

DATE : 24 AUG 2019

DAY : Saturday

# DENR

## IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



# 13 rare animals seized from wildlife trader

By **Krixia Subingsubing**  
@krixiasINQ

After three years of skirting law enforcers through the underbelly of online wildlife trafficking, a man notorious for selling endangered animals on Facebook was finally nabbed on Friday by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Manila.

Sharon Jonjon Lim, known among wildlife collectors on Facebook as Ron Mil, will be facing charges of possession and sale of wildlife under Republic Act No. 9147, said NBI environmental crime division chief Czar Eric Nuqui.

## Buy-bust

Lim was arrested during a buy-bust sting in Sta. Mesa, Manila, through a former associate-turned-asset.

Agents were able to rescue 13 rare animals worth a total of P250,000.

These include three peregrine falcons, which are forbidden from being traded under the UN Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, said Philippine Center for Terrestrial and Aquatic Research executive director Emerson Sy.

The other animals were six sulcata tortoises, two red-sided eclectus parrots and two



**ENDANGERED** Dr. Rogelio Demelletes Jr. of the DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau shows a sulcata tortoise (left) and an eclectus parrot (right). They were among the rare animals and birds rescued from an online wildlife trafficker.

—PHOTOS BY JOAN BONDOC

iguanas.

These will be cared for in the Ninoy Aquino Wildlife Park in Quezon City, Nuqui said.

Lim, believed to have been engaging in illegal wildlife trafficking as early as 2014, was an especially elusive suspect, said Dr. Rogelio Demelletes Jr. of the DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau.

"He refused to meet with his own customers, preferring a middleman. He would post his wares on Facebook and only accommodate his most frequent customers," he said.

This made him quite unlike his fellow wildlife traders on

Facebook, who were too often indiscreet with their transactions—"like taunting law enforcers," Nuqui said.

## Facebook deals

Nowadays, he added, most of their arrests were hinged on Facebook transactions.

"The demand for wildlife trading flourishes there because of the degree of anonymity [afforded to traders and buyers]. Online transactions are also quicker and more convenient," he said.

He noted that Lim didn't seem to have any physical shop and that all his captive-bred animals were sold online. INQ

## DENR boosts greening program in Nueva Vizcaya

ESTABLISHED in 2017, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-Enhanced National Greening Plantations (ENGP) in Nueva Vizcaya has bared good results, as the DENR continues to maintain and manage plantations in the province as a source of livelihood and greening activities.

Edgar Martin of the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office said their ENGP now covers an area of more than 2,633 hectares with 11 extension officers as an additional workforce to ensure the success of the project in collaboration with private organizations, local government units (LGUs) and other stakeholders.

Martin said part of their ENGP program was the development of some 885 individual plus trees in the Lower Magat Eco-Tourism Park in Diadi town and Barangay Palas in Bambang town, which they maintain as a good source of quality seeds.

"We are also managing a clonal nursery in Diadi town

that has already produced 16,650 cloned seedlings out of the 20,000 cloned seedlings target for 2019," Martin said.

Cloned seedlings at the nursery include Narra, Molave, Malasantol, Tuai, Duguan and Benguet Pine.

Martin said this was in addition to 42,435 Mahogany seedlings they had produced in various areas in the province, which their office intends to use in plantations not covered by government funding and for distribution to various public and private agencies that are interested in partnering with the ENGP program.

Meanwhile, the DENR is beefing up its enforcement capability in the province by procuring communication equipment and mobility vehicles, including the hiring of more forest personnel to be deployed in areas where there are logging activities.

Martin said with the equipment, their office would be able to empower personnel in their mandate to guard their respective areas.

"We have acquired equipment which were distributed to our field offices to assist personnel in enforcing the agency's mandates on environment protection and management," he said.

Martin said they were still in need of a few more personnel and that they had initially hired 11 forest protection officers to increase their capability in protecting the forests and maintain their patrolling activities in the province.

"We now maintain at least three forest protection groups in the upland municipalities of Kasibu, Quezon and Sta. Fe, which also led to the confiscation of illegally cut logs," he said.

The DENR has seized and recorded more than 1,488 board feet of illegally cut forest products from January to June of this year, including two vehicles used in hauling and three chainsaws. It also led the filing of eight environment-related cases in various courts in the province.

Martin said their enforce-

ment agencies had been operating with the assistance of the Philippine National Police, Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, LGUs and civilian volunteers.

Also under the Lawin Forest and Biodiversity Protection System (LFBPS) assessment, the DENR has covered 1,985 kilometers patrol activities in the province, which is 276 percent of their target this year.

Martin explained that the LFBPS is an integrated science-based assessment that is a user-friendly scheme with the use of innovative technology and helps in monitoring the status of the forest.

He noted that the scheme also helps environmental monitoring especially in forest and biodiversity areas of high conservation value.

"It also allows communities and authorities to alleviate the status of the natural forest and properly manage the ecosystem against degradation and deforestation," Martin added. LEANDER C. DOMINGO



## KAMPANYA SA KALINISAN IPATUTUPAD LABAN SA TURISTANG NAGKAKALAT NG DUMI SA ISLA NG BORACAY

PALALAKASIN ng Boracay Inter-Agency Rehabilitation Management Group (BIARMG) ang kanilang kampanya upang mapanatili ang kalinisan ng islang Boracay matapos ang naging viral video na nagpapakita ng dalawang turista na nagkalat ng dumi ng tao sa pampang at sa tubig ng world famous resort island.

Sa kasalukuyan, tinitingnan na ni BIARMG Director Natividad Bernardino ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang kumakalat na video sa social media kung saan may babaeng turista na hinahayaang dumumi ang isang bata sa tubig-dagat habang ang isa naman ay ibinabaon sa puting buhangin sa pampang ang maruming diaper.

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

Ayon kay Bernardino, ikinokonsidera na ng BIARMG ang iba't ibang paraan upang makasunod ang mga turista sa ipinatutupad na regulasyon sa Boracay partikular ang

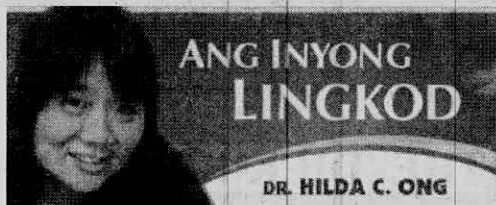
tungkol sa "anti-littering ordinance" na nagbabawal sa lahat na magkalat, umihi, dumumi, dumura at magtapon ng basura sa mga pampublikong lugar.

"We are planning to give pamphlets through the airlines on the do's and don'ts on the island especially on the proper way to throw garbage and policy against defecation at the Boracay beach," sabi ni Bernardino.

Aniya, pinag-iisipan narin nilang isulat sa ibang foreign language ang mga karatula o signages na nilalagay sa beachfront bilang babala sa mga nagkakat, naninigari-lyo, nagdadala ng babasaging bote at iba pa.

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

Batay sa talaan ng Malay Municipal Tourism Office (MMTO), sa kabuuang 619,034 turista na bumisita sa Boracay mula Enero 1 hang-



DR. HILDA C. ONG

gang Abril 15 ng kasalukuyang taon, 357,041 o 57% sa bilang na ito ay mga banyaga at karamihan sa mga ito ay Chinese at Koreans.

Ang local tourists ay may bilang na 240,745 at 22,148 ang mga overseas Filipino worker.

Ang iba pang banyagang turista na nagtungo sa Boracay ay nagmula sa mga bansang Japan, Russia, Taiwan, United Kingdom at United States.

Lumalabas din sa record ng MMTO na mula Enero hanggang Marso ay nakapagtala ang naturang tanggapan ng 1,043 na lumabag sa mga batas sa isla. Ito ay pinangunahan ng mga Chinese tourist na mayroong 605 violators; sinundan ng South Koreans, 220 at Filipinos, 173.

Ani Bernardino, ang viral video ng dalawang banyaga ay isang halimbawa ng mga iresponsableng turista na hindi marunong rumespeto sa Boracay, lalo na sa mga naninirahan dito at sa kanilang mga kapwa turista.

"Although it may be considered an isolated incident, we are nonetheless taking this seriously, which is why my

office is seeking out to the person who uploaded the video so that substantial information can be made and appropriate actions can be taken on the matter," ayon pa kay Bernardino.

Sinabi pa nito, mula sa ulat ng Boracay Enhanced Security, Strategy and Tactics (BESST) Police, ang mga nahuling lumabag sa Phase I beachfront ay bumaba na mula 270 noong Abril 2019 hanggang 74 ngayong Hunyo 8. Sa Phase II main road, mula sa 527 ay bumaba ito sa 8 sa parehas na petsa.

Kabilang sa tungkulin ng BIARMG ay ang pag-monitor sa ginagawang rehabilitasyon ng Boracay kasama na rito ang water quality assessment at road rehabilitation na pinangangasiwaan ng Department of Public Works and Highways. Noong umaga ng Agosto 14 ay ipinag-utos ni DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu na i-cordon off ang beachfront area sa Station 1 kung saan kinunan ang viral video. Pansamantala itong ipinasara ng 48-oras o hanggang ang water quality tests ay magpapakita ng safe levels for human contact.



**DENR ASSURES FISHERMEN**

# MANGROVE PARK OUTSIDE OF PLANNED BULACAN AIRPORT

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—A mangrove park that was rehabilitated by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in a town in Bulacan province is far from the proposed 2,500-hectare New Manila International Airport project of San Miguel Holdings Corp. (SMHC).

Bulacan town's Mangrove Ecopark is 277 meters away from the proposed SMHC aerotropolis and will not be affected by its construction, according to a cer-

tification issued on July 22 by Emelita Lingat, Bulacan provincial environment and natural resources officer.

Bulacan residents have been concerned about the ecopark at Sitio Wawang Capiz in Barangay Taliptip, which is north of the planned P734-billion international gateway.

Philkairos Inc., which was commissioned to undertake the government-required environmental impact study for SMHC,

informed fishermen and residents in March that the 24.5-ha mangrove area would be spared from the reclamation of former fishponds spanning 2,500 ha.

The rehabilitation of the park was funded by the DENR's Biodiversity Management Bureau, Lingat said.

Mangroves protect homes during bad weather while giving fishermen good catch, said Monica Anastacio, a leader of the group AkapKa, which is opposed

to the SMHC airport project.

Losing the mangroves would leave Bulacan with only 294 ha of mangroves, according to a forest mapping project conducted by Homer Pagkalinawan of the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

By comparison, mangroves along Manila Bay have dwindled from 54,000 ha at the end of the 19th century to 2,000 has in 1990, and 794 ha in 1995, the DENR said. —TONETTE OREJAS INQ



## DENR gives thumbs up to Antipolo Solid Waste Management

**THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) IV-A has given the thumbs up to the solid waste management of the Antipolo City government when it recognized Antipolo in the recently held 4th Annual Environmental Summit at the Taal Vista Hotel in Tagaytay City.**

Antipolo was among the chosen local government units (LGUs) cited by the DENR this year. Antipolo received two plaques of recognition for its Best Available Practices and Best Environ-

mental Technology.

"Ang lungsod ng Antipolo ay ang ating tahanan na dapat nating panatilihin malinis, maayos, at maganda. Mahigpit po nating ipinapatupad ang mga ordinansa at programa sa wastong pamamahala ng basura para tugunan ang kalinisan ng ating siyudad. Nakakataba po ng puso ang pagkilala ng pamahalaang nasyunal dahil patunay ito na epektibo at tama ang ating ipinaglalabang pangarap para sa Antipolo," said Mayor Andeng Ynares.

Led by the City Environment and Waste Management Office (CEWMO), among the award winning practices of Antipolo City is the use of briquetting machine and composting bin to recycle waste.

Also included in the city's best practice is the use of Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) in waste management and its continuous information campaign in 16 barangays.

In 2018, the Interior and Local Government (DILG) recognized the city as Hall of Fame awardee in its Environmental Compliance Audit (ECA).

Among the prestigious citations received by the city are the Manila Bayani Award and Top Performer Award.



## DENR thumbs up sa Solid Waste Management ng Antipolo City

APPROVE sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) IV-A ang solid waste management ng Antipolo City Government nang kilalanin nito ang Antipolo sa ginanap na 4th Annual Environmental Summit kamakailan sa Taal Vista Hotel, Tagaytay City. Kabilang ang Antipolo sa mga piling-piling LGUs na kinilala ng DENR ngayong taon. Tumanggap ng dalawang Plaque of Recognition ang pamahalaang lokal para sa Best Available Practices at Best Environmental Technology.

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Sa pangunguna ng City Environment and Waste Management Office (CEWMO), kabilang sa award winning practices ng Antipolo City ang paggamit ng

briquetting machine at composting bin sa pagreresiklo ng mga basura. Malibandito, best practice din ng lungsod ang paggamit ng Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) sa pamamahala ng mga basura at ang walang tigil na information campaign sa 16 na barangay.

Noong 2018, pinarangalan at kinilala ng Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) ang lungsod bilang Hall of Fame Awardee sa Environmental Compliance Audit (ECA). Kasama rin sa mga prestihiyosong parangalan nakaamit ng pamahalaang lokal ang Manila Bayani Award at Top Performer Award.



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## Mercury-free Philippines nasa kamay ng publiko

**NANINDIGAN** si Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu na ang paraan upang magkaroon ng mercury-free country ay responsibilidad ng lahat kabilang na ang gobyerno, pribadong sektor, civil society at ng publiko.

"Each of us has a role to play, and with the Philippines' upcoming ratification of the Minamata Convention, it is incumbent upon us to properly

ly manage mercury and its wastes in an environmentally sound manner," sabi ni Cimatu sa pagpapasinaya ng National Action Plan ng bansa para sa phase-out ng mercury-containing products and wastes.

Ang Minamata Convention ay ang pagsasama-sama ng buong mundo para sa isang tratado na layuning magkaroon ng phase-out ang mercury na isang highly toxic substance na maaaring makaapekto sa

kalikasan at kalusugan ng mga tao.

Tinanggap ng DENR ang kopya ng NAP na ipinagkaloob kay DENR's Foreign Assisted and Special Projects Service Director Lourdes Wagan na siyang naging kinatawan ni Cimatu sa ginanap na seremonya sa Mandaluyong City noong Hulyo 30.

Noong 2013, ang Pilipinas ay isa sa 128 na bansa na lumagda sa Minamata Convention upang makontrol ang paggamit at pagbebenta ng mercury.

**SANTI CELARIO**



## MIDNIGHT DEALS SA CAGAYAN RIVER DREDGING, BUKING!

**APAT na pribadong kompanya ang binigyan ng midnight deals ng dating administrasyon ng lokal na pamahalaan ng Aparri para i-dredge ang parte ng Cagayan River na nasasakupan ng nasabing bayan.**

Sa provincial board hearing noong Huwebes, ibinunyag ni Senior Board Member Rosauro Resuello na binigyan ng permiso ni dating Acting Vice Mayor/ Sangguniang Bayan Member Cesar Mabbagu at inaprubahan ni dating Acting Mayor/ Sangguniang Bayan Member Ria Capina ang Riverfront Construction, P.E.R.R.C.

Construction, Ephesus Mineral Corporation na mag-dredge ng Cagayan River at ang JDVC Resources Corp. na mag-off-shore mining sa karagatang bahagi ng Aparri.

Ang impormasyon ni Resuello ay kinumpirma mismo sa nasabing pagdinig ng mga resource speaker mula sa Mines and Geosciences Bureau at Department of Public Works and Highways.

Ang mga kasunduan ay inaprubahan kalagitnaan ng Hunyo 2019 o ilang linggo bago ang pagtatapos ng termino ng mga nakaupong pinuno na kinabibilangan nina Mabbagu

at Capina.

Ayon sa isang source mula sa Kapitolyo ng probinsiya na ayaw magpakilala dahil napakasensitibo ng isyu, sina Mabbagu at Capina ay tumayong mga galamay sa munisipyo nina dating Mayor Ismael Tumaru at Vice Mayor Shalimar Tumaru na maaaring nasa likod ng maanomalyang midnight deals sa apat na kompanya. Ang mga Tumaru ay

kapwa natalo sa nakaraang eleksiyon.

Maring iginiit ng bokal sa mga kinauukulan ang malalimang pagbusisi sa mga minadaling kontrata na hindi pumapabor sa interes ng mamamayan ng Aparri lalo't may mga paglabag din sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources ang mga kompanyang kanyang pinangalanan.

RNT



## Solar power mas bet ni Duterte

PABOR si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa solar power plant dahil malinis at mas ligtas ito kung ikukumpara sa coal power plant.

Inihayag ito ng Pangulo sa kanyang pagdalo sa inagurasyon ng 7.5 MWP Tuminglad solar power project sa Odiongan, Tablas Island, Romblon noong Miyerkoles.

"Ganito ang istorya niya, those who are producing oil and coal are always against itong hybrid lalo na kung solar. And all sorts of stories about the disadvantages of having a solar that it cannot withstand—well of course the forces of nature," sabi ng Pangulo.

Aminado ang Pangulo na mas mura magpatayo ng coal at oil power plant pero malakinaman aniya ang pinsalang dulot ng mga ito sa kapaligiran.

"You have a cheap power plant—coal, oil, but the fossil, the carbon, the fossil fuel leaves a lot of carbon footprints in our country. And I do not know how it would impact on the next generation," ayon kay Pangulong Duterte.

Ang panawagan aniya ng mga tao ngayon ay para sa isang makabagong enerhiya o renewable energy na hindi makakapinsala sa ating kapaligiran.

Binigyang-diin pa ng Pangulo na ang mga solar power plant project katulad ng itatayo sa Odiongan ay sumusuporta sa layunin ng gobyerno na bilisan ang pag-develop ng mga renewable energy sources sa bansa upang mabawasan ang labis na pagsandal ng Pilipinas sa mga traditional energy sources katulad ng coal.

# Haribon discusses impact of global warming

HARIBON Foundation members met recently to discuss climate change and the impact of biodiversity in a membership learning activity, titled "1.5: A Learning Session for the Planet and the People," at the Haribon office in Quezon City.

The session, which centered on the impact of climate change at 1.5 degrees Celsius (C), was led by Haribon member John Leo Algo, program manager for Climate Action for Sustainability Initiative.

According to Algo, global warming would likely reach 1.5 C between 2030 and 2052 if the current rate of greenhouse gas emissions continue or go even higher.

This would pose very serious threats to the environment and will be extremely dangerous because, by then, only less than 10 percent of coral reefs in Philippine waters would be in good condition.

Food security is also at stake as the country has been experiencing some of the deadliest tropical cyclones in the planet in only over a decade.

Thus, Haribon said, to avoid



■ Photo shows Haribon members who took part in a recent membership learning activity, titled '1.5: A Learning Session for the Planet and the People,' at the Haribon office in Quezon City. HARIBON PHOTO

greater negative impact on human health, the environment and biodiversity, it is imperative to prevent the rise of global temperature beyond 1.5 C.

Some of the ways to reduce global warming include establishing more renewable energy sources,

planting native trees or rainforestation, and reducing gas emissions.

Moreover, Algo stressed that there is no single perfect solution to the warming of the planet, as such, a collaboration among individuals and groups from all sectors is key in responding to this global problem.

Do you want to learn more about how to help the environment? Would you like to join different conservation activities with other individuals and groups? Join Haribon now by visiting membership@haribon.org.ph.

**QUEENIE DIANE MALABANAN**



# Maynilad to reforests 34 hectares in 2019

**WEST Zone concessionaire Maynilad Water Services, Inc. pledged to plant 34,000 trees and mangroves over 34 hectares of critical watersheds this year, as part of its annual "Plant for Life"**

## Program.

The program is part of Maynilad's continuing effort to reforest the Ipo Watershed and other watersheds within the West Zone, which will help prevent calamities such as

land erosion and flooding, and protect water quality in the dams that supply the water needs of Metro Manila.

This year, Maynilad adopted 30 hectares in Mt. Balagbag, Rizal, which is one of the most heavily deforested areas of the Ipo Watershed.

Since the program's inception in 2007, Maynilad has planted almost 800,000 trees in the Ipo Watershed covering an area of 341 hectares. The water company has also expanded reforestation activities to include watersheds in Malabon and Muntinlupa, and the planting of mangroves in Laguna Lake and the coastal areas of Manila Bay.

"One way to ensure the sustainability of our limited water resources is to plant trees in vital watersheds. Planting trees prevents the soil erosion that could affect the quality of raw water, and also offers a long-term solution to the cycle of flooding during the rainy season," said Maynilad President and CEO Ramoncito S. Fernandez.



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## PAGBABAGO

# A tireless advocate for children, environment, and the poor

By **FLORANGEL ROSARIO BRAID**

**G**INA Lopez is not only one in a million; there can never be anyone like her. This appears to be the opinion of many of our admirers who have sent hundreds of posts on Facebook and letters to the media.

Three days before she passed on, I wrote on Sylvia Munoz Ordonez's Facebook post, asking for prayers for Gina, and saying that her friends and the country need her. Sylvia wrote back, "Only miracles can save her." A day later, she wrote that Gina had awakened. A miracle indeed! God answers in mysterious ways. A day later, He must have decided that by being an angel, Gina could be of greater help to the people and country -- through her intervention during some of our most difficult times.

Gina and I met some three decades ago, after her return as missionary of Ananda Marga, a religious sect where she spent six years of service in Portugal, India, and Kenya. This was when we were both trying to explore ways of navigating the new world of Internet through educational TV and children's programs. We again connected two years ago when she was environment secretary. I had been writing a series on climate change and mining issues, so she asked me if I could join her in a visit to Mindanao municipalities that had shown the destructive impact of large-scale and irresponsible mining. I could not join the first scheduled trip but

promised to join the next one. However, this didn't materialize as a few days later, she was rejected by the Commission on Appointments.

After Gina's article for "Rogue," where she described how a hard life can be a "good one," and how she taught children in pre-primary schools in marginalized communities under some of the most deprived conditions, she received hundreds of responses from people who could not find enough words to describe their admiration for her "courage, caring heart, selfless love, compassion, commitment, spirituality, as well as what they describe as an amazing journey."

Gina would say that "as long as one is committed to integrity and service, there are divine forces that help." Meditation also helps, she said, when people ask how this woman from a privileged family was able to endure what she had to go through. Some say her advocacies are similar to that of Angela Jolie. Others see in her some of Mother Teresa's qualities.

She attributed her courage and determination to her life in the ashram which she said had prepared her to become a creator of a better world.

One would remember how she ordered the shutting down of 23 mines and cancelled 75 lucrative contracts for mines that threatened environmental laws. "I'm doing the right thing, and let the dice fall where they may.... Who suffers if you kill the environment? It's the poor. And it's the government's duty

to protect our people. But if a decision is based on business interests, it loses its moral ascendancy." Thus was her response to owners and supporters of mining industries who had violated our laws. Congress denied her confirmation 10 months after her appointment by President Duterte.

Before she became the government's environment chief, Gina was already a household word in environment and children's rights concerns. At the ABS-CBN Foundation which she founded, she had organized a 24-hour hotline, Bantay Bata 163 which responds to all sorts of violations against children's rights, and a recipient of the UN Grand Awardee for Excellence. "Sineskuela," an educational TV program, won the UNESCO award. Over the years, the ABS-CBN Foundation provided scholarships and disaster relief during calamities. Gina founded "Bantay Kalikasan" which rehabilitated the 2,700 hectares of La Mesa Dam Watershed, which led to the establishment of La Mesa Eco-Park. She later cleaned up Pasig River when she was appointed to head the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission.

Gina indeed led an incredible and meaningful life.

"Could she be president someday?", someone asked about Gina whose primary vision for herself was always to be aligned with the highest truth.

She has left us, but there will be others that she had mentored and nurtured with the same ideals, the

same timeless creativity and energy, the same passion and love of country and fellowmen, who would eventually take her place. I can picture her now, perhaps having conversations with God, telling Him what she always tells others -- that "the greatest thing is the possibility of making a difference."

And we can all agree that indeed, Gina had made more than a difference in our lives.

Farewell Gina, till we meet again.

*My email, [florangel.braid@gmail.com](mailto:florangel.braid@gmail.com)*





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**GINA Lopez**

ABS-CBN shares the amazing and inspiring life story of well-loved environmentalist and philanthropist Gina Lopez in the special documentary "Genuine Love," which airs this Sunday (Aug. 25) at 10:45 am before "ASAP Natin 'To" and at 9 pm after "The Voice Kids."

Produced by ABS-CBN Docu-Central, "Genuine Love" takes us to Gina's younger days and shows how and why she left her family and a life of privilege to

# Remembering Gina

search for a deeper life purpose.

After serving as an Ananda Marga missionary for more than 15 years in Africa, she returned to the Philippines and took over ABS-CBN Foundation – the socio-civic arm of the country's biggest broadcast network that was founded by her father Eugenio "Geny" Lopez Jr.

In her trailblazing way, Gina spearheaded projects, which included Educational Television (ETV) that produced iconic programs like "Sineskwela" and "Hiraya Manawari;" Bantay Kalikasan that promoted environmental preservation; and Bantay Bata 163, Asia's first rescue hotline for abused children.

Her advocacy against illegal and destructive commercial mining made President Rodrigo Duterte appoint her as an environment secretary.

After her short stint in the government, Gina wasted no time and founded the Investments in Loving Organizations for Village Economies (ILOVE) Foundation, where partner organizations in

the government and private sector united to provide financial and technical support to eight deserving groups. She featured the stories of the eight organizations in her show "G Diaries" on ABS-CBN.

Her death last Monday (August 19), crushed the hearts of her many supporters, fellow advocates, and beneficiaries of her projects, who attest to her sincerity and unwavering passion to serve the Filipino people.

As it traces the beginning of Gina's life in public service until her passing, "Genuine Love" will share stories about Gina as told by her family members, friends, and colleagues who attended her wake held in ABS-CBN. It will also show final interview last July 12 with Tina Monzon-Palma.

Watch the inspiring story of the ABS-CBN Foundation, the individuals and communities it has helped, and the woman behind its enduring mission this Sunday (August 25) at 10:45 am before "ASAP Natin 'To" and at 9 pm after "The Voice Kids."



# Stories on Gina, the eco-heroine, tell of how she helped small villages

By **ALEXANDRIA DENNISE SAN JUAN**

Stories on gratefulness and love for the environment poured yesterday from people who had worked with Gina Lopez who came to pay their last respects at the first day of public viewing for the former Environment chief.

One of the stories came from Geraldine Labradore who flew from Cebu City with seven others to pay their last respects for the person they called their "eco-heroine" in their small island of Kinataraan.

Labradore, who was part of the Southern Partners and Fair Trade Center located in Cebu, remembered how Lopez helped put their remote island on the map and also supported the livelihood of the community.

"Ma'am Gina was our development partner, actually, part of the Kinataraan Sustainable Area Development Program that is focused on eco-tourism and building livelihood for the community," Labradore said in an interview at the ABS-CBN Studio 10 where the wake is being held.

According to Labradore, their relationship with Lopez started with an e-mail inviting the environment activist to visit the island and explore possible partnerships with other stakeholders. She added that Lopez' stint as the head of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) inspired them a lot.

"Upon receiving our e-mail she responded quickly, she even called me up. She said she was going to Cebu, wanted to meet us, and the rest is history."

Labradore recalled that after that first meeting with Lopez, all of them in the community were "above the clouds and happy."

"We were able to construct in August 2018 the facility that we call now as the Kinataraan Wellness Resort, the first in the island, which we are trying to build as an eco-tourism site and destination."

Through the help of Lopez, Labradore said the resort is now one of the destination sites in Cebu. The visitor traffic benefits the whole community especially the Hagdan Kinataraan Langub Workers Association (Hakilawa) which is mostly composed of women.

"We were so inspired by her being passionate and very concerned with farmers and women. Her aim to help address poverty was also our dream."

A teary-eyed Labradore said she will always remember Gina as an "amazing lady" who uplifted their situation in the island and gave them hope to continue the legacy that she has left for the community.

Another visitor, 68-year-old Divine Timola came all alone from Alabang, Muntinlupa to the wake in Quezon City to visit the wake of Lopez whom she described as "a brave woman who loves the country and the environment so much."

"Every Sunday, I always watched her show where I saw how many undiscovered beautiful islands we have in the Philippines. I learned to love the country we are living in," Timola shared.

She said it was also from Lopez where she learned about how mining negatively affects the lives of the people.

"The things that she did before will never be forgotten and I hope someone will continue her legacy of doing everything she can do to protect our environ-

ment."

Labradore and Timola were among the many people and organizations helped and inspired by Lopez through her pro-environment advocacy and programs who lined up at the ABS-CBN Studio 10 to pay their last respects to the known "Earth-warrior."

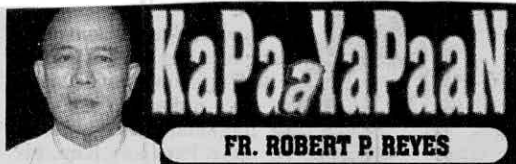
Lopez, who was the ABS-CBN Foundation chairman, launched Bantay Bata 163 – the first rescue hotline for children in Asia, and the Bantay Kalikasan, a program that advocates for the protection of the environment.

Her most notable achievements through Bantay Kalikasan were the successful reforestation of the La Mesa Watershed and the rehabilitation of 17 esteros of the Pasig River.

She was also the vice-chairperson of ABS-CBN Bayan Foundation which provides microfinance assistance to micro-entrepreneurs.

In June 2016, Lopez was appointed by President Duterte as DENR secretary in an ad interim basis but the Commission on Appointments formally rejected her appointment on May 2017.





## LABAN PARA SA KALIKASAN NINA DOC GERRY AT GINA LOPEZ, INIWAN NA SA MGA BUHAY PA

IKA-24 ng Enero 2011, katatapos lang ng pag-uusap nina Doc Gerry Ortega at Gina Lopez ng ABS-CBN Foundation tungkol sa mainit at kontrobersiyal na kampanya ng “10 milyong lagda” upang itigil ang pagmimina sa Palawan, tumuloy si Doc Gerry sa ukay-ukay na nasa tabi ng Veterinary Clinic. Kasalukuyang namimili si Doc Gerry nang lumapit at tahasang itinutok ng isang lalaki sa kanyang ulo ang baril at bigla itong pinaputok. Bumagsak at humandusay ang tapat at matapang na kaibigan ng kalikasan.

Dumating agad sa Puerto Princesa si Gina para dumalo sa burol ni

Doc Gerry. Magkasama kami ni Gina sa entablado ng malaking bulwagan kung saan ibinurol si Doc Gerry. Bago nagsimula ang misang pinamunuan ni Obispo Pedro Arigo, nagkaroon ng maikling programa. Sa harapan ng maraming tao, nagsalita si Gina at tinapos ang kanyang talumpati sa mainit na chant na “no to mining in Palawan!” Sinabayan sa paulit-ulit nang isinisigaw ng mga tao roon ang “no to mining in Palawan!” Pagkatapos nito, nagsimula na ang misa.

Bago natapos ang misa, nagsalita ang panganay na anak ni Doc Gerry na si Michaela. Sa dulo ng

kanyang pagbabahagi, inihambing ni Michaela ang kanyang ama sa kandila sa madilim na gubat. *“Sapat na ang ilaw ng munting kandila upang basagin ang nakatatangkot at nakapanghihina na dilim. Ang kandilang ito ay ang ama kong si Doc Gerry Ortega.”*

Pagkatapos ng mga imbestigasyon at matagal na paghahanap sa naturang mastermind ng pagpatay kay Doc Gerry, nahuli sa Thailand ang magkapatid na sina ex-Palawan Gov. Joel Reyes at ex-Coron Mayor Mario Reyes noong Setyembre 2015. Nakulong ang magkapatid sa Provincial City Jail ng Palawan, pero pagkaraan

ng ilang buwan, nakalaya si Mario Reyes.

Nakadidismaya dahil noong ika-5 ng Enero 2018, ilang linggo lang bago ang ika-8 anibersaryo ng pagpatay kay Doc Gerry, ibinasura ng Court of Appeals ang desisyon ng pangalawang panel ng DOJ na nagbaligtad sa desisyon ng unang panel na nagsabing walang batayan ang akusasyong si Joel Reyes ang mastermind sa pagpatay kay Doc Gerry kaya nakalaya na rin ang dating gobernador.

Tila nawala o nabawasan ng malaki ang liwanag na ibinigay ni Doc Gerry sa Palawan sa pagpapalaya sa mastermind ng pagpatay sa kanya ngunit, sa

kabila ng umalingawngaw na sigaw sa burol ni Doc Gerry na “no to mining in Palawan”, lumaki at lumawak ang sigaw na mula mismo kay Gina Lopez na naging kalihim ng DENR at mula rito, narinig natin ang kanyang tinig na “no to mining in the Philippines!” Pero ang nakalulungkot, isang taon lang ang itinagal niya sa kagawaran.

Ngayong patay na sina Doc Gerry at Gina Lopez, nagliliwanag ang dalawang kandila ngunit, iba na ang kanilang isinisigaw, ibinigay na nila ang liwanag ng kanilang buhay sa atin kaya simulan na rin natin ang liwanag para sa kalikasan, para sa tao at para sa Inang Bayan.

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## SEA TURTLE, TWO WHALES FOUND DEAD IN BICOL

**LEGAZPI CITY:** Three marine endangered species were found dead in separate shorelines of the provinces of Albay, Camarines Sur and Masbate for two consecutive days. On Thursday morning, an endangered marine species, a female 2.23-meter pygmy sperm whale (*Kogia breviceps*), was found dead in the coast of Barangay Pasal, Del Gallego town in Camarines Sur, said Nonie Enolva, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources regional spokesman. On Wednesday, a 15-year-old green sea turtle weighing 30 kilograms and measuring 3 feet 21 inches, was found dead with a piece of fishnet stuck on her neck in the shoreline of Manhatan Calayucay village in Santo Domingo town. The carcass was buried along the shore of Barangay Calayucay with the supervision of Tinoy Balingbing, municipal environment officer. Balingbing warned the people that slaughtering a sea turtle, even the dead ones, is strictly prohibited. While in Batuan, Masbate, a short-finned pilot whale (*Globicephala macrorhynchus*) was also found dead on Wednesday morning.

**RHAYDZ B. BARCIA**



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Website: <http://www.emb.gov.ph> / Email: [mail@emb.gov.ph](mailto:mail@emb.gov.ph)

### **NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

On the **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS)** of the proposed **SOUTH PULANGI HYDROELECTRIC POWER PLANT PROJECT** of **PULANGI HYDRO POWER CORPORATION (PHPC)** to be located in the **MUNICIPALITIES OF DANGCAGAN, DAMULOG, KIBAWE AND KITAOTAO ALL IN THE PROVINCE OF BUKIDNON.**

Notice is hereby given to all parties who wish to give their opinion regarding the implementation of the proposed **SOUTH PULANGI HYDRO ELECTRIC POWER PLANT PROJECT** to attend the Public Hearings scheduled as follows:

Date	Time	Venue
11 September 2019 (Wednesday)	8:00 AM (Registration starts at 7:00 AM)	Kitaotao Tennis Court, Municipality of Kitaotao
11 September 2019 (Wednesday)	2:00 PM (Registration starts at 1:00 PM)	Lucky 9 Resort Function Hall, Municipality of Dangcagan
12 September 2019 (Thursday)	8:00 AM (Registration starts at 7:00 AM)	Kibawe Municipal Gymnasium, Municipality of Kibawe
12 September 2019 (Thursday)	2:00 PM (Registration starts at 1:00 PM)	Municipal Function Hall, Municipality of Damulog

The Public Hearing is being conducted in connection with the review of the EIS of the aforementioned project by the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

All interested parties who wish to attend or participate in these Public Hearings should preferably confirm their attendance/participation and may give their opinion(s) in a concise position paper to the **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION (EIAMD)** of this Office through mail or through email at [eiamd.emb.co@gmail.com](mailto:eiamd.emb.co@gmail.com), at least three (3) days before the Public Hearing schedule. Those who will not be able to register or submit written positions may be given the opportunity to share their issues on the day of the hearing itself.

The project's EIS and Executive Summary for the Public are downloadable at our website: [www.eia.emb.gov.ph](http://www.eia.emb.gov.ph) (kindly access the Notice of Public Hearing/ Consultation link found in our website) while copies will be available in this Office.

For more details, please contact the EIAMD Division at this Office at telephone number (02) 920- 2240 to 41 through the project casehandlers Engr. Lene Ramboyoung and Mr. Xairus Guzman.

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## Amazon forest fire threatens oxygen supply

**RIO DE JANEIRO:** Amid global concern about raging fires in the Amazon, the most serious repercussion is it puts global oxygen supply in peril as approximately 20 percent of oxygen originate from the 7 million-square kilometer wilderness, Brazil said.

Official figures show nearly 2,500 forest fires are ongoing in the Brazil in the first eight months of the year — the highest number for any year since 2013. Most were in the Amazon.

The extent of the area damaged by fires has yet to be determined, but smoke has choked Sao Paulo and several other Brazilian cities in the past week. United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said he was "deeply concerned" by the fires.

Neighboring Peru, which contains much of the Amazon basin, announced it was "on alert" for wildfires spreading from the rainforest in Brazil and Bolivia.

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■ OXYGEN FROM A1

## Amazon forest fire threatens

Paraguay and Bolivia are battling separate wildfires that have devastated large areas of their rainforests.

The threat to what some call "the lungs of the planet" has ignited a bitter dispute about who is to blame during the tenure of a leader who has described Brazil's rainforest protection as an obstacle to economic development and who traded Twitter jabs on Thursday with France's president over the fires.

French President Emmanuel Ma-

cron called the wildfires an international crisis and said the leaders of the Group of 7 nations should hold urgent discussions about them at their summit in France this weekend.

"Our house is burning. Literally. The Amazon rain forest — the lungs which produces 20 percent of our planet's oxygen — is on fire," Macron tweeted.

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro fired back with his own tweet: "I regret that Macron seeks to make personal

political gains in an internal matter for Brazil and other Amazonian countries. The sensationalist tone he used does nothing to solve the problem."

Onyx Lorenzoni, the president's chief of staff, earlier in the day accused European countries of exaggerating environmental problems in Brazil in order to disrupt its commercial interests.

"There is deforestation in Brazil, yes, but not at the rate and level that they say," said Lorenzoni, according to the Brazilian news website globo.com.

His allegation came after Germany and Norway, citing Brazil's apparent lack of commitment to

fighting deforestation, decided to withhold more than \$60 million in funds earmarked for sustainability projects in Brazilian forests.

The debate came as Brazilian federal experts reported a record number of wildfires across the country this year, up 84 percent over the same period in 2018.

Satellite images show smoke from the Amazon reaching across the Latin American continent to the Atlantic coast and Sao Paulo, Brazil's biggest city, according to the World Meteorological Organization.

Bolsonaro, who won election last year, also accused media organiza-

tions of exploiting the fires to undermine his government.

"Most of the media wants Brazil to end up like Venezuela," he said, referring to political and economic turbulence in the neighboring South American country.

London-based Amnesty International blamed the Brazilian government for the fires, which have escalated international concern over the vast rainforest that is a major absorber of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

The rights group this year documented illegal land invasions and arson attacks near indigenous territories in the Amazon, including

Rondonia state, where many fires are raging, said Kumi Naidoo, Amnesty's secretary general.

"Instead of spreading outrageous lies or denying the scale of deforestation taking place, we urge the president to take immediate action to halt the progress of these fires," Naidoo said.

The World Wide Fund for Nature conservation group also challenged Bolsonaro's allegations about nongovernment organizations, saying they divert "the focus of attention from what really matters: the well-being of nature and the people of the Amazon." **AP**



## UN, France raise concern over Amazon wildfires 'crisis'

SALVADOR, Brazil—Paris and the United Nations called Thursday for the protection of the fire-plagued Amazon rain forest as Brazil's right-wing president accused his French counterpart of having a "colonialist mentality" over the issue.

Official figures show nearly 73,000 forest fires were recorded in Brazil in the first eight months of the year—the highest number for any year since 2013. Most were in the Amazon.

The extent of the area damaged by fires has yet to be determined, but smoke has choked Sao Paulo and several other Brazilian cities in the past week.

UN chief Antonio Guterres said he was "deeply concerned" by the fires.

"In the midst of the global climate crisis, we cannot afford more damage to a major source of oxygen and biodiversity," he said on Twitter.

"The Amazon must be protected."

France's President Emmanuel Macron said the wildfires were "an international crisis" and called on the globe's most industrialized nations to address it at their summit this weekend.

"Our house is on fire. Literally. The Amazon, the lung of our planet which produces 20 percent of our oxygen is burning," Macron said on Twitter.

"It is an international crisis. Members of the G7, let's talk in two days about this emergency."

That did not sit well with Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro.

"The French president's suggestion that Amazon issues be discussed at the G-7 without participation by the countries in the region evokes a colonialist mentality that is out of place in the 21st century," Bolsonaro wrote on Twitter.

Neighboring Peru, which contains much of the Amazon basin, announced it was "on alert" for wildfires spreading from the rain forest in Brazil and Bolivia.

Paraguay and Bolivia are battling separate wildfires that have devastated large areas of their rain forests.

Environmental specialists say the fires have accompanied a rapid rate of deforestation in the Amazon region, which in July quadrupled compared to the same month in 2018, according to data from the National Institute for Space Research (INPE).

Bolsonaro instead attributes the fires to increased drought, and accuses environmental groups and NGOs of whipping up an "environmental psychosis" to harm Brazil's economic interests. **AFP**



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## Global worry over Amazon fires escalates

**R**IO DE JANEIRO—Amid global concern about raging fires in the Amazon, Brazil's government complained Thursday that it is being targeted in smear campaign by critics who contend President Jair Bolsonaro is not doing enough to curb widespread deforestation.

The threat to what some call "the lungs of the planet" has ignited a bitter dispute about who is to blame during the tenure of a leader who has described Brazil's rainforest protections as an ob-

stacle to economic development and who traded Twitter jabs on Thursday with France's president over the fires.

French President Emmanuel Macron called the wildfires an international crisis and said the leaders of the Group of 7 nations should hold urgent discussions about them at their summit in France this weekend.

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The debate came as Brazilian federal experts reported a record number of wildfires



## 2/2 Global worry over Amazon fires escalates

across the country this year, up 84 percent over the same period in 2018. Satellite images show smoke from the Amazon reaching across the Latin American continent to the Atlantic coast and Sao Paulo, Brazil's biggest city, according to the World Meteorological Organization.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres tweeted: "In the midst of the global climate crisis, we cannot afford more damage to a major source of oxygen and biodiversity. The Amazon must be protected."

Federal prosecutors in Brazil's Amazon region launched investigations of increasing deforestation, according to local media. Prosecutors said they plan to probe possible negligence by the national government in the enforcement of environmental codes.

Bolivia is also struggling to contain big fires, many believed to have been set by farmers clearing land for cultivation.

Bolsonaro said there was a "very strong" indication that some nongovernment groups could be setting blazes in retaliation for losing state funds under his administration. He did not provide any evidence.

Bolsonaro, who won election last year, also accused media organizations of exploiting the fires to undermine his government.

"Most of the media wants Brazil to end up like Venezuela," he said, referring to political and economic turbulence in the neighboring South American country.

London-based Amnesty International blamed the Brazilian government for the fires, which have escalated international concern over the vast rainforest that is a major absorber of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

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"Instead of spreading outrageous lies or denying the scale of deforestation taking place, we urge the president to take immediate action to halt the progress of these fires," Naidoo said.

The WWF conservation group also challenged Bolsonaro's allegations about NGOs, saying they divert "the focus of attention from what really matters: the well-being of nature and the people of the Amazon."

Brazil contains about 60 percent of the Amazon rainforest, whose degradation could have severe consequences for global climate and rainfall. Bolsonaro, who has said he wants to convert land for cattle pastures and soybean farms, won office after channeling outrage over the corruption scandals of the former government.

Filipe Martins, an adviser to Bolsonaro, said on Twitter that the Brazilian government is committed to fighting illegal deforestation and that many other countries are causing environmental damage.

The Amazon will be saved by Brazil and not "the empty, hysterical and misleading rhetoric of the mainstream media, transnational bureaucrats and NGOs," Martins said.

Sergio Bergman, Argentina's environment minister, appealed for people to overcome political or ideological divisions to protect the environment. He spoke at a five-day UN workshop on climate change in Brazil's northern state of Bahia.

"We all, in a way, understand that it is not possible to keep using natural resources without limits," Bergman said. **AP**





# DFA: Du30's call to discuss Hague ruling

**By Marlon Ramos**  
@MRamosINQ

It's up to President Duterte if he would actually raise the international arbitral ruling recognizing the Philippines' sovereignty in the West Philippines Sea in his meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping next week, Foreign Assistant Secretary Meynardo Montealegre said on Friday.

Mr. Duterte, who had been criticized even by his political allies for adopting an appeasement policy in dealing with the country's territorial dispute with China, had earlier said the time was ripe for him to bring up with Xi Manila's historic win over Beijing in the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in The Hague.

He will be flying to China on Aug. 28 to Sept. 1 for his fifth visit to Beijing and his eighth meeting with the Chinese leader since becoming President in 2016.

### Only President knows

Notoriously known as a loudmouth, Mr. Duterte had previously made bold pronouncements, such as his failed campaign promise to end the country's drug problem in "three to six months," but took back his words later.

If he would really mention the arbitral ruling in his bilateral talks with Xi, only the President would know, according to Montealegre.

"I think that's the President's prerogative, to discuss the particular issue. At the

same time, he already made pronouncement on this particular matter," Montealegre said at a press briefing in Malacañang.

"So it's the President's call to discuss this specific issue," he said.

Asked about the possibility of the Chief Executive making good on his word this time, the foreign assistant secretary said: "We cannot preempt what the President will discuss in particular regarding the arbitral ruling."

He added that China has yet to raise any opposition regarding the President's plan.

### Other issues

Presidential Assistant on Foreign Affairs Robert Borje said the meeting between the

two leaders on Aug. 29 will also be a venue for the President to discuss other issues concerning the Philippines and China besides their maritime row over the South China Sea

When sought for a more definite answer on the possibility of Mr. Duterte speaking about the PCA decision in his five-day visit, Borje said: "The President has said that he will raise the issue."

Montealegre said Mr. Duterte and Xi would be present at the signing of several "cooperative bilateral documents and memoranda of understanding" intended to "further increase the breadth and depth of our cooperation between the Philippines and China."

"President Duterte looks

forward to exchanging views with President Xi on how to accelerate the pace of our functional cooperation in terms of concrete projects as well as on issues of mutual interest to both countries," he added.

Meanwhile, Borje said the initial plan for the President to visit a school building in Fujian province built in honor of his late mother, Soledad Duterte, had been shelved due to "logistical" reasons.

### Visit postponed

"It's a decision... made mutually (by both governments)," Borje said. "It's been postponed... There are certain things that need to be done further."

Added Montealegre: "I think it's not appropriate [to visit Fu-

jian] at this time. I don't know [the exact reason]. It was just postponed for [a] more appropriate period in the future."

### Watch Gilas game

After drawing brickbats for his remarks playing down the chances of Gilas Pilipinas winning over Italy, Mr. Duterte would personally watch the game between the Philippine men's basketball team and their Italian rivals on Aug. 31 in Guangzhou.

"President Duterte will personally cheer for Gilas Pilipinas in our scheduled game against the Italian team," Montealegre said, adding that Chinese Vice President Wang Qishan would accompany Mr. Duterte in his Guangzhou visit. INQ



# Macron calls Amazon fire 'international crisis'

PARIS (AP) — French President Emmanuel Macron on Thursday said raging wildfires in the Amazon were an "international crisis" and called on this weekend's G7 to address the issue.

"Our house is burning. Literally. The Amazon rainforest — the lungs which produces 20 percent of our planet's oxygen — is on fire. It is an international crisis. Members of the G7 Summit, let's discuss this emergency first order in two days!" he said on Twitter.

His comments came as Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro said his government lacked the resources to fight a record

number of wildfires burning in the Amazon rainforest, weeks after telling donors he did not need their money.

Fires in the Amazon have surged 83 percent so far this year compared with the same period a year earlier, government figures show, destroying vast swathes of a forest considered a vital bulwark against climate change.

Although fires are a regular and natural occurrence during the regular dry season at this time of year, environmentalists blamed the sharp rise on farmers setting the forest alight to clear land for pasture.

"The Amazon is bigger than Europe, how will you fight criminal fires in such an area?" Bolsonaro asked reporters as he left the presidential residence on Thursday. "We do not have the resources for that."

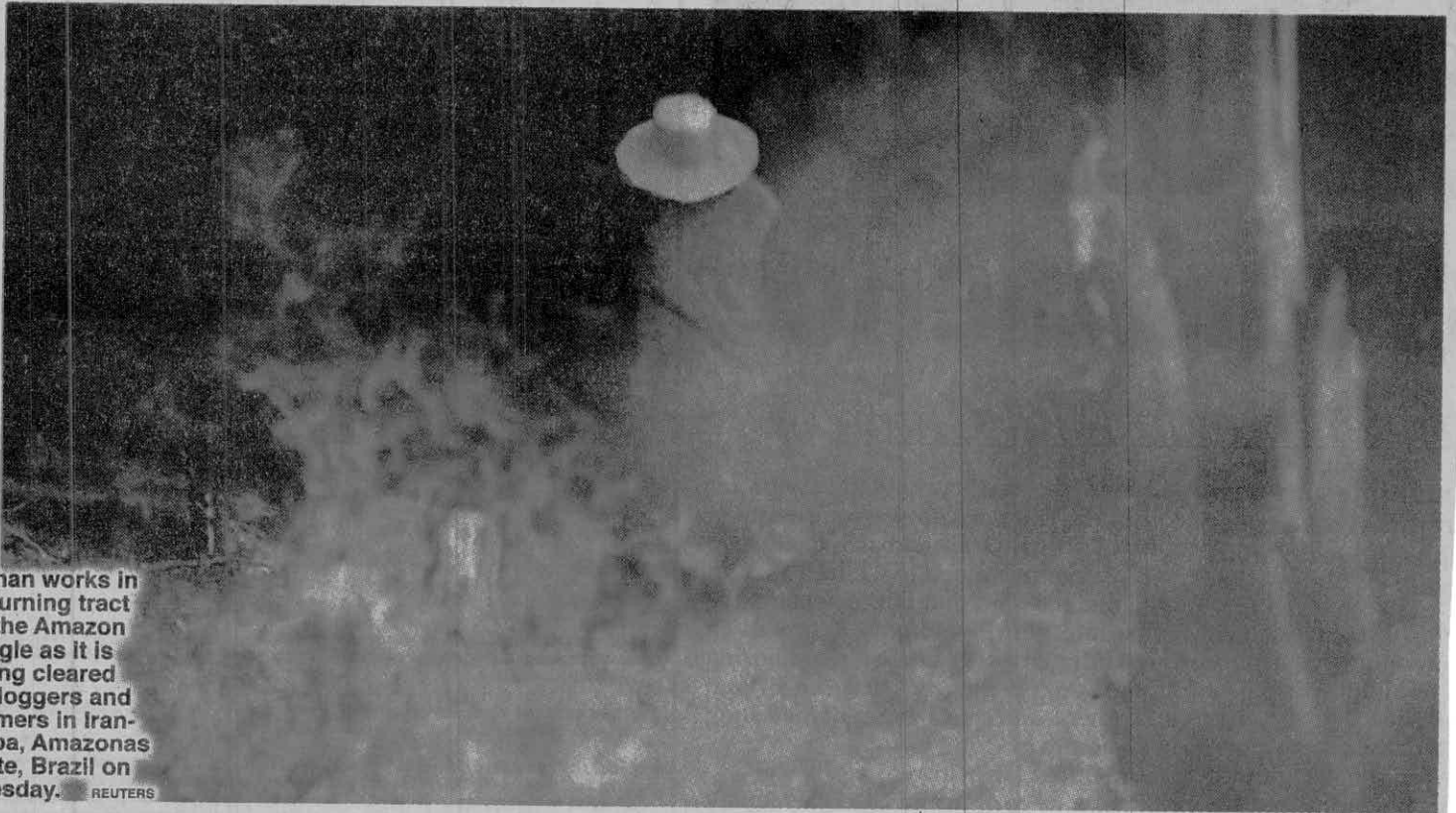
Federal prosecutors in Brazil said the same day that they are investigating a spike in deforestation and wildfires raging in the Amazon state of Pará to determine whether there has been reduced monitoring and enforcement of environmental protections there.

Prosecutors also said they will investigate an ad reportedly published by a local

newspaper last week encouraging farmers to participate in a "Fire Day," in which they would burn large areas of forest "to show Bolsonaro their willingness to work."

The probe is being led by prosecutors in the cities of Santarém, Itaituba, Altamira and Belém.

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A man works in a burning tract of the Amazon jungle as it is being cleared by loggers and farmers in Iranduba, Amazonas state, Brazil on Tuesday. REUTERS



## Rody's China visit to tackle bilateral relations, sea row

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

Keen on asserting the Philippines' rights over the West Philippine Sea, President Duterte will push through with his working visit to Beijing from Aug. 28 to Sept. 1, the Department of Foreign Affairs said yesterday.

In a press briefing at Malacañang, Foreign Affairs Assistant Secretary Meynardo Montealegre said the President's trip to China would be aimed at strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries.

He added that Duterte's bilateral meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping would focus on the accomplishments and shared goals of the Philippines and China under Comprehensive Strategic Cooperation.

"President Duterte looks forward to exchanging views with President Xi on how to accelerate the pace of our functional cooperation in terms of concrete projects as well as on issues of mutual interest to both countries," Montealegre said.

The visit marks the eighth meeting of the two presidents since 2016.

According to Montealegre, both leaders will also witness the signing of a number of cooperative bilateral documents and memoranda of understanding, which are "all aimed to further increase the breadth and depth of our cooperation between the Philippines and China."

Duterte's visit came in the wake of the administration's demonstration of "hard stance" versus Beijing, with the President insisting on the joint exploration of the disputed areas at the South

China Sea, enforcement of the UN arbitral ruling and his warning against foreign vessels' incursions in Philippine territorial waters.

While on the trip, Duterte would also go to Guangzhou City to cheer on the Gilas Pilipinas basketball team as it competes in the FIBA World Cup against the Italian team on Aug. 31.

While in Guangdong province, officials said Duterte would receive a call from Chinese Vice President Wang Qishan.

"The President and Vice President Wang are expected to discuss ways to strengthen cooperation, increase trade and investment, and deepen the friendship between our countrymen and the people of Guangdong," Montealegre said.

But Duterte's side trip to Fujian province to supposedly inaugurate a school building in honor of his late mother, Soledad, was postponed due to logistical issues.

"For this particular visit there was a plan, and then the recommendation now is to move it to a later date because it is more appropriate to be done at a later date and not at this particular time," said chief of presidential protocol Robert Eric Borje.

"It's a decision that's made mutually. It's been postponed. We're going to work on the plans. As to the dates we will have to work on it. There are certain things that need to be done further," he added.

In an event earlier this month, it was Duterte who announced that he would inaugurate a school building during his China trip. However, Borje explained that back then the President's schedule has yet to be finalized.

"If you may know, during this type of visits we go over different types of scenarios and different types of destinations and until such time that these are confirmed and announced to the public, nothing is really confirmed," Borje said.



## PPP seen critical to building green, resilient Phl economy

By CZERIZA VALENCIA

Public-private partnerships (PPP) are becoming increasingly crucial in creating a green and resilient economy for the country because of the scale of resources and expertise required, the PPP Center said.

In a new opinion piece on the center's website, Lerma Advincula, PPP Center director for project development and monitoring facility services, said responding to the threats of climate change as part of the globally-committed Sustainable Goals (SDGs) entails the cross-cutting task of building resilient infrastructure and sustainable industrialization to support economic development.

Essentially, this would require a transition from conventional infrastructure development to low-carbon, climate resilient and sustainable development pathway.

"To attain this goal is indeed complex," she said. "This in turn entails innovation, significant financing, and a major shift in a way that all stakeholders can work more effectively."

Lerma said the private sector is now shaping up to be "an indispensable ally" in building climate-resilient infrastructure because it can both bridge the greater financing needs for infrastructure and implement innovative climate solutions.

The Philippines, she said, now faces the double conundrum of needing to close the infrastructure gap and making these structure resilient to climate stress.

Rapid urbanization also necessitates pursuing infrastructure development in this direction. At the same time, rural development remains necessary to address wide income disparities across regions.

Lerma thus urges policy-makers to provide a supportive environment for PPPs.

"To help address this concern, PPPs will be critical. Under a well-designed regulatory environment, PPPs can be one of the most viable options to maximize the innovation and resources of the private sector, while the government orchestrates collective action through programs, projects, and policies," she said.

In pursuing PPP projects, the center said these must be tailored to the local context.

Since 2017, the PPP Center has been pursuing its local PPP strategy as it shifts its focus to facilitating the promotion of the PPP mode of procurement in local government units.

Lerma said the private sector could help LGUs expand its pipeline of viable PPP projects as the strategy also incorporates the use of climate-conscious technologies.

International donors to the center's project preparation fund, she said, also recognize the importance of providing assistance to LGUs for climate-resilient PPP projects as seen in the provision of additional funding to the Project Development and Monitoring Facility (PDMF) this year.

"The PDMF, which is a revolving fund managed by the PPP Center, can now support more projects especially those coming from local government units, state universities and colleges, local government corporations, water districts, and economic zones, among others," Lerma said.



### **MWC completes treatment plant upgrade**

Ayala-led Manila Water Company, Inc. (MWC) has completed the upgrade of its Luzon Treatment Plant, an activity that caused supply disruptions in some parts of Metro Manila. "We needed to undertake this activity the soonest possible time as this will increase the efficiency and reliability of the Luzon Treatment Plant, which serves over 20,000 households in Quezon City," Manila Water OIC-Group Director for Corporate Operations Arnold Jether A. Mortera said. "We also decided to undertake the activity in three phases to avoid prolonged water service interruption for the affected customers," he added. The facility upgrade activity lasted for three days and involved the transfer of power from generator-sets to inline Meralco power. Affected customers were advised of possible water service interruption from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. the following day, for three consecutive nights, as the activity entailed shutting down of the facility to allow for the three-step transfer to Meralco power. Currently, more than 99 percent of Manila Water customers already enjoy 24/7 water supply at 7 pounds per square inch (psi) pressure or reaching only the ground floor. This, despite the still-limited supply at National Water Regulatory Board (NWRB) has maintained its allocation for domestic use for Metro Manila at 36 cubic meters per second (CMS) from the normal 46 CMS. (MBM)



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**BAN SINGLE USE PLASTICS.** Ipinakikita ang nakapintang mga larawan ng mga bal-yena at butanding na nasawi dahil sa mga plastic, nanawagan ang isang grupong makakalikasan sa pamahalaan na pabilisin ang aksiyon sa pagbabawal sa pag-gawa, pamamahagi, pagtitinda, paggamit at pagtatapon ng mga plastik na isa-hang gamit lamang o single use plastics (SUPs) dahil isa ito sa sanhi ng tumitinding polusyon na mapanganib sa kalusugan at kalikasan. Kuha ni **PETER LACANG**



## MB Lifestyle editor receives SKAL award

By **DOM GALEON**

Manila Bulletin Lifestyle editor Arnel A. Patawaran received the SKAL Tourism Personality Award (Print Media Category) for his contributions in promoting Philippine tourism.

The 29th SKAL Tourism Personality Awards was held at the New World Hotel in Makati Thursday.

"I am accepting this award in behalf of the Manila Bulletin and Manila Bulletin Lifestyle, and I dedicate it to my bosses and my team," Patawaran said in his acceptance speech. "We have resolved to tell not only the stories we want but also the stories we need to hear in a world clamoring for more

conscience and responsibility."

Among the 15 other tourism personalities who were recognized were Cabinet Secretaries Roy Cimatu (DENR), Eduardo Año (DILG), and Berna Romulo-Puyat (DOT) – the so-called Boracay triangle – for their contributions to eco tourism; Elizabeth Sy, president and chairman of SM Hotels and Convention, for the Hotel Awards Category; Lilia Pineda, vice-governor of Pampanga, for her contributions to domestic tourism; Cynthia Carrion, chair of the Corregidor Foundation Inc., who received the Historical Tourism Development Award; and Jaime Bautista, former president of Philippine Airlines, who received the

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SKAL Leadership Award in recognition of his accomplishments as the head of the nation's flag carrier.

SKAL is an international, profes-

sional organization of tourism leaders dedicated to promoting global tourism and friendship. This year marks the 38th anniversary of Skal.