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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT TO MANILA

NO NEW RECLAMATION BY PRIVATE SECTOR IN MANILA BAY, SAYS DU30

By Leila B. Salaverria
@LeilasINQ

Citing an overburdened Manila, President Duterte said on Saturday that he would not allow any private entities to reclaim land in the country's capital.

Speaking at the inauguration of the Sangley Airport Development Project in Cavite province, Mr. Duterte said he would allow reclamation only for government projects and those that had already been approved.

"I will not allow massive reclamation for the private sector, not now. Because if you approve one, you approve all," he said.

He said he was trying to be fair and treat everybody equally, but if he allowed reclamation, Manila would suffer.

"But if I do that, which I am wont to do, I will choke Manila. The entire Manila City would

be environmentally at peril," he said.

He also disclosed that many parties were lobbying for reclamation, which was why he took over the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA).

"Every Tom, Dick and Harry was following up. I said, 'No. No reclamation,'" he said.

In February 2019, the President issued an executive order transferring the PRA to the Office of the President.

Approving power

The order transfers the power to approve reclamation projects from the National Economic and Development Authority to the PRA.

Those who want to reclaim land should wait for the next administration, said Mr. Duterte. "You wait until the next President, who might look at it kindly, at a different lens."

He also said the next administration should study reclamation "very carefully" as Manila was an old city. "[I]t will decay if you add so many things in front of Manila Bay."

The fishermen's group Pama-lakaya has recorded a total of 43 reclamation projects that will cover almost 30,000 hectares of Manila Bay, including the three projects approved by the local government of Manila.

In his speech, the President praised Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade for accomplishing much in the Sangley airport using some P700 million in government funds.

"Look [at] what P700 million can do in the hands of a competent, a bright... Ilocano, a tightwad," he said.

He also said that for his last flight home to Davao as President, he would use the Sangley airport. INQ



Reclamation projects to choke Manila - Duterte

By ALEXIS ROMERO

President Duterte would not allow massive reclamation projects in Manila Bay, saying these would choke the city of Manila and imperil its environment.

"Not during my time. Maybe, I will only allow reclamation if it is in connection with the government's projects. I will not allow reclamation projects for the private sector because if you approve one, you approve all. That's how it is," Duterte said during the inauguration of the Sangley Airport development project in Cavite on Saturday.

"You know, when you govern you try to, at least, be equal and fair. But if I do that, I will choke Manila," he added.

Duterte said the next president should look into the possible negative effects of the proposed reclamation projects.

"The entire Manila city would be in danger.

For the next administration, whoever gets to be the president, study it carefully," he said. "Being an old city, it will decay if you add so many things in front of Manila Bay."

Around 10,000 hectares from Navotas City to Cavite would be covered by the 25 proposed reclamation projects.

Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) general manager Joselito Gonzales said four projects have been given notices to proceed: Navotas City coastal bay, Horizon Manila 418, Pasay 360-hectare reclamation and the Pasay 265-hectare reclamation project.

Groups of environmentalists and fishermen are opposed to these projects, which they said



File photo shows environmentalists and fisherfolk protesting the proposed reclamation projects in Manila Bay.

MIGUEL DE GUZMAN

could destroy the country's ecosystem and displace thousands of families.

Last year, Duterte signed Executive Order 74, which transferred the PRA to the Office of the President from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources amid the supposed lobbying for the approval of some projects.

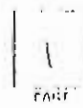
The President cited the need to rationalize the approval process of reclamation projects toward an economically and environmentally sustainable development.

"No reclamation. You wait until the next president. They might look at it at a different perspective. But me, I'm just two years away," he said.



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Duterte won't allow Manila Bay reclamation

By ARGYLL CYRUS B. GEDUCOS

President Duterte said he will never allow any massive reclamation projects in Manila Bay, saying it will put the nation's capital at peril.

In a speech in Cavite City Saturday evening, Duterte said he will only allow a reclamation if it is in connection with a government project.

"Not during my time. I will only allow maybe plans of whatever reclamation if it is in connection with a government project. I will not allow massive reclamation for the private sector. Not now. Because if I... if you approve one, you approve all," he said.

"Ako ayaw ko, wala ako (I don't want it, I will not approve anything). Government projects maybe, except for those na-approve na, wala na ako (except for those already approved ... other than that, I won't allow it)," he added.

The Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) said December last year that at least four reclamation projects in Manila Bay were already given the green light.

The projects approved included the 360-hectare Navotas City Coastal Bay Reclamation Project, the 265-hectare Pasay Reclamation Project, and the 418-hectare Horizon Manila Reclamation Project.

"The entire Manila City would be environmentally at peril. So pag-aralan ninyong mabuti 'yan (You have to study it carefully)," he said.

Duterte said those interested **►7**

Duterte won't allow...



should just wait for the next administration as his successor may have a different view about it.

"For the next administration, whoever gets to be the president of this country, study it very carefully. Because that Manila there, that old city is an old city and it will decay if you add so many things in front of Manila Bay," he said.

In an interview with ABS-CBN last month, Duterte said reclaiming 10,000 hectares of the Manila Bay was almost "mind-boggling." He said he was not ready to approve any reclamation project if there was no concrete plan showing how the environment would be protected.

"That big [an area] is stupefying. Mukhang (I think), I am not

ready for that. I am not ready even to say I will grant it. Not in my time," he said.

"As long as there is no guarantee that the environment will be protected and the health of the people also safeguarded," he added.

"You have to make an audit now of whether or not the environment of the entire area there can absorb the waste and where it will go after being treated. Because now, you must have water treatment. If you have a new building, make sure you are connected to [a] water treatment facility," he continued.

In February last year, President Duterte ordered the creation of the Manila Bay Task Force to ensure the expedited and complete rehabilita-

tion, restoration, and conservation of the coastal and marine ecosystem of the bay.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), which was named head of the task force, was ordered to strictly enforce the Philippine Clean Water Act on the conduct of containment, removal, and cleaning operations, and the exercise of supervision and control on all aspects of water quality management.

The agency was likewise tasked to monitor compliance with critical environmental laws, rules and regulations; and issue notices of closure, cease and desist orders, and other appropriate sanctions to violators, including the filing of cases against erring government officials. (Argyll Cyrus B. Geducos)



TITLE:

MNL BAY RECLAMATION

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Manila Bay not 100% spared from reclamation

THERE may still be reclamation projects in Manila Bay under the current administration, after all.

During his speech at Sangley Airport's inauguration for commercial use on Saturday, President Duterte said government projects will be exempted from the moratorium for reclamation initiatives in Manila Bay.

"I will only allow, maybe, plans of whatever reclamation if it is in connection with a government project," Duterte said.

He reiterated his position to ban "massive reclamation" projects for the private sector in said location because of its possible harmful environmental effects on Manila. "If I do that [massive reclamation]... which I am [not] want to do, I will choke Manila," Duterte said.

"The old city...will decay if you add so many things in front of Manila Bay," he added.

This, despite Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) General

Manager Joselito Gonzales's previous assurance, that any reclamation projects in Manila Bay will not cause any flooding in Manila.

As of December 2019, the PRA confirmed there were four approved reclamation projects in Manila Bay: the Navotas City Coastal Bay Reclamation Project; the Pasay 360-Hectare Reclamation Project; the Pasay 265-Hectare Reclamation Project; and the Horizon Manila 418-Reclamation Project.

Duterte transferred last year control of the PRA from the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) to the Office of the President because of his concerns over many parties eyeing to have reclamation projects in the Manila Bay.

Duterte said he will leave it to the next administration to allow further reclamation in Manila Bay.

"You wait until the next president who would be... They might look at it kindly [through] a different lens," Duterte said. **Samuel P. Medenilla**



Duterte rejects reclamation in Manila Bay

PRESIDENT Rodrigo R. Duterte on Saturday said he would not allow the private sector to pursue new reclamation projects in Manila Bay, saying these will put the Philippine capital environmentally in peril.

"Not during my time. I will only allow maybe plans of whatever reclamation if it is in connection with a government project. I will not allow massive reclamation for the private sector. Not now. Because if you approve one, you approve all. *Ganun 'yun eh* (That's the way it is)," he said in a speech at the inauguration of the P486-million Sangley Airport Development Project (SADP).

Mr. Duterte said only government-related reclamation projects and those approved by the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) will be allowed to proceed.

"You know, when you govern... at least you try very hard to be equal and fair. But if I do that, of which I am wont to do, I will choke Manila. The entire Manila City would be environmentally at peril. So *pag-aralan ninyong mabuti 'yan* (You have to study that very carefully)," he said.

Reclamation, S1/2

Reclamation, from S1/1

Mr. Duterte said the next administration should study proposed reclamation projects very carefully, "because that Manila there, that old city is an old city and it will decay if you add so many things in front of Manila Bay."

This was not the first time Mr. Duterte expressed his opposition to reclamation projects in Manila Bay.

Last year, Mr. Duterte signed an executive order transferring the power to approve reclamation projects to the Office of the President. The PRA was previously under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Board had the power to approve reclamation projects.

"That is why *yung* Reclamation Authority *kinuha ko*. I got it back because I heard that everybody was lobbying (for approval of their projects)... *Sabi ko*, no (I told them, no)," Mr. Duterte said on Saturday.

Property developers are looking to capitalize on the booming real estate market by reclaiming land along Manila Bay. There are around 25 proposed projects to reclaim 10,000 hectares from Navotas City to Cavite.

Last December, PRA General Manager Joselito Gonzales said four projects have been given the green light — the Navotas City Coastal Bay Reclamation Project, Pasay 360-hectare Reclamation Project, Pasay 265-hectare Reclamation Project, Horizon Manila 418-hectare Reclamation Project.

SM Prime Holdings last December received the official notice from the Pasay City government to proceed with its 360-hectare reclamation project within the latter's municipal waters. The said project will be connected to the Mall of Asia Complex, which is also a joint reclamation-land project by both parties.

On the other hand, the other 265-hectare reclamation project in Pasay City is being pursued by the LGU and the Pasay Harbour Center Consortium.

The Navotas Coastal Bay Reclamation Project is being undertaken by the Navotas LGU and Argonbay Construction Company, Inc.

The Horizon Manila project is being developed by the Manila LGU and Jbros Construction Corp. — **GMC**

No to reclamation projects at Manila Bay: Duterte

BY JOCELYN MONTEMAYOR

PRESIDENT Duterte on Saturday said he will never allow any massive reclamation project in Manila Bay as it would put the "old city" in danger.

He said he might consider reclamation if the projects are in connection with government projects.

He added that if there are private-firm initiated programs that involve reclamation in Manila Bay, those might have been approved before his term.

"There is one important thing that I'd like to make it clear now: Not during my time. I will only allow maybe plans of whatever reclamation if it is in connection with a government project. I will not allow massive reclamation for the private sector. Not now. Because if you approve one, you approve all," Duterte said at the inauguration of the Sangley Airport Development Project and presentation of the Sangley Point International Airport Project held in Cavite City on Saturday.

The President also said he placed the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) under his office last year because of reports of mas-

sive lobbying for the approval of reclamation projects at the Manila Bay area.

The PRA was transferred to the Office of the President in February 2019 through Executive Order 74.

Reports said the PRA approved four reclamation projects in December 2019, namely the Navotas City Coastal Bay, two projects in Pasay City involving 360 and 265 hectares, and the Horizon Manila involving 418 hectares.

The President said more projects involving reclamation activities in Manila Bay could "choke Manila."

"The entire Manila City would be environmentally at peril ... For the next administration, whoever gets to be the president of this country, study it very carefully. Because that Manila there, that old city is an old city and it will decay if you add so many things in front of Manila Bay," he said.

In February last year, Duterte created the Manila Bay Task Force headed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The task force's main task is to ensure expedited and complete rehabilitation, restoration, and conservation of the coastal and marine ecosystem of the Manila Bay.



Duterte rejects Manila Bay reclamation

President Duterte said he will never allow any massive reclamation projects in Manila Bay, saying it will put the nation's capital at peril.

In a speech in Cavite City Saturday night, Duterte said he will only allow a reclamation if it is in connection with a government project.

"Not during my time. I will only allow maybe plans of whatever reclamation if it is in connection with a government project. I will not allow massive reclamation for the private sector. Not now. Because if I --- if you approve one, you approve all," he said.

The Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) said last December that at least four reclamation projects in Manila Bay were already given the green light.

The projects approved were the Navotas City Coastal Bay Reclamation Project, Pasay 360-Hectare Reclamation Project, Pasay 265-Hectare Reclamation Project, and the Horizon Manila 418-Reclamation Project.

The President said he would be choking Manila if he allows the reclamation projects in Manila Bay.

"The entire Manila City would be environmentally at peril. So pag-aralan ninyong mabuti 'yan," he said.

Duterte said those interested

should just wait for the next administration as his successor may have a different view about it.

"For the next administration, whoever gets to be the president of this country, study it very carefully. Because that Manila there, that old city is an old city and it will decay if you add so many things in front of Manila Bay," he said.

In February last year, President Duterte ordered the creation of the Manila Bay Task Force to ensure the expedited and complete rehabilitation, restoration, and conservation of the coastal and marine ecosystem of the Manila Bay.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), which was named head of the task force, was ordered to strictly enforce the Philippine Clean Water Act on the conduct of containment, removal, and clean operations, and the exercise of supervision and control on all aspects of water quality management.

The agency was likewise tasked to monitor compliance with critical environmental laws, rules and regulations; and issue notices of closure, cease and desist orders, and other appropriate sanctions to violators, including the filing of cases against erring government officials. **(Argyll Geducos)**



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BOC reships last batch of SoKor garbage

By EVELYN MACAIRAN

The Bureau of Customs (BOC) will finally complete the reshipping of the 6,500 metric tons of garbage that arrived in the country from South Korea almost two years ago.

The BOC was set to reship the remaining 100 containers of garbage yesterday and on Feb. 23, according to John Simon, BOC-Cagayan de Oro district collector.

"If these would push through, this would bring the total number of re-exported containers to 201," Simon said.

In January last year, the BOC sent back 51 container vans of waste to South Korea. It was followed by another 50 in January this year.

Simon said a commercial vessel, *M/V Vivaldi*, departed Cagayan yesterday, carrying 50 container vans of garbage back to South Korea.

Another vessel, the *M/V Nordmarsh*, will be used to re-export the last batch of garbage on Feb. 23.

The shipments were de-

clared as plastic flakes and found to contain non-biodegradable wastes.

A warrant of seizure and detention was issued against the shipment for alleged violations of the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act and Republic Act 6969 or "An Act to Control Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes."

Records showed the shipments were sent by Green Soko and consigned to Verde Soko in the Philippines.

The first batch of the shipments consisted of 5,000 metric tons of garbage that arrived at the Villanueva Port in Misamis Oriental in July 2018.

The second batch, containing 1,500 metric tons, arrived at the Mindanao International Container Terminal, a sub-port of the BOC-Cagayan district.

Simon coordinated with the South Korean environment officials for the return of the garbage to its port of origin.

- With Gerry Lee Gorit



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ILLEGALLY DUMPED WASTE PAGE 1/1

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ALL ILLEGALLY DUMPED WASTE IN '18 TO BE SENT BACK IN FEB—CUSTOMS

THE Bureau of Customs (BOC) said all the waste illegally shipped to the country in 2018 will be sent back to South Korea within the month.

In a statement on Sunday, BOC said a total of 101 containers were already reexported to South Korea in January 13 last year and January 19 this year.

Citing a statement from Port of Cagayan de Oro District Collector John Simon, the BOC said the remaining batches of waste that were scheduled to be shipped in Saturday, February 16, and February 23 shall bring the total reexported waste to 201 containers, "and shall finally rid the country of the illegally imported waste."

"Collector Simon thanked all those involved in successfully sending back the wastes to South Korea and stressed that the Bureau, under

Commissioner Rey Guerrero, shall remain firm in its commitment in protecting the country's borders from the entry of any illegal shipments including wastes that are harmful to the environment," BOC said. In 2018, a shipment declared as plastic flakes was alerted and was verified to contain mixed nonbiodegradable waste.

A warrant of seizure and detention was then issued against the shipment and cases were filed for violation of the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA) and RA 6969 or Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes Control Act of 1990, the BOC said.

BOC earlier said the waste materials were "unlawfully imported" by the Cebu-based Verde Soko Philippines Industrial Corp. in July and October 2018.

SEE "WASTE," A2



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LOWER



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BANNER
STORY



EDITORIAL



CARTOON

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Waste. . .

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Manila and Seoul are signatories to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, more popularly referred to as the Basel Convention.

The convention is designed to reduce the movements of hazardous waste between nations, and specifically to prevent transfer of hazardous waste from developed to less developed countries.

'Ban imported waste'

ENVIRONMENTAL groups based in Quezon City and Davao City on Sunday called on the Duterte administration to ban the importation of foreign waste.

At the same time, they also appealed to other countries to stop exporting their unwanted waste to the Philippines.

The appeals were made by environmental advocates led by Quezon City-based EcoWaste Coalition and Davao City-based Interfacing Development Interventions for Sustainability (IDIS) at the send-off ceremony held at the Mindanao International Container Terminal (MICT) for the third batch of illegal South Korean waste shipments to be reexported.

They pushed for preventive measures to halt the entry of hazardous waste and other refuse, including household and plastic trash, into the country's ports.

In a statement, the groups quoted Port Collector Simon, who said that "the reexportation of the remaining wastes from South Korea this month signifies our nation's steadfastness to protect public health and the environment from the deceptive trade in hazardous waste disguised as plastic waste for recycling."

The BOC official also stressed that "as guardians of our ports, we [the BOC] are

committed to curb illegal trade and halt all forms of customs fraud, including the practice of falsely declaring hazardous waste and other wastes as recyclables."

Environmental advocate Aileen Lucero, the National Coordinator of the EcoWaste Coalition, said "the chain of foreign waste dumping incidents that sparked national outrage warrants the imposition of tougher policies that will effectively deter the illegal traffic of hazardous waste and other wastes, especially those from developed economies who have more resources to safely manage their own wastes."

Chinkie Peliño-Golle, IDIS executive director, agreed: "We must not allow countries to continue exporting their waste problem to the Philippines. To send a clear signal to these countries that we do not want their waste, the government has to fast-track the adoption of preventive measures banning the entry of wastes in whatever form of disguise."

The groups specifically pointed to the need for the Duterte administration to proceed with the long-overdue ratification of the Basel Ban Amendment (an international law banning the export of hazardous wastes and other wastes from developed and developing countries), and to ban the importation of waste altogether.

"These environmental justice measures will protect our country and our people from the negative consequences of global waste trade," the groups insisted. The groups, likewise, asked the government to ensure that all parties behind the unlawful waste shipments from South Korea to be held fully accountable, and for the national government to extend full assistance to the local government unit affected by the illegal traffic of waste, including the conduct of environmental sampling to assess the contamination of the storage area for illegal waste and its cleanup and rehabilitation. **Bernadette D. Nicolas and Jonathan E. Mayuga**



BOC to ship back Korean 'household garbage'

CAGAYAN DE ORO City - For the third time, the Bureau of Customs in Region 10 will ship back to South Korea 50 containers of households and municipal garbage imported by Verde Soko intended for making plastic bricks.

The 6,500 tons garbage shipment imported by Verde Soko Philippines Industrial Corporation first arrived in Northern Mindanao in July and October 2018 disguised as plastic synthetic flakes to be as raw materials for plastic bricks.

Customs Collector John Simon said that the garbage has no place here in our country as we are not a dumping ground for waste, "We are not a dumping ground for rich countries' waste," Simon said.

Verde Soko imported the garbage declared as plastic flakes but it turned out that the garbage are household waste. Verde Soko stored the imported waste at its yard inside the Phividec Industrial Estate in Tagoloan town, earning the ire of residents, lawmakers and environmentalists.

BOC-10 issued three warrants of seizure and detention against the illegal waste shipments, heterogenous and injurious to public health," which it declared as misdeclared, heterogenous and injurious to public health."

Citing violations of DENR Administrative Order 2013-22 and Republic Act 10863, or the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act, BOC-10 ordered the waste shipments re-exported to their origin.

Simon said that the re-exportation of the remaining wastes from South Korea this month signifies our nation's steadfastness to protect public health and the environment from the deceptive trade in hazardous waste disguised as plastic waste for recycling.

"As guardians of our ports, we (the BOC) are committed to curb illegal trade and halt all forms of customs fraud, including the practice of falsely declaring hazardous waste and other wastes as recyclables," Simon said.

Bobby Lagsa



'WILDLIFE TREASURES' PROMOTES

ENVIRONMENTAL,

BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

By RIZAL RAOUL S. REYES

@brownindio

DURING his lifetime, the late Dr. Perry S. Ong was hailed as one of the country's top wildlife biologists. He championed several causes on biodiversity and conservation of nature.

Last January 29, the Energy Development Corp. (EDC), and the University of the Philippines-Institute of Biology (UP-IB) launched the book, *Wildlife Treasures*, Ong's pet project, to promote protection and conservation of the environment, and biodiversity.

Published by EDC in cooperation with UP-IB, *Wildlife Treasures* is proof of their long-standing and fruitful partnership that began 10 years ago when EDC tapped the university to help firm up their biodiversity conservation and monitoring program (BCMP).

"We owe whatever success and positive impact that our BCMP has to the environment, and to our stakeholders to UP-IB's former head and one of our country's foremost scientists, Dr. Perry S. Ong," said Richard B. Tantoco, president and COO of EDC in his remarks during the book launching held at the UP-IB auditorium in UP Diliman.

Biodiversity conservation champion

DOC PERRY, as he was fondly called by friends and students, was the dean of UP Diliman's College of Science and one of the country's biodiversity conservation champions before he passed away last year.

His legacy, that includes spreading awareness on the importance of caring for nature, will now be carried on by his students, colleagues and partners, like EDC.

Tantoco said the meeting with the former dean of UP-IB made the company realize that their efforts were not sufficient in the areas of operation of their geothermal plants.

EDC is the country's largest 100-percent renewable-energy company. Moreover, it produces 1,457.8 megawatts of installed capacity,



ENERGY Development Corp.'s and the University of the Philippines-Diliman's Institute of Biodiversity launch Dr. Perry S. Ong's book, *Wildlife Treasures*, that documented the wildlife biodiversity thriving in EDC's numerous powerplant sites.

accounting for 37 percent of the Philippines's total generated renewable energy.

Tantoco said Ong's passion and dedication to wildlife conservation inspired EDC to raise the bar on biodiversity conservation. As a result, EDC adjusted its policies, budget and focus.

Thus, it started the long partnership with Ong and UP-IB.

The two organizations conducted biodiversity surveys as part of a long-term effort to establish a baseline of biodiversity resources in order to have a basis on which they can direct their efforts to further improve what they can do.

"This commitment gave birth to *Wildlife Treasures*, the book we are launching today," Tantoco said.

Wildlife Treasures, according to Tantoco, was Ong's choice for the book's title.

"Perry taught us to treasure the wildlife around us, and reminded us of our duty as Filipinos to preserve what we have for future generations," he said.

Wildlife Treasures, a brainchild of Ong, was conceptualized in 2017 as a fauna equivalent of the flora-focused EDC's Binhi greening legacy program.

He believed it was high time for the company

to chronicle the wildlife biodiversity in its sites to complete EDC's legacy.

Binhi was a holistic effort to identify, rescue, propagate and chronicle 96 vanishing, endangered and endemic tree agencies.

The result was a publication of vibrant photos and information on the robust habitat of fascinating species surrounding EDC's power plants all over the country.

Helping hand

TANTOCO recalled that he would often call Ong when he had some questions. Among them was when he caught a snake, a spider or even a turtle in his farm.

At one time, he sent Ong a video of a 2-foot long baby cobra with an expanded neck, and also asked him about spiders.

As a parent, Tantoco's initial instinct was to kill the creatures for fear they would endanger his children. But Ong had an opposite view.

Tantoco recalled Ong's reply: "Catch it carefully, Ricky. Put it in a sack, and release it in the most isolated place nearby."

He added: "He [Ong] believed that since nature serves man well, it is everyone's duty to care for it in return, be it a snake, a rodent or a spider."



WILDLIFE

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Impact of the project

TODAY, EDC's areas of operation are home to a myriad of wildlife species—291 birds, 43 bats, 25 other mammals, 46 reptiles and amphibians, majority of them endemic to the country.

The species include the flying foxes in EDC's Bacon-Manito Geothermal Reservation in Bicol; the flying lemur in its largest geothermal reservation in Leyte; the owl and hornbill of Negros Island where its second-largest geothermal reservation is located; and the iconic Philippine eagle on Mount Apo.

Tantoco said their success in the conservation would not be achieved, would not be successful, if EDC had not met Ong.

With guidance from Ong and his UP-IB team, EDC continues to manage the key biodiversity areas and protected areas where they operate, such as Bacon-Manito in Bicol; Anonang-Lobi mountain range in Leyte; Mount Kanlaon Natural Park and Cuernos de Negros in Negros Oriental; Mount Apo Natural Park in Mindanao; and the Pantabangan-Carranglan Watershed Forest Reserve in Nueva Ecija.

EDC and UP-IB will donate copies of *Wildlife Treasures* to universities, other institutions, groups and individuals in the hope that more people will be inspired to commit to environmental protection and biodiversity conservation.

The publication of the book and its launching was the company's tribute to Ong.

"No kind is left behind in EDC's mission to build a clean-energy future. EDC powers, and protects, people and the planet, striking the right balance between energy, biodiversity and community," Tantoco said.

In her emotionally filled acceptance speech, Ong's wife, Dr. Susan Aquino-Ong, told the audience that biology was really the passion of her late husband.

"Perry dedicated his life to biology, biodiversity and to the conservation of nature," she said.

She added that the Ong family is happy that her husband's advocacies are alive through the dedication and support of his students, colleagues and organizations like EDC.



Editorial

Hangin na may lason, maraming pinapatay

MARUMI ang hangin sa maraming lugar sa bansa kabilang ang Metro Manila. Maihahalintulad sa Covid-19 (bagong tawag ngayon sa nCoV) ang air pollution sapagkat 27,000 katao ang pinapatay bawat taon. Sa isang pag-aaral na ginawa ng Greenpeace Southeast Asia at ng Center for Research on Energy and Clean Air, ang usok mula sa mga sasakyan na gumagamit ng gasolina at diesel at maging ang mga sinusunog na coal ang dahilan ng kamatayan ng mga Pilipino. Umaabot naman sa P304 bilyon ang halaga na nawawala sa ekonomiya ng bansa dahil sa air pollution.

Noong nakaraang taon, sa isang report, sinasabing 120,000 katao ang namamatay bawat taon dahil sa pagkalahap ng hangin na may lason. Ayon pa sa report, pangatlo ang Pilipinas sa mga bansa sa Asya na marami ang namamatay sa air pollution. Ang



China ang number one at number two ang Mongolia. Karaniwang pinagmumulan ng hangin na may lason ang ibinubugang usok ng mga sasakyan partikular na ang mga dyipni. Tinatayang 80 porsiyento na pinanggagalingan ng air pollution ay mula sa mga hindi nami-maintain na mga sasakyan. Ayon sa report, pinakamalala ang air pollution sa Metro Manila.

Sinabi naman ng Department of Health (DOH) na ang maruming hangin ay nagdudulot ng noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). Kabilang sa mga sakit na nakukuha dahil sa pagkalahap nang maruming hangin ay allergies, acute respiratory infections, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, cancer at cardiovascular diseases. Unang tinatamaan ng sakit ang mga pasahero at pedestrians dahil sila ang nakalantad sa maruming hangin. Bukod sa usok ng mga sasakyan, nalalanghap din ang usok ng mga sinunog na basura, goma, plastic at iba pang harmful wastes na delikado sa kalusugan.

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

Sa malalang problemang ito sa air pollution, narapat nang kumilos ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). Gumawa sila ng hakbang para mapigilan at maparusahan ang mga nagpaparumi sa hangin sa Metro Manila. Kung hindi kikilos ang DENR, marami ang unti-unting mamamatay dahil sa paglanghap ng hangin na may lason.

Grander plan for Sangley airport eyed

BY MYLA IGLESIAS

GOVERNMENT may have a grander plan in developing the Sangley Point International Airport (SPIA) in Cavite.

The provincial government of Cavite, proponent of the project, said SPIA may replace the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA).

For now, SPIA is planned to replace the recently inaugurated P700-million Sangley Airport Development Project (SADP), originally conceived to help decongest NAIA.

The development of SPIA will eventually allow for the eventual phaseout of operations at the NAIA, allowing the area it occupies to be redeveloped into a new city center district, according to the government of Cavite.

This, however, is a long-term plan that needs the approval of the

Department of Transportation.

Construction of SPIA, which involves massive reclamation in the southern part of Manila Bay, is targeted to start by second quarter this year and be partially operational by 2022.

SPIA will break ground on the P208.5-billion phase 1 component of the project right after the sole bidder, China Communications Construction Co. Ltd. (CCCC) and MacroAsia Corp. signs the notice of award and comply in the requirements hopefully within the first quarter.

The consortium of CCCC and MacroAsia on Friday received the notice of award. It has committed to comply with the financial requirements to proceed with the construction. The travel ban to China and its special administrative regions due to the corona virus outbreak has prevented the members of

the consortium to meet and sign the documents.

"We (Cavite government) submitted the terms of reference. It's been awarded. But there are still conditions... that they need to comply with. It's ... a rudimentary financial guarantee they have committed except they (should) meet as a board to sign the documents," said Cavite Gov. Jonvic Remulla.

Remulla expressed confidence the consortium will comply with the requirements within the first quarter and break ground on the project by the second quarter.

From the signing of the joint venture development agreement, it will take 12 to 18 months for the consortium to complete the detailed engineering design leading to financial closure, CCCC-MacroAsia said.

The first phase of SPIA will

.....
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An aerial rendition of the Sangley connector boulevard that directly links Cavite to SPIA.



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GRANDER

include the new Sangley connector road and bridge, which is a six-lane highway with urban mass transit connectivity, directly linking the Kawit interchange of Manila Cavite expressway (CaviteX) to SPIA.

Phase 1 itself will involve the development of an interim first runway that is designed to operate alongside NAIA, with an annual design capacity for 25 million passengers annually.

The second phase of the SPIA project involves the development for a second runway, with an annual design capacity for 75 million passengers. This is further expandable to up to four runways for an ultimate annual capacity of 130 million passengers.

Remulla said the consortium of CCCC and MacroAsia will have to buy the entire SADP and return

the government's investment in the rehabilitation and development of the airport.

SADP is one of the key projects of the Duterte administration's Build Build Build program and was conceived to help decongest NAIA.

The SADP was originally targeted for completion in March 2020. However, when President Duterte made the directive to expedite the airport's construction on June 12, 2019, everything ran on a much faster pace.

Five months after the President's directive, the SADP was completed, with its priority facilities now 100 percent operational, according to the Department of Transportation.

Once the consortium starts the actual construction of SPIA,

operations of the existing SADP have to stop to pursue the further improvement and expansion of the airport, Remulla said.

He said the current Sangley airport has to be elevated by three meters as a climate change report said the area where it sits will be submerged in water in 20 years.

"Meanwhile, Duterte said he would not allow any reclamation project on Manila Bay by the private sector.

"Not during my time. I will only allow maybe plans of whatever reclamation if it is in connection with the government project. I will not allow massive reclamation for the private sector. Not now. Because if I -- if you approve one, you approve all," Duterte said during his speech at the inauguration of the SADP in Cavite last Saturday.

"The entire Manila City would be environmentally (in) peril. For the next administration, whoever gets to be the President of this country, (they have to) study it very carefully. Because ... Manila, that old city, it will decay if you add so many things in front of Manila Bay," Duterte added.

SADP meanwhile is now provided with a newly-constructed 750-square meter (sq.m.) passenger terminal building that can accommodate 160 passengers.

The newly-constructed 250m x 120 meter concrete apron of the airport can accommodate five units of turbo prop or category 3C aircraft.

Support facilities such as the security fence, road network, vehicular parking area for 120 cars, and a power house with two

standby 625KVA generators are now installed.

Additionally, two 1,750-sq.m. hangars have been constructed in advance for the eventual commercial operations of the airport.

The DOTr is also set to further improve the airport's facilities and has allocated P500 million for SADP for this year.

Among the projects budgeted were the improvement of the drainage system, which will help prevent flooding in the airport vicinity during heavy rains and high tide.

Sangley Airport is currently being utilized for general aviation operations, with its newly-constructed facilities ready to cater to turbo-prop aircraft for its initial commercial cargo operations that can run from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Several general aviation companies have expressed commitment and interest to operate and utilize these facilities as a manifestation of their support to the project. These include Asian aerospace, INAEC aviation, World Aviation, Cebu Pacific, Philippine Airlines, Aboitiz Inc., Alphaland, Air Mabuhay, 1Avition, PAGSS, PAIRCARGO, Petron, and Phoenix.

The airport is set to cater to routes/flights to island tourist destinations.

Alphaland, which flies the Balesin route and launched its first flight in Sangley Airport on February 14, will be transferring its Manila and Clark operations to the new airport.

The airport's hangars will also be used for Cebgo's cargo operations' transfer at Sangley.



PINAIRAL na ang online at broadcast (radio at telebisyon) na misa ng mga Katoliko sa bansang Singapore at Hong Kong.

Gagamit ka na lang ng cellphone, laptop, kompyuter, telebisyon, teleradyo, social media at transistor na de battery.

Wala na ang mga pagtitipon ng mga tao sa loob ng mga simbahan at iba pang pinagdarausan ng mga Katoliko ng maramihang pagtitipon gaya ng para sa ibang mga sakramento, seminar, formation, marriage encounter, retreat, cursillo at iba pa.

Sabagay, online at broadcast na ang ginagawa ng mga Katoliko kung nagmimisa si Papa Kiko sa Pasko, Bagong Taon at Banal na Araw.

Maging ang kanyang pagbabasbas ay itinuturing na ring nakaabot mula sa Vatican City hanggang sa Pinas kahit na ang totoo, eh, hanggang harapan lang niya ang inaabot ng holy water.

Sanay na rin ang mga tao sa ganitong paraan ng pagtitipon kahit para sa kanilang mga patay, birthday at iba pa.

KASAL, PATAY, HOLY WEEK

Pero sa pagkakaalam natin, mga Bro, ang kasal ay 'di pwedeng online at broadcast dahil dapat personal na magpakita ang administering officer na mayor, judge, pari, pastor o imam, mga ikakasal at ninong o ninang o witness nila.

Kailangang may lisensya ang administering officer, magsabi ng "I do o I did" ang ikakasal at makaraan nito ay pipirma sa marriage contract ang mga ito, kasama ang mga saksi o witness o ninong at ninang.

Napakahirap ding isipin na ang mga patay ay pagbawalang paglamayan, maging ang paghahatid sa kanila sa sementeryo o sa sunugan.

Maliban lang siguro kung namatay sa COVID-19 ang kapamilya o kapuso o kapatid.

Sa Hong Kong, maging ang pagtitipon para sa unang araw ng Holy Week na Ash Wednesday ay bawal din.

Sa Hong Kong, bawal ang lahat ng ito mula kamakalawa o Pebrero 15 hanggang Pebrero 28 habang sa Singapore, kailangang maging ang lahat sa anuns-



Ni BENNY ANTIPORDA

MGA PARI MABABANGKRAP SA COVID-19

yo ng gobyerno o mga pari kung kailan muling papayagan ang mga pagtitipon sa mga simbahan.

SA PILIPINAS?

Daan-daan na ang mga Person Under Investigation sa iba't ibang ospital at kahit ang mga pinakakawalan ay under monitoring pa rin sila.

Mangilan-ngilan pa lang ang nagpositibo sa mahal kong Pinas at hindi katulad sa Hong Kong at Singapore na marami-rami na.

Pero inaantabayanan ng ating gobyerno ang pagkalat ng sakit dahil sa pagdating ng mga Filipino at may permanent visa na dayuhan, lalo na ang mga nagmumula sa buong China, kasama na ang Hong Kong at Macau.

Bawal lahat ang mga dayuhan na pumasok sa bansa mula sa nasabing mga lugar kaya walang problema sa mga ito maliban lang sa mga Pinoy at may permanent visa.

Ngayon, mga Bro, kung relihiyoso ang mga dumarating na Filipino at may permanent visa, maaaring magsisipag sila sa pagdalo sa mga pagtitipon ng simbahan.

Magpapasalamat sila at magiging palasimba sila para ipagdasal ang kanilang mga sarili, pamilya, kabarangay at buong bansa na huwag dapuan ng COVID-19.

Ang masama, walang kinikitalang relihiyon ang COVID-19 at hindi rin nakikinig sa mga dasal.

Ano kaya ang pupwedeng gawin ng mga pari, madre, obispo at kardinal sa Pilipinas.

KITA MASE-ZERO?

Siguro, ang unang tingnan ng mga madre, pari, obispo, cardinal at mga asosasyon sa simbahan ay ang pera na pumapasok sa kanilang kaban sa lahat ng mga aktibidad ng simbahan.

May bayad kasi lahat ng sakramento, maging ang mga pa-blessing ng mga sasakyan, building at iba pa.

Ipagpalagay na nating mag-ala Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome ang COVID-19, mase-zero ang simbahan sa kita sa maraming buwan.

Tumagal ang SARS ng 8 buwan sa pagitan ng

2002 at 2003.

Mahaba-habang panahon 'yan na walang kikitain ang mga madre, pari, obispo at kardinal kung saka-sakali.

Ngayon, papayag ba sina father, bishop at cardinal na walang gawing mga sakramento at iba pang pagkakitaaan nila?

Sa Holy Week, dito kumikita nang malaki ang mga simbahan dahil napa-kasisipag mag-simba ang mga mananampalataya at napakasisipag din silang mag-donasyon.

Kaugnay nito, sakaling gayahin ng Simbahang Katolika ang ginagawa na sa Hong Kong at Singapore, mag-online banking ba ang mga simbahan para ang mga donasyon o kita mula sa mga sakramento, gaya ng pamisa, ay makararating sa kaban ng mga simbahan o bulsa nina father, obispo, kardinal at madre?

BAWAL GUMAMIT NG PERA

Sa China, ipinagbawal na rin ang paggamit ng mga lumang pera dahil pa rin sa COVID-19.

Napansin kasi nila na ang pera ang isang mabilis na daluyan ng COVID-19 dahil nagpapasahan ang mga tao ng pera sa mga bilihan.

Kumakapit ang virus sa pera at isa itong mabilis na paraan ng pagkalat ng sakit.

Dini-disinfect na ang mga ito at pupwede lang gamitin makaraan ang 14 araw.

Parang kinu-quarantine din ang pera, gaya ng pag-quarantine sa mga tao, sa loob ng 14 araw.

Makaraan nito, saka lang liabas ang mga ito.

Kung hindi naman, kailangang maglabas ng bagong pera ang gobyerno para magamit.

Kumusta kaya sa mahal kong Pinas sa ganitong mga usapin at sitwasyon?

oOo

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



Villar allays concerns on China funding for infra projects

By RICHMOND MERCURIO and CZERIZA VALENCIA

Public Works and Highways Secretary Mark Villar assured the public that the outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) will have a minimal impact on China-funded infrastructure projects in the country.

"If ever there is an effect, minimal. But so far, I don't see any major effects," he said.

The Philippines banned on Feb. 11 the entry of foreigners from China and its special administrative regions Hong Kong and Macau to curb the spread of COVID-19.

Only Filipinos and permanent resident visa holders are allowed to enter the country from the said areas. Filipinos, on the other hand, are temporarily barred from traveling to these countries.

With the travel ban, technical staff, architects or engineers from China who may be needed for the China-funded projects are restricted from coming to the country.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Ernesto Pernia said recently, though, that the prevailing outbreak may slow down the process-

ing of official development assistance (ODA) from China as fewer meetings would be held owing to the travel restrictions.

Both the Philippine and Chinese governments have recognized the need to conduct regular meetings to accelerate the processing of infrastructure projects for ODA funding.

"We admitted that we need to meet, to have regular meetings but it would be difficult right now because we cannot go to China," said Pernia.

Pernia also noted that China's dollar shortage may affect the processing of ODA loans for the Philippines.

China is also in the thick of responding to the immediate impact of the spread of COVID-19 on its economy at the moment.

So far, only two major projects under the government's Build Build Build program have obtained ODA funding from China: the Chico River Dam Irrigation project and the Kaliwa Dam project.

Two projects across the Pasig River funded by Chinese grants, however, are "still ongoing with no major issues," said Villar.

Turn to B3

Villar... From B1

"The projects are doing well. I don't see any major effects. So far, works on these projects are continuing," he said.

Villar said timelines for the Binondo-Intramuros bridge and the Estrella-Pantaleon bridge, which both broke ground in 2018, remain the same.

The two projects, which are funded by China through

a grant under a bilateral cooperation agreement with the Philippine government, are scheduled for completion next year.

The 506.46-meter Estrella-Pantaleon bridge will connect Estrella street in Makati and Barangka Drive in Mandaluyong City, while the 734-meter Binondo-Intramuros bridge will cross the Pasig River to link Intramuros and Binondo.