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**DENR**

**IN THE NEWS**

**Strategic Communication and Initiative Service**



# Battle for Manila Bay heightens

By **CORY MARTINEZ**

**THE Battle for Manila Bay is further heightened with the start of the dredging operations of the 36.4-km Tullahan-Tinajeros river system.**

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu said that all systems go for the dredging project of said river system, which will start on Feb. 24, Monday.

Cimatu stressed that the Tullahan-Tinajeros dredging operation is an important part of the Manila Bay rehabilitation program.

The river system, which starts from La Mesa Dam

in Quezon City and drains into the Manila Bay at Centennial Park in Navotas City, is one of the dirtiest waterways emptying into the historic bay which has been undergoing rehabilitation since January last year.

The dredging project is covered by the memorandum of agreement entered into by the DENR with food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. (SMC) last year.

The agreement formalized SMC's participation in the Adopt-an-Estero program, a priority initiative of the DENR and a key strategy to address the continuing mandamus of the Supreme Court to clean up Manila Bay.



**Cimatu**

Cimatu said that dredging will be done within the 5.25-km part of the river system, covering the stretch located in Barangay Catmon in Malabon City to Barangay Bagumbayan South in Navotas City.

He added that dredging is necessary to remove the sediments that are affecting the water quality of the river.

"Dredging strips away the accumulated debris, which could help reduce the risk of flooding and improve its water quality," Cimatu pointed out.

The SMC had earlier pledged P1 billion for the dredging and cleanup of the river system, including the purchase of backhoes, cranes with claw, dump trucks, barges and fuel.



## Dredging ng Tullahan-Tinajeros River para sa Battle of Manila Bay

**INANUNSYO** ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources na sisimulan na sa darating na Pebrero 24 ang dredging operations sa kahabaan ng Tullahan-Tinajeros River System.

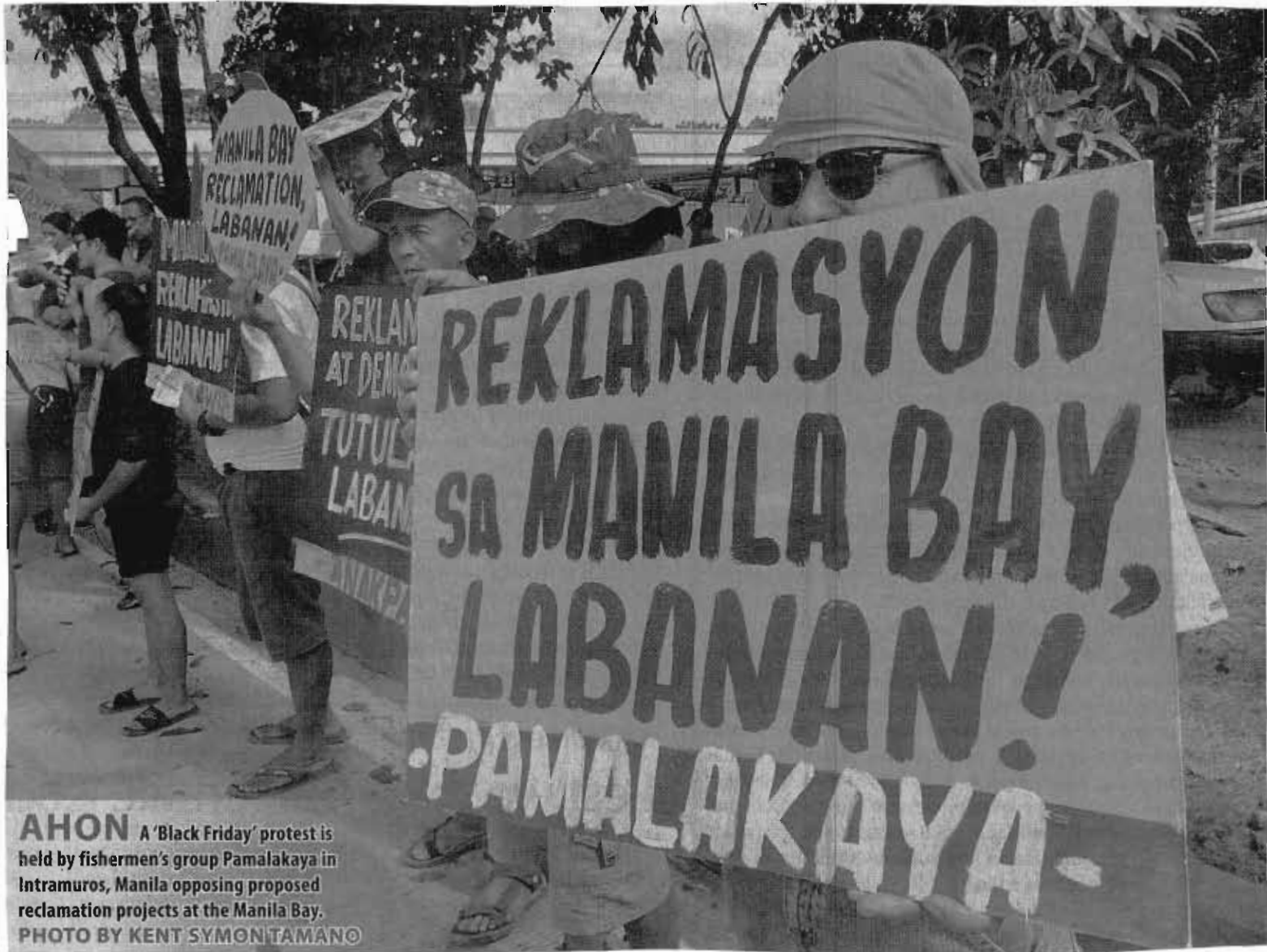
"It's all systems go for the Tullahan-Tinajeros dredging project, which is an important part of the Manila Bay rehabilitation program," ayon kay DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu.

Ang 36.4-km river system na nagsisimula sa La Mesa Dam sa Quezon City at nagtatapos sa Manila Bay sa Centennial Park, Navotas City ay isa sa pinakamaunang waterways na dumadaloy patungo sa makasaysayang baybayin na simulang linisin noong Enero ng nakalipas na taon.

Nakapaloob ang dredging project na ito sa memorandum of agreement na nilagdaan ng DENR at ng food and beverage giant na San Miguel Corp. noong isang taon.

Bukod sa mga kinatawan ng DENR at SMC ay inaasahan din sa gaganaping dredging ang pagdalo ng mga kinatawan ng local government ng Navotas at Malabon cities, lalawigan ng Bulacan, Department of Public Works and Highways, Department of the Interior and Local Government at Metropolitan Manila Development Authority.

**JAY REYES**



**AHON** A 'Black Friday' protest is held by fishermen's group Pamalakaya in Intramuros, Manila opposing proposed reclamation projects at the Manila Bay.  
**PHOTO BY KENT SYMONTAMANO**



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## DENR rehabilitates rescued serpent eagle in Isabela

**CAUAYAN CITY, Isabela:** The Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) here now has in its custody a young serpent eagle, also known as "lawin," which was rescued by a concerned citizen.

Forester Nelson Acob of Cenro Cauayan, said the serpent eagle was brought by the rescuer to the local radio station DZNC Bombo Radyo, which the referred it to the

Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office.

"We will keep in the meantime the eagle for its rehabilitation before releasing it back to its natural habitat," Acob said, urging the public for greater public vigilance to watch vending, collecting and gathering of wildlife species.

Citing Republic Act 9147 or the "Wildlife Resources Conservation and

Protection Act," Acob said a person caught in possession of vulnerable species can be jailed for one day to six months and be meted a fine ranging from P10,000 to P200,000.

He added that under the law, no person or entity is allowed possession of wildlife unless they can prove financial and technical capability and facility to maintain it.

**LEANDER C. DOMINGO**



■ This photo shows a young serpent eagle rescued by a concerned citizen and turned over the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office in Cauayan, Isabela for rehabilitation.  
**BY LEANDER C. DOMINGO**



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## KALIKASAN PATROL APP

Bantay Gubat (forest warden) volunteers in Infanta, Quezon gather data on forest and species threats using the Ka-Patrol mobile app as part of Haribon's citizen-initiated monitoring system for key biodiversity areas. This initiative is part of a larger campaign aimed at strengthening communities in forest management under the Forest Governance Project by Haribon and BirdLife International, with financial support from the European Union. PHOTO BY KATH ZAMBAS





# House panel okays 13 locations as protected areas

By  
**Zaida  
delos  
Reyes**

A HOUSE panel has approved at least six bills declaring 13 sites, found in eight provinces, as protected areas.

The House Committee on Natural Resources, chaired by Cavite Rep. Elpidio Barzaga Jr., stressed that if these bills are enacted into law the sites will be closed to commercial and large-scale exploitation.

The 13 sites will be added to a long list of watersheds, hills, mountains, parks, forest lands, and natural landscapes declared protected under Republic Act No. 11038, or the Expanded National Integrated Areas System (ENIPAS) Act of 2018.

These are Mt. Arayat in Pampanga; nine watersheds in Mindoro Occidental and Mindoro Oriental, a group of small islands in the town of Carles in Iloilo, the Tugbo watershed in the city of Masbate and the town of Mobo in Masbate, the Hinakpan mystical hills in Guihulangan, Negros Oriental, and the Tirad Pass landscape in Gregorio del Pilar in Quirino and the towns of Sigay, Cervantes and Suyu in Ilocos Sur.

Barzaga pointed out that most of these areas have been subjected to commercial use for decades and are now overexploited.

"We have to protect, regrow and preserve them for the benefit, enjoyment and appreciation of future generations of Filipinos. For instance, watersheds, hills and mountains are among our primary sources of water," he said.

Barzaga added that the new protected sites cover a combined area of 332,456 hectares.

Deputy speaker and Pampanga Rep. Aurelio Gonzales Jr. welcomed the inclusion of Mt. Arayat saying the mountain "is currently facing environmental challenges like illegal logging."

"If no action is taken, it is only a matter of time before Arayat degrades into an unrecoverable husk of land-mass devoid of life. It could also become a natural hazard to people living within its periphery," he said.

A protected area management office headed by a protected area superintendent would be created to see to it that the sites are no longer subjected to destructive human practices.

Funding for the management and protection of these areas would be included in the annual budget of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.



## QC to ban single-use plastic in July

Quezon City hotels and restaurants have been given until July 1 to fully comply with an ordinance banning single-use plastics for dine-in purposes.

Mayor Joy Belmonte approved the recommendation of the city's Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department to defer the Feb. 15 implementation of the measure to allow a transition plan for establishments.

"We understand the concerns of businesses so we

will give them ample time to comply," Belmonte said yesterday. "After that, it will be all systems go for the implementation of the ordinance."

Belmonte has signed the ordinance, which prohibits the distribution and utilization of single-use plastics in hotels and restaurants.

Covered by the ban are throw-away plates, spoons, forks, cups and other plastic and paper disposables.

— Janvic Mateo





## 'Recycle, not ban single-use plastic,'

### Villar appeals to public

#### By Macon Ramos-Araneta

AS THE Philippines remained to be the third largest producer of plastic waste that made its way to our oceans, Senator Cynthia A. Villar on Friday conceded that single-use plastic might be impossible to ban.

"Yes, *baka* impossible to ban," said Villar, chairman of the Senate committee on environment and natural resources.

Villar said she is yet to hear any replacement for single-use plastic.

The senator, however, said a possible remedy is to recycle single-use plastic, "unless an opinion for its replacement will surface."

"I have read many articles abroad. What we can do is require them to recycle the single-use plastic, not prohibit since I have not heard of packaging other than glass," said Villar.

"Maybe if they can recycle their packaging, that's okay. But if they cannot, then technology should be tapped to invent something that can replace single-use plastic," Villar said.

She said that at present, there are no products yet where single-plastic use is prohibited.

"No products. We are not yet prohibiting single-use plastic because it is the cheapest, but "we can recycle it, we can

allow. And I don't think they have a replacement," related Villar.

Earlier, Villar conducted a hearing on Senate Bill No. 1331 or the Extended Producers Responsibility Act of 2020 that will mandate manufacturers to be responsible for the management of their plastic products.

The proposed measure authored by Villar also seeks to institutionalize the practice of EPR in waste management.



# QC plastics ban moved to July

## Ordinance 2876 prohibits the distribution and/or use of single-use plastics/disposable materials

BY PAULA ANTOLIN  
*@tribunephil\_phau*

Restaurants and hotels in Quezon City have until 1 July 2020 to comply with the ordinance banning single-use plastics and disposable materials for dine-in purposes.

The Office of the Mayor approved the recommendation of the Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department (EPWMD), headed by Andrea

Villaroman, to defer the 15 February 2020 implementation of Ordinance SP-2876, S-2019 due to "needed logistical adjustments" on the part of stakeholders.

It stated that City Hall understood the concerns of the affected establishments, thus the deferment of the implementation of the ordinance.

Introduced by Councilor Dorothy Delarmente and co-introduced by 35 other city councilors, Ordinance 2876 prohibits the distribution and/or use of single-use plastics/disposable materials, including cutlery, for dine-in purposes in all hotels and restaurants in Quezon City.

The ban covers the use of throwaway plates, spoons, forks, cups and other plastic and paper

disposables.

Villaroman made the recommendation to the mayor following a series of dialogues with stakeholders, including restaurants, fast-food chains and hotels, who expressed their commitment to the measure. However, they raised several concerns in terms of food safety and hygiene, logistical concerns and requirements and other issues regarding hotel and restaurant operations.

Finding their concerns reasonable, Villaroman recommended the deferment of the ordinance's implementation, provided that stakeholders would come up with a transition plan detailing concrete steps to be undertaken to comply with the

said regulation.

Villaroman said the plan, to be submitted within 30 days from 15 February, will include the introduction of recovery and recycling mechanisms for single-use plastics/disposable materials.

The EPWMD is also constantly coordinating with the Philippine Alliance for Recycling and Materials Sustainability to develop the recovery and recycling mechanisms for residual plastic and disposable materials, which can address those single-use wastes not covered by the ordinance.

Villaroman also reported that the implementation of the Plastic Bag Ban Ordinance, which started last 1 January 2020, is being followed by most of the relevant retailers.



## DoT urged to join drive to ditch single use plastics

**AN environmental group urged the Department of Tourism (DoT) to step up its advocacy for reusable bags as the country holds its first-ever "Philippine Shopping Festival" next month.**

The EcoWaste Coalition, a non-profit green group working for a zero waste and toxics-free society, called upon Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat to optimize the shopping campaign not only to boost tourism, but also to encourage consumers and retailers to ditch the wasteful plastic bag habit.

Puyat had previously stated that "in developing our tourism industry, we must strike a balance between economic opportunities and social responsibilities," stressing "we must ensure that any development in the tourism industry must not be undertaken at the expense of the environment, the tourists, and the host communities."

"With the well-being of Mother Nature in mind, the department's promotional campaign should give due emphasis to the environmental benefits of reusable bags that will encourage more shoppers, locals and foreigners, into proudly bringing their own bags whenever they shop," EcoWaste Zero Waste Campaigner Jove Benosa said.

"Instead of single-use plastic bags or paper bags, consumers should be reminded and rewarded for carrying reusable bags with them. This will help in reducing the environmental and climate impact of single-use bags, particularly the myriad of problems associated with their unrestrained production, consumption and disposal," he said.

"The use of bayong and other hand-woven bags made of native materials such as palm, pandan and water hyacinth, as well as DIY (do it yourself) tote bags from old clothes, katsa and fabric scraps, should be actively promoted and supported," he suggested.

He said over 500 LGUs have so far adopted ordinances banning or regulating plastic bags to minimize their garbage woes.

The EcoWaste Coalition further urged the DoT to use the nationwide sale to encourage a shift from disposables to reusables by restaurants, food courts, and other food and beverage vendors.



## Mga hotel, resto tinanangan sa plastic ban ng QC

Lahat ng hotel at restaurant sa Quezon City ay binigyan ng hanggang Hulyo 1, 2020 upang ganap na sumunod sa ordinansa na ipinagbabawal ang paggamit ng mga plastic na gamit o disposable material sa mga kumakain.

Ayon kay Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte kanya nang inaprubahan ang rekomendasyon ng Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department (EPWMD) na ipagpaliban ang petsang Pebrero

15, 2020 kaugnay sa pagpatupad ng Ordinance No. SP-2876 S-2019 sanhi ng kinakailangang 'logistical adjustment' sa parte ng mga establisimyento.

Aniya, nauunawaan nila ang sitwasyon kung kaya't bibigyan ng sapat na panahon ang mga establisimyento para makasunod sa ordinansa.

Pagkatapos aniya ng Hulyo 1, 2020 ay kanila nang ipatutupad ang bagong ordinansa para sa plastic ban. **(Riz Dominguez)**



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LESSEN IMPACT OF DRY MONTHS

# WATER SUPPLY REMAINS BELOW NORMAL FOR MARCH

**By Ronnel W. Domingo**  
@RonWDomingoINQ

The allocation of raw water from Angat dam for domestic use in Metro Manila, Cavite and Rizal is expected to be maintained at a sub-normal level of 42 cubic meters per second (cms) in March, the third month in a row, according to the National Water Resources Board (NWRB).

NWRB Executive Director Sevillo David Jr. said in an interview this would be the recommendation when the board meets next week, a move that is more likely to be carried than a reduction in allocation.

"We want to at least maintain [42 cms and avoid a reduction] until we are able to go back to normal allocation levels," David said.

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System normally receives 46 cms from Angat. In 2019, MWSS and its concessionaires received as low as 36 cms when water level at the dam fell below the critical level

of 160 meters above sea level.

David told the Inquirer that with the summer months approaching, an increase in MWSS allocation might not be forthcoming, but that there would at least be no reduction.

"We are striving to at least maintain 42 cms through the coming months to ensure that there would be sufficient supply in the summer and lessen the impact of the dry months on consumers," he added.

As for water allocation for irrigation, David said this was likely to be also maintained at 20 cms or half the normal supply for farms.

"We have to maintain that in March because they need it [at a time when crops are in their vegetative stage]," he said. "This may be reduced in April when the need is less because the crops are nearing harvest."

As of Friday morning, water level at Angat was at 202.48 meters above sea level (masl) or 9.52 of of 212 masl. INQ



## Dugyot na babuyan sa Bulacan, ipinasara

ISANG farm na inireklamo dahil sa umaalingasaw na amoy ang pansamantalang ipinasara ng mga iknauukulan sa Sta. Maria, Bulacan kahapon.

Ayon kay Mario Alfaro ng Sta. Maria Municipal Environment and Natural Resources (MENRO), ipinasara muna nila ang Daop-Palad Farm sa Sitio Tikal, Brgy. Catmon na nagdudulot ng polusyon.

Nabatid na ang Daop-Palad Farm ay pinatatakbo ng isang kooperatiba na ang itinuturong administrador ay isang Rosalina Nolasco na may tanggapan sa Sitio Sabintang Kampana, Brgy. Bulac, Sta. Maria.

Sinabi ni Alfaro na may

125 baboy ang laman ng Daop-Palad Farm subalit isang tao lamang ang nag-aalaga kaya hindi mamintina ang kalinisan at talagang marumi.

Bukod sa polusyong dulot sa komunidad, umaagos din ang dumi ng baboy at ang matinding apektado rito ay isang sanctuary floating resort sa Brgy. San Vicente na di-

narayo ng mga tao kapag panahon ng tag-init.

Dahil dito ay inatasan ng MENRO ang owner/operator ng Daop-Palad Farm na magsumite ng mga kinakailangang business documents sa loob ng 15 araw at kundi makakasunod ay tuluyang ipasasara.

**DANNY GRAVALDOR**



## LLDA

### UNCENSORED

THE Laguna Lake Development Authority is a very important and powerful branch of government that sees to it that no polluted water from Metro Manila goes to the Laguna Lake. It is said that LLDA must use its power to safeguard the supply of fresh water to Metro Manila and its environs. The late President Ferdinand E. Marcos created the LLDA to insure the supply of clean water to Metro Manila from the Laguna de Bay.

I've said that there was a need to dredge the lake that was already silted during the presidency of Madame Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. But the Belgian company was not able to go on with the project for some reason or another.

As I said in my previous column last Tuesday, I will continue to explain how salt water from the China Sea is filtered into fresh water.

In my discussion with friends who have been connected before with the LLDA, the China Sea is the main source of water. I asked: But how is that possible when what we need is fresh, potable water? *Hindi naman maiinom ang tubig na maalat.*

*Ganito podawang nangyayari.* The salt water from the China Sea, on the Batangas side in particular, the salt water from the China Sea goes through the coast line of the Pansipit River and converts it to fresh water. The water of Laguna Lake and Taal Lake both come from the China Sea. The salt water enters the Pansipit River and enters the Taal Lake no longer salt water. Unbelievable but true. God only knows!



Manuel  
L.  
Morato

The same thing happens with the Pasig River. The salt water from the China Sea in Manila Bay in particular, enters the Pasig River leading to Laguna Lake as fresh water.

In the case of Taal Lake, the fishes name *Maliputo* or *Talakitok* and *Tawilis* originally came from the China Sea. The *Talakitok* enter the Pansipit River and goes to Taal Lake. Eventually *Talakitok* became *Maliputo* through this natural process. From a salt water fish to a fresh water fish; from *Talakitok* to *Maliputo*, considered the most expensive fish in the Philippines found in Taal Lake.

The Pansipit River is 9 kilometers from Balayan Bay to Taal Lake. There are 3 towns *na sakop ng* Pansipit River: Lemery, San Nicolas and Sta. Teresita along the river. The Spanish Galeons used to pass the Pansipit River for repair and trade. But, because of reclamation along the Pansipit River, *humiit, kumitid at halos kalahati ang nawala* because of reclamation on both sides by so-called "developers."

The China Sea is the main supplier, an endless supplier of water to Taal Lake through the Pansipit Riv-

er; and through the Pasig River to Laguna Lake. Both Pansipit River and Pasig River *dapat natin alagaan* as the life-blood of our potable water supply in Metro Manila and its neighboring towns and cities. *Dapat lamang alagaan at 'yan ay bigay ng Ating Mahal na Panginoong Diyos.*

Looking back, I keep remembering the late Gina Lopez for being concerned about the cleaning up of the Pasig River; and the environment in general. No one can deny that she gave it her all to preserve the environment. No matter what others may say, the late Gina Lopez definitely caused awareness, attention and concern to one and all that our environment must be protected and taken cared of. May she rest in peace. She had contributed much to our people in her lifetime.

I would like to add that many of us still remember the late Mrs. Macra Cruz as LLDA Administrator during the time of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. She was the topnotcher of MAPUA as a Hydro Engineer. She was number one as an Engineer.

Bless her soul for she indeed protected the Laguna Lake very well during her stewardship. I do believe and I will take a guess that she might have given the suggestion to dredge the Laguna Lake to protect it from drying up. *Maraming nagsasabi noon pa na mababaw na ang Laguna Lake dahil sa trash* being dumped from Metro Manila and towns around it.

For comments and suggestions email at [mlmorato@yahoo.com](mailto:mlmorato@yahoo.com)

# Pujada, 2 others now on list of world's most

## beautiful bays

**DAVAO ORIENTAL:** The Pujada Bay, along with Mayo and Balete Bays, in the City of Mati, Davao Oriental has officially been included on the list of the "Most Beautiful Bays in the World."

The provincial government has just received the confirmation on February 21, through an official communication from the Most Beautiful Bays in the World Association (MBBWA).

"I am pleased to inform you that the Board of Directors has voted in favor of accepting Pujada Bay, but also Mayo and Balete Bays together, as a new member of the Most Beautiful Bays in the World Association. Congratulations and welcome," Michel Bujold, world president of the MBBWA, said in a letter addressed to Davao Oriental Gov. Nelson Dayanghirang and Mati Mayor Michelle Rabat.

Dolores Valdesco, head of the Environment and Natural Resources Office and one of the technical persons for the province's application, said the MBBWA is set to send their recommendations for implementation, which include the incorporation of Mayo and

Balete Bays in the City of Mati in the official documents that originally cover only the Pujada Bay.

Last month, two top officials of the Club of the Most Beautiful Bays in the World from France and Canada, namely treasurer Guy Rousset and general manager Bruno Bodard, visited the province to conduct a four-day validation and site visit at the Pujada Bay.

During their stay, both officials expressed how impressed they were with the bay's beautiful and rich seascapes and landscapes.

Following the validation, the officials submitted their on-site visit report to the board members of the MBBWA, who gave the official nod for the Pujada Bay's inclusion in the prestigious association.

Dayanghirang expressed his happiness over new milestone for the province.

"One of the reasons we applied Pujada Bay to the Most Beautiful Bays in the World Club is to share its magnificent assets to the people of the world who would like to experience the natural and cultural richness of our place. The people of Davao Oriental are very proud



**PUJADA BAY IS WORLD'S BEST** The Pujada Bay, along with Mayo and Balete Bays, in the City of Mati, Davao Oriental has officially been included on the list of the 'Most Beautiful Bays in the World.' CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

of Pujada Bay and consider it a jewel of the province," Dayanghirang said.

"It is, therefore, a top priority in terms of maintenance and enhancement of its natural beauty

because this is a God-given gift that is meant to be shared and enjoyed not only today but more so in the coming years and the generations to come," he added.

The official awarding of the cer-

tificate is set to be handed over to the officials of the Davao Oriental and Mati during the MBBWA's annual congress in Morocco this coming October.

**PIO OF DAVAO ORIENTAL**





# Apec: A new phase of the journey

## BUSINESS MATTERS

GUILLERMO M. LUZ

Last week, I attended the first quarterly meeting of 2020 of the Apec Business Advisory Council (Abac) in Sydney, Australia. Abac is composed of three members from each of the 21 economies which make up Apec or the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation. Collectively, these 21 economies make up just under one-half of the world's population but account for the majority of global GDP and trade. The economies include Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Republic of Korea, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Chairmanship in Apec rotates every year among the economies and this year's chair is Malaysia. The Philippines served as chair in 1996 and 2015.

Abac's role is to serve as a business advisory council to Apec by discussing and delivering business-related recommendations to senior officials, Cabinet ministers, and leaders (e.g., presidents and prime ministers) of the 21 economies. Apec's original mission and objective was to promote free trade in the Asia-Pacific. Formally created in 1989, Apec created a 25-year plan in 1994 known as the Bogor Goals to create a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific by 2020, with a deadline for developed economies set for 2015 and a time frame for developing economies by 2020.

Abac was founded in 1995 to advise government officials how to help achieve these goals. It held its first meeting in 1996 in Manila. It delivers a formal written report to leaders and holds a dialogue with them every November. Aside from that, it delivers written recommendations to at least eight sets of ministers, including trade ministers, finance ministers,

energy ministers, and others. Its international secretariat is based in Manila.

Abac carries out its work through five working groups on regional economic integration; finance and economics; sustainable development; digital innovation; and micro-, small, and medium-scale enterprise development. Some details of the annual work plan have evolved over time but its basic mission has remained the same: trade and investment liberalization and continuous movement along the path toward a free trade area for the Asia and Pacific.

With its 25-year timeline for the Bogor Goals coming to a close, we have all been assessing what's been accomplished and reflecting on what the next steps should be. As a group, Apec has seen its real GDP grow from \$19 trillion in 1989 when it was formed to \$42 trillion by 2015, the latest available data. Per capita income has risen by 74 percent over that period, raising millions out of poverty and expanding a middle class over that period. Much of that was driven by trade growth which grew 6.7 times to \$20 trillion (versus 5.6 times for the rest of the world). While the free trade area of the Asia-Pacific outlined in the Bogor Goals has not yet been achieved, movement has been seen along several pathways in that direction, most notably through the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership which covers some 18 countries; Trans-Pacific Partnership (around 11 countries); and

Pacific Alliance (four countries).

However, the ride has not always been smooth nor have results been equally felt across the region. Poverty and lower per capita incomes still persist and the middle class has not expanded that much in some economies, including the Philippines. While millions have been lifted out of poverty, clearly some have still been left behind. The tide has risen, but not lifted all boats. This is one of the reasons why there has been an antiglobalization sentiment in spite of the benefits which global trade and investments have brought.

More challenges lie ahead and this is where Apec will need to adjust its lenses even as it keeps its eyes on the path toward free trade for the region. Climate change, resilience, and sustainability will feature large in all our futures. Business practice and individual behavior will need to change to shape that new future. Digital innovation already is a transformational factor today. Artificial intelligence and machine learning will transform the way we work and educate our workers. Inclusion and inclusive growth will also be the new mantra as Apec moves into its next quarter century.

The next leg of this journey continues as the Philippines hosts the second Abac meeting of 2020 in April in Manila.

Guillermo M. Luz is an alternate member of Abac, associate director at Ayala Corporation, and chief resilience officer of the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation.

Business Matters is a project of the Makati Business Club (makatibusinessclub@mbc.com.ph).



STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES  
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# UP fraternity calls for youth action on climate change

By JOSEPH ALMER PEDRAJAS

University of the Philippines (UP) fraternity members have called on the youth to act on climate change for a sustainable future during a press conference after the annual Oblation Run in UP Diliman, Quezon City yesterday.

Members of the Alpha Phi Omega

fraternity led the run around Palma Hall yesterday, most of them holding white placards with words written in green paint – “Hold Violators Accountable” and “Climate Action Now.”

The theme of this year’s event is “Run for the climate: Calling the youth to climate action for a sustainable future.”

Karl Abenojar, fraternity member and prefect for academic affairs, said the

group chose to call attention to climate change because of the alarming signs like the rising sea levels and the changing temperature.

“It is alarming. It affects the marginalized communities,” he added.

The group said that it is important that the youth initiate the action as they have the power to sway the electorate to choose leaders who we can work on is-

sues related to the environment.

“We are, as digital natives, very familiar with new technologies, strategies and tactics to employ in our campaign towards a sustainable future.”

Some of the specific actions that they urged are tree-planting, reducing consumption of non-biodegradable and single-use plastics, and using products made from recycled materials.