 1982 likened it to a building's broken window. If unrepaired, passers-by will think nobody cares. Soon vandals will break more windows and trespass. Trouble will spill out to the street. Citizens will avoid the area. Thugs will take over, peddling drugs, mugging, and murdering. Conversely, fixing the broken window at once spreads the spirit of neatness. People notice. Other buildings are spruced up. The district prospers.

The theory was put to test in the New York City subway system in the 1990s. Hired as transit authority consultant, Kelling invited fellow believer David Gunn to run the multibillion-dollar upgrading. Part of it was confronting vandalism. At night street gangs spray-painted graffiti on the coaches, but Gunn had them all scrubbed cleaned and fresh for the next morning's run. Months later, their "masterpieces" never seeing the light of day, the vandals gave up. Then Gunn took on the fare-beaters whom the police, busy with serious crimes, thought too minor. Gunn worried that if riders jumping the turnstiles went unpunished, then more would try to

get away with it too. They'd sneer, "If they don't pay, why should I?" Disrespect for rules would reign. William Bratton, head of the transit police, made sure not a single broken window, in the form of fare-beaters, was left unfixed. Plainclothes lawmen made a show of arresting the toll jumpers. In the process they discovered: one in seven arrestees had a pending warrant, and one in 20 illegally was carrying a firearm. Noticing the fare cheats being nabbed, subway muggers stayed away.

Mayor Isko too unintentionally unearthed crimes. On his first week in office he evicted illegal street hawkers from the Divisoria-Santa Cruz *accessoria* districts. Their littering and traffic clogging had to end once and for all. To Isko's surprise, he was offered P5 million a day bribe – P150 million a month or P1.8 billion a year – to let them stay. It turned out that a syndicate involving barangay, city hall, and police officials were involved. Huge amounts were collected from the vendors in exchange for illegally occupying the streets and sidewalks. Through the

years sub-rackets had evolved, ranging from illegal water and electricity connections for the stalls, to unlicensed permanent constructions. A monopoly even made a killing renting out parasols, plastic stools, and folding beds to the hawkers.

The flushing out of the syndicate led to the dismissal of crooked public supervisors. The prosperity is palpable. With illegal vendors gone, vehicles started moving. Engine emissions and noise lessened. Shoppers and legitimate storeowners began to breathe easy. Police foot patrols increased, along with tourists. Pickpockets and panhandlers disappeared. Barangay councils and police precincts in other districts of Manila felt compelled to follow suit.

"Broken Windows Theory" is credited in part for the decline in New York City's crime rate during Rudi Giuliani's mayoralty. With Bratton elevated to police commissioner, the duo took a zero-tolerance approach to low-level offenses, including public drunkenness. Eliminated were the notorious squeegee men, who ostensibly washed the windshields of cars stalled in traffic but actually extorted cash. Societal and individual attitudes changed due to conscious constant tidying up, noted science journalist Malcolm Gladwell in

his bestseller "Tipping Point." Other factors contributed: the crack cocaine epidemic had declined, the economy perked up, and youth offenders found gainful work or simply grew old so turned away from crime.

Perhaps noticing Isko's success, President Rody Duterte has ordered a nationwide clearing of public roads. Interior Sec. Eduardo Año is to suspend and indict local government executives who fail to comply. Laggards shall be assumed to be in on rackets. Pilot replication area is Metro Manila, where traffic congestion is worst.

Authorities would do well to study "Broken Windows Theory." They cannot let the smallest infractions go unfixed. That includes illegal parkers, sidewalk encroachers, park hobos, drugged street children, reckless jitney and tricycle drivers, jaywalkers, and litterbugs. If successful, they can then take on building owners with no parking bays, land-grabbers, and river polluters. Health, sanitation, and environment would improve. Manila Bay and other waterways would be rehabbed.

The concept is plain: neatness undercuts crime.

* * *

"Dede-Land", Hotdog De-Dennis Garcia's primammary painting exhibit, unstraps breaststrokes of his favorite imagined female body part. Aug. 19-30, at Art Center, 4th Floor, SM Megamall, EDSA, Mandaluyong.

* * *

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EDITORIAL

Bulakan airport

THE government must encourage the construction of a new modern airport to replace the Ninoy Aquino International Airport that has long outlived its usefulness.

Increased domestic and foreign flights have recently overwhelmed NAIA, given its limited space and runways, resulting in air traffic congestion and delays in the arrival and departure of planes. Plans to upgrade NAIA may not suffice to meet the increasing number of both local foreign air passengers. Such upgrade can only be an interim solution and does not offer a viable, long-term answer to airport congestion.

The proposal of conglomerate San Miguel Corp. to construct a new airport in Bulakan, Bulacan province appears to address the physical limitations of NAIA. The Department of Transportation just issued the notice of award to San Miguel, which has pro-

posed to build the P734-billion Bulacan International Airport project just north of Metro Manila.

The department, in giving the go-signal to San Miguel, noted that the new airport would help decongest NAIA, while providing the traveling public a world-class facility and connectivity options. The new airport, as promised by the proponent, will be a modern facility that will hopefully transform the sleepy town of Bulacan into a bustling metropolis and a new gateway to Metro Manila and northern Luzon provinces.

San Miguel has tapped the services of global firms Groupe ADPi, Meinhardt Group and Jacobs Engineering to design and build the New Manila

International Airport. All three companies were involved in building world-class airports, including Changi Airport in Singapore, Atlanta Airport in the US and Charles de Gaulle Airport in France.

The new airport can be a catalyst to the development of more infrastructure projects in Central Luzon. The NMIA, for one, will include the construction of an 8.4-kilometer tollway that will connect it to North Luzon Expressway in Marilao, Bulacan.

Moreover, with a design capacity of 100-million passengers annually and airside facilities with a configuration of four parallel runways, the airport is expected to boost the tourism potential of the coastal town and neighboring municipalities.

The new airport, in sum, will create new economic activities in the Bulacan stretch of Manila Bay, and greatly decongest Metro Manila.



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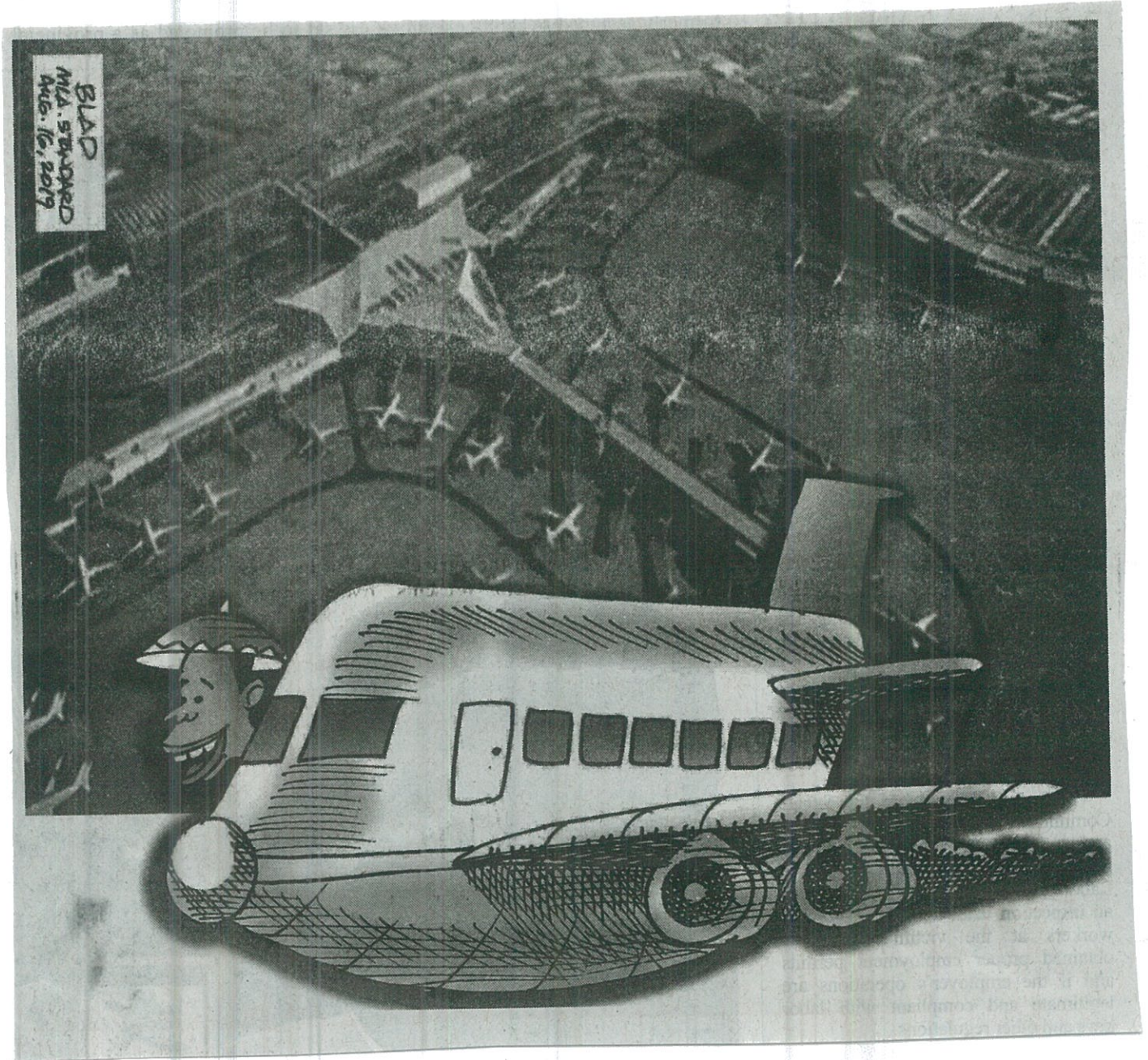
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BFP doubts arson as caused of burning of Korean trash

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—The Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) has brushed aside the possibility of arson for Monday's 11-hour fire that burned a quarter of the 5,177 metric tons of Korean trash stocked in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental.

This developed as Misamis Oriental 2nd District Rep. Juliette Uy raised the possibility of arson, urging the relevant government agencies to investigate.

Chief Inspector Randy Obsioma, chief of the BFP's Tagoloan fire station, clarified that they were not completely ruling out arson yet.

However, evidence from the fire scene makes the conclusion far-fetched.

If it were indeed arson, the flame would not have gone deeper, Obsioma explained, pointing to the five-foot-high mound of sacked garbage inside the compound of Verde Soko (Philippines) Industrial Corporation, a company that seeks to operate a waste recycling facility inside the Phividec

Industrial Estate.

"So far, our investigators did not find any piece of evidence that could point to arson," he said.

Obsioma noted that the Verde Soko facility was fenced with security personnel guarding it, hence "it would be difficult for intruders to come in and light the trash."

He said Monday's fire did not just burn the surface but also penetrated the bottom of the mound of mostly plastic waste, suggesting that "something unusual might have triggered it."

He said the fire could likely be caused by the methane gas produced by the trash exposed to heat.

The trash has been the object of controversy for several months now. Last week, the South Korean embassy in Manila has announced these were set for shipment back to South Korea next month.

These were part of more than 6,500 metric tons of garbage illegally shipped into the country in two batches last year.

— *Inquirer*



Gov't utilizes 93% of NCAs as of end-July

By MARY GRACE PADIN

State agencies sped up the utilization of funds as of end-July this year following the implementation of the 2019 General Appropriations Act (GAA), the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) said yesterday.

According to the latest data from the DBM, government agencies utilized about P1.569 trillion worth of notices of cash allocation (NCA) from January to July this year.

The DBM said this is equivalent to 93 percent of the P1.688 trillion worth of NCAs released during the seven-month period, a significant improvement from the 73 percent NCA utilization rate seen in January to July last year.

NCAs refer to the disbursement authority issued by the DBM to cover the cash requirements of government agencies.

A higher NCA utilization rate demonstrates the capacity of line agencies to timely disburse their allocated funds and implement their programs and projects.

According to Budget Undersecretary Laura Pascua, the faster NCA utilization as of end-July "may be due to the change in crediting the NCA release for the agencies."

"Per guidelines on the release of funds, specific monthly allocation is credited on the first working day of each month. Unlike in the previous year, the full quarter requirement is credited on the first working day of the first month of the quarter already," Pascua said.

National Budget Circular 577 was issued on May 2 this

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year to provide the guidelines on the release of funds following the enactment of the 2019 GAA.

Broken down, the DBM said P1.153 trillion of the total NCAs utilized as of end-July was from line agencies. The DBM said this is also equivalent to 93 percent of the total NCAs released to line agencies during the period.

Cash allocations utilized for budgetary support to government-owned and -controlled corporations reached P68.23 billion, while NCAs used by local government units reached P347.63 billion.

The government was forced to operate under a reenacted budget in the earlier part of the year, leading to a slowdown in government spending.

Following the passage of the 2019 General Appropriations Act on April 15, the government economic cluster formulated a spending catch-up plan for the rest of the year.

Earlier, the DBM committed to speed up the release of cash allocations in the second half as this would enable agencies to immediately roll out proj-

ects.

The DBM said it is also closely coordinating with other agencies to accelerate budget execution and to catch up with the government's spending target this year.



'Corruption probe done in October'

By MJ Blancaflor

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte will not interfere in the investigation of two Cabinet secretaries for their alleged involvement in corrupt activities—and does not even know who they are, the Palace said Thursday.

Greco Belgica, a commissioner of the Presidential Anti-Corruption Commission, said Wednesday that two Cabinet members were being investigated over allegations of corruption.

Belgica declined to name the officials but said the investigation will be over in October since the officials have been cooperating with the probe.

"That agency, the PACC, it's their duty to investigate. So, until such time they are done with findings, recommendation, the President will not know," Panelo said in a press briefing. **Next page**

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'Corruption...

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The Palace also distanced itself from the investigation.

"He does not interfere in the function of any department, agency or office," Panelo told **Manila Standard** in a text message.

Belgica said one of the complaints was filed by an official from the Cabinet secretary's department while the other was submitted by a private citizen.

PACC is also conducting a lifestyle check on 200 officials from the Bureau of Customs, Bureau of Internal Revenue, Department of Public Works and Highways, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and Department of Transportation, and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office.

Former PCSO general manager Alexander Balutan and ex-board member Sandra Cam, who resigned from their posts because of corruption issues, were also included in the PACC lifestyle check,

Belgica said.

The PACC already has possession of documents proving anomalies within the PCSO, Cam said Thursday.

"PACC Commissioner Greco Belgica already has in his possession all the documents to prove corruption in Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office [PCSO] since May 2019," Cam said in a statement.

Cam explained that Duterte asked for the documents himself when they met in Tokyo, Japan last May during the President's official visit.

She said she handed the documents to Senator Christopher Go, who himself turned them over to Belgica.

"President Duterte and I met in Tokyo. He asked me for proof. I then gave him the documents that proved that there is corruption in PCSO," Cam said.

"He then asked me to hand over these documents to Senator Bong Go and the latter gave these documents to Commissioner Belgica who is in charge of the investigation," she added.

Cam said she is also ready to bare more details about corruption in PCSO in a

Senate or House inquiry.

She earlier said she possessed documents, which could prove that officials, including retired military generals, were involved in corruption at the PCSO.

On Wednesday, Belgica said Cam is allowed to submit her evidence to the PACC, noting that she was the first to call out corruption in PCSO.

"She will be allowed to submit the evidence to us, to the President, to the Ombudsman and we will welcome that," Belgica said in a Palace briefing.

"So, we are interested to hear what she has, not to take it as the truth, but to investigate and allow it to go into the process," he added.

President Rodrigo Duterte ordered a halt to all gaming operations under the PCSO on July 26 over alleged "massive corruption" within the agency.

On July 30, Duterte lifted the suspension of PCSO lotto operations but other gaming operations such as small town lottery, Keno, and Peryahan ng Bayan remain suspended pending investigation. **With PNA**



Eco-warriors endure fight vs climate change

Schools in South Africa have been designating students as “eco-warriors” as part of an initiative supported by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), to drive environmental and climate change awareness among the young and old in their communities.

The youthful warriors have supported rubbish clean-up campaigns around their schools, eliminating over 1000 illegal dumping sites.

Other students have established agricultural cooperatives and learned how to farm sustainably in the face of the effects of climate change and the degradation of the environment.

Recognizing the power of youth to facilitate positive change, the Global Environment Facility’s (GEF) Small Grants Program (SGP) supported a climate change awareness project driven by a Durban-based youth group, Future Leaders of Change (FLC) – a non-profit organization that mobilizes youth and brings awareness of the effects of climate change to schools and communities.

With SGP support, FLC implemented the Climate Change Warriors Project (CCWP).

Targeting youth specifically, the project aimed to conduct climate change education and awareness programs/campaigns; coordinate

climate change adaptation trainings for the local communities (specifically in sustainable agriculture and reforestation); and bridge the information gap between experts and local communities.

The project was inaugurated by hosting a climate change summit with 300 youth in attendance, and showcasing their work on climate change and greening initiatives.

These warriors play an important role in keeping their schools environmentally-friendly.

Subsequently eco-warriors were identified in each school to drive environmental awareness initiatives in their communities.

The eco-warriors chosen were from schools with preexisting FLC collaborations; each school has five such warriors who represent the school in environmental programs and recruit other learners within the school.

These warriors play an important role in keeping their schools environmentally-friendly, and perform clean-up campaigns in and around their schools.

As part of the CCWP, FLC supported communities and schools in semi-urban, rural, and urban areas, organizing five clean up campaigns and eliminating illegal rubbish dump sites.



AS part of the Climate Change Warriors Project, FLC supported communities and schools in semi-urban, rural, and urban areas, organized five clean up campaigns to eliminate illegal rubbish dump sites.

UN PHOTO



MEXICAN INNOVATION

FOR AIR-POLLUTED CITIES THAT CAN'T WAIT:

ARTIFICIAL TREES

PUEBLA, MEXICO—Trees are one of the best things we have to clean the Earth's air, but they have certain drawbacks: they need time and space to grow.

Enter the BioUrban, an artificial tree that sucks up as much air pollution as 368 real trees.

Designed by a Mexican startup, the towering metal structure uses microalgae to clean carbon dioxide and other contaminants from the air, returning pure oxygen to the environment.

Measuring 4.2 meters tall and nearly 3 meters wide, the device looks something like a cross between a tree and a post-modernist high-rise, with a steel trunk that radiates rising bands of concentric metal.

Photosynthesis

“What this system does, through technology, is inhale air pollution and use biology to carry out the natural process (of

photosynthesis), just like a tree,” says Jaime Ferrer, a founding partner in BiomiTech, the company behind the invention.

Mexicans know a thing or two about air pollution.

Mexico City, a sprawling urban area of more than 20 million people, regularly grinds to a halt under air pollution alerts, triggered by emissions from the capital's more than five million cars, its polluting industries and even the nearby Popocatepetl volcano.

Not competing with trees

Ferrer says the company's goal is to help such cities achieve cleaner air in targeted areas—those used by pedestrians, cyclists or the elderly, for example—when planting large numbers of trees is not an option.

Worldwide, an estimated 7 million people die from exposure to air pollution each year, according to the World Health Organization.

“We decided our job was to not just stand by and let people keep dying,” says Ferrer.

Launched in 2016, BiomiTech has so far “planted” three trees: one in the city of Puebla in central Mexico, where it is headquartered; one in Colombia; and one in Panama.

It has a contract for two more in Turkey, and projects in the works to install them in Mexico City and Monterrey in northern Mexico.

A BioUrban typically costs about \$50,000, though the final price varies depending on the site.

The company has mainly sold them to local governments so far, though private donors are providing the funding in Monterrey, an industrial hub that is also no stranger to air pollution.

Each tree weighs about one ton and cleans as much air as a hectare of forest, the equivalent of what 2,890 people breathe in a day.

The project is reminiscent of another launched by a German firm in 2015, the “City Tree,” a giant, vertical square of moss that also uses photosynthesis to clean the surrounding air.

Not a replacement

Ferrer insists that the idea of the BioUrban is not to replace real trees but to complement them in areas where planting a forest would not be viable.

“They can be used in high-traffic areas, transportation terminals, where you can't just plant a hectare of trees,” he told Agence France-Presse (AFP).

“The system isn't going to end air pollution in Mexico City. But it can alleviate the problem in high-traffic areas.”

Maria Jose Negrete, 21, who goes to university near the spot where the first tree was installed, is a fan.

“It uses technology to help the environment. That's what we need right now,” she said.

—AFP



PHOTOSYNTHESIS FACTORY
The BioUrban 2.0 air purification system installed in Puebla, Mexico, carries out a process of photosynthesis using live algae, doing the equivalent to what 368 natural trees would do. —AFP



CLIMATE MEET Australia's Prime Minister Scott Morrison (fifth from right) pose for a group photo with other leaders of Asia Pacific nations during the Pacific Islands Forum in Tuvalu. AFP PHOTO

NZ, Pacific nations back tougher climate actions

TUVALU: New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern backed Pacific leaders' calls for urgent action on climate change, ramping up pressure on Australia to overhaul its stance on global warming.

Australia's Scott Morrison arrived at a meeting of Pacific island leaders in Tuvalu with Canberra's regional leadership in question amid intense scrutiny of his government's climate change policies.

Wealthy Australia has long dominated the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), an 18-member grouping consisting mainly of small atoll nations dotted around the vast Pacific ocean.

But its role is in doubt after leaders of the low-lying nations questioned in recent days whether Australia's climate-sceptic leader is committed to curbing a problem they see as a fundamental threat to their survival.

Ardern joined the chorus after touching down at the PIF meeting, further isolating coal-producing Australia.

"New Zealand will do its bit and we have an expectation that everyone else will as well... Australia has to answer to the Pacific, that's a matter for them," she told reporters.

Greenpeace campaigner Joseph Moeono-Kolio said Morrison's government appeared intent on watering down the summit's com-

munique, due to be issued Thursday, which is set to demand urgent action on climate change.

"Australia is poised to become the pariah of the Pacific," he said. Moeono-Kolio said among the measures deemed unacceptable by Australians were calls to ban new coal mines and set a timeframe for phasing out use of the carbon-emitting fuel.

"Scott Morrison has done the exact opposite of what the leaders of the Pacific have asked Australia to do and placed Pacific communities on the frontlines of the climate crisis in an even more precarious position," he said.

"Morrison's callous indifference to the plight of Pacific islanders suggests he has no problem sacrificing entire nations for the short-term profits of his backers in the coal industry."

Morrison has staunchly defended Australia's climate record, insisting the country will meet its 2030 emissions reduction target set under the 2015 Paris Agreement.

He also announced an A\$500 million (\$340 million) package this week, with funding drawn from Australia's existing aid budget, to boost climate resilience in the Pacific.

Australia and New Zealand reportedly persuaded PIF leaders to weaken the language in their communique four years ago ahead of the landmark Paris climate talks. **AFP**



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MARAMING nadidis-kubreng halaman sa mahal kong Pinas laban sa iba't ibang sakit.

Napatunayan ang mabisang gamot laban sa diabetes, halimba-wa, ang ampalaya at isang high school student na siyentista ang nakadiskubreng laban sa diabetes ang alati-res.

Matagal-tagal na ring napatunayang mabisang gamot ang lagundi laban sa ubo, sambong laban sa sakit sa bato at high blood, at tsaang gubat bilang panghugas ng nanganak at laban sa pagta-tae.

Ngayon naman, ang tawa-tawa ay ginagamit laban sa dengue na pamparami ng platelet na inuubos ng dengue virus.

Itong platelet, mga Bro, ang kalasag natin laban sa pagkaubos ng dugo sa katawan natin dahil gumagawa ito ng pagbubuo ng dugo o clot para pigilin ang tuloy-tuloy na pagdurugo.

DOST AT MAMAMAYAN

Siyempre pa, natuwa tayo nang sabihin ng Department of Science and Technology na pwede nang subukin ang tawa-tawa laban sa dengue.

Pero bago pa mag-salita ang DOST, meron nang mga mamamayan ang sumubok sa tawa-tawa at ito ang lihim na ipinaiinom sa mga may dengue na dinadala o naka-confine sa mga ospital.

Takang-taka ang mga doctor sa pagsusuri na napakabilis dumami ang platelet ng mga napaiinom ng tawa-tawa nang hindi nila nalalamang ginagamit ng mga pasyente.

Panay aspirin lang naman kasi ang ipinaiinom ng mga doctor at sinasabi lang na kung malakas at malusog ang tao, gagaling at gagaling ang maysakit sa dengue.

Viral disease raw kasi ang dengue na tumatama lang sa mga mahihina ang katawan at resistensya.

Pwede tayong mag-labas ng mga patunay ukol sa magandang epekto ng tawa-tawa sa mga nagkakasakit sa dengue.

DOH PANIRA

Ang masakit nga lang, panira ang sinasabi ng Department of Health sa posisyon ng DOST.

Sinasabi ng DOH na



DOST VS DOH SA TAWA-TAWA VS DENGUE

hindi gamot sa dengue ang tawa-tawa at nagbala pa nga na huwag basta gagamit ang mga may dengue ng tawa-tawa.

Ito'y sa harap na ng katotohanan na may gumagawa nang mga kapsula ng tawa-tawa laban sa dengue.

Tanong ngayon: sino ang dapat na paniwalaan, ang DOH o ang DOST?

Ang nakikita natin, wala pang nalalason at namamatay sa mga taong gumagamit ng tawa-tawa na inumin laban sa dengue.

At meron nga tayong ilang saksi na nagpapatunay na noong nagkadengue sila, mabilis na dumami ang kanilang platelets makaraang uminom sila ng pinagpakuluan ng tawa-tawa.

ANG PITHAC

May nilikhang ahensya ng administrasyon ni ex-President Fidel Ramos para magsaliksik sa herbal medicine at iba pang posibleng gamot na hindi gawa at ibinebenta ng mga dayuhang kompaniya.

Ito ang Philippine Institute of Herbal and Alternative Medicine na karamihang halamang gamot ang ginagawang pangunahing sangkap sa paggawa ng medisina.

Sa pagkakaalam natin, PITHAC ang unang gumawa ng lagundi, sambong at tsaang-gubat na gamot at ito ang mga binibili ng DOH para ikalat at ipamahagi sa iba't ibang ospital, klinika at health center.

Pero namamatay-matay ang PITHAC dahil sa labis na kakulangan ng pondo at suporta ng pamahalaan.

Minsang ininterbyu ng Remate ang head doctor na nakalimutan na ang pangalan sa compound ng Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center at DOH ilang taon na ang nakalilipas, todo reklamo ito sa kawalan umano ng interes ng pamahalaan na isulong ang mga pag-aaral o research sa halamang gamot.

Ito na rin ang pangunahing dahilan na naghihigala ang mga plantas-

yon nila na research center para sa halamang gamot at iba pang pamalit na gamot sa mga benta ng malalaking kompanya gaya ng Sanofi Pasteur na may gawa ng Dengvaxia.

DENGUE AT DIABETES

Ngayon nga ay napakaraming may dengue at diabetes at pareho ang mga ito ng pumapatay ng maraming Pinoy.

Taon-taon, pumapatay ng dengue ng daan-daang katao at ngayong taon, maaaring papatay ito ng 1,000 katao hanggang sa Disyembre mula sa maaaring aabot sa 200,000 may dengue.

Noong 2017, may 5 milyong may diabetes na Pinoy at maaari umanong may katulad na bilang ang may sakit nito ngunit hindi pa nasusuri.

Nasa 50,000 ang namatay sa diabetes noong 2017 at maaaring may mamatay na 100,000 taon sa pagdating ng 2045.

Ganito katindi ang mga sakit na ito at dapat sanang bigyan ito ng konsentrasyon, lalo na ang DOH.

Pero tila malamig ang DOH sa mga sakit sa dengue at diabetes, bakit?

Ito'y sa kabila ng sinasabi ng DOST na posibleng gamot sa dengue ang tawa-tawa at sa diabetes ang alati-res, ayon naman sa batang siyentista na si Maria Isabel Layson, 17, ng Iloilo National High School.

Pero pagdating ng Dengvaxia at mga ibinebenta ng mga dayuhan, todo bili ng gamit at rekomenda ang mga taga-DOH.

Dahil ba sa bilyon-bilyong piso ang halaga ng mga ito at ay kumikita samantalang walang kita sa mga halamang gamot gaya ng tawa-tawa at alati-res.

Anomang reaksyon o reklamo, maaaring iparating sa 0922840-3333 o i-email sa bantiporda@vhs.com