

DATE : 02 27 20

DAY : Wednesday

**DENR**

**IN THE NEWS**

**Strategic Communication and Initiative Service**



## DENR's Cimatu wants to see more public-private tie-ups

**ENVIRONMENT** Secretary Roy Cimatu wants to see more public-private partnerships in environmental initiatives.

He called on more private companies to join the government in its environmental initiatives, following the recent launch of the P1-billion Tullahan-Tinajeros dredging project.

The project involving the 5.25-km portion of the Tullahan-Tinajeros River system from Malabon City's Barangay Catmon to Navotas City's Barangay Bagumbayan South is a joint undertaking by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and diversified conglomerate San Miguel Corp.

The DENR chief described the dredging project as a "perfect example of collaboration between the government and private sector."

"This is a partnership forged in trust, joined by a vision, and

driven by passion," he said.

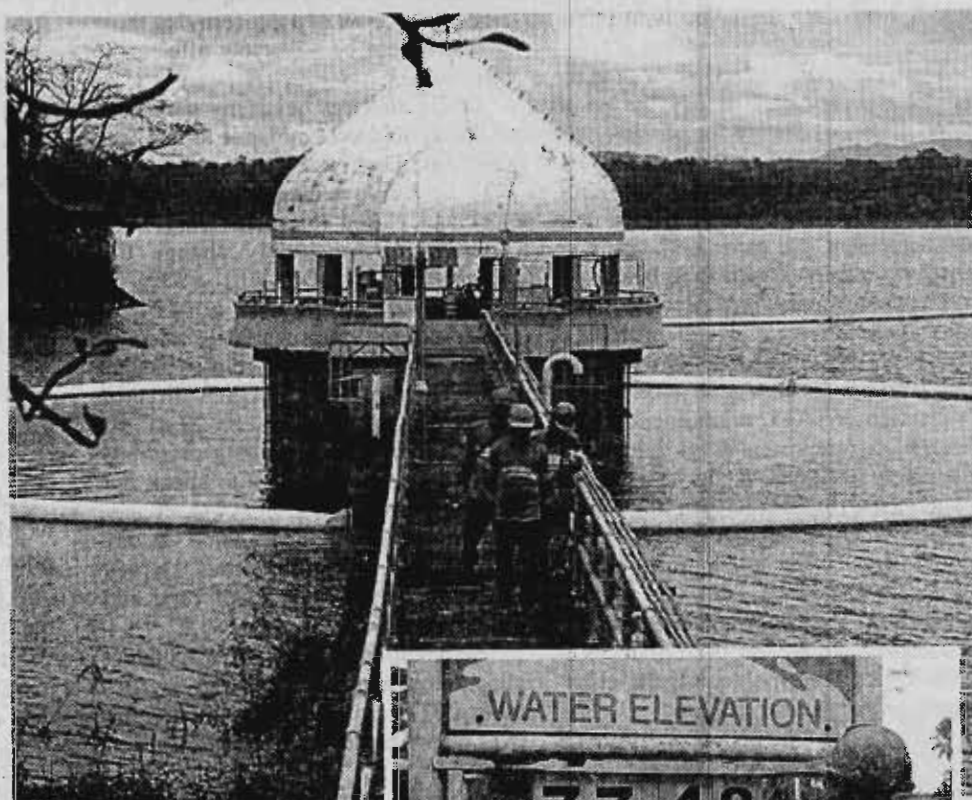
"More than the fact that we cannot do it alone, this commitment of [SMC] to help us in this enormous task magnifies the importance of shared responsibility. As we are all part of the problem, one way or another, we can all be part of the solution," he added.

He said he is hoping that the partnership would inspire other private firms to include in their corporate social responsibility the cleanup of waterways.

He said he could not thank SMC enough for adopting the Tullahan River which cleanup is critical to the rehabilitation of Manila Bay.

To clean up the Tullahan River, the government would have "an easier task of cleaning Manila Bay," he said.

"Also by doing so, we will help prevent flooding. That is hitting three birds with one stone," he added. **Rio N. Araja**



**WATER CHECK.** La Mesa dam workers conduct a routine check of water intake as well as the water elevation height, with summer only weeks away. **Manny Palmero**



## SMC-DENR Tullahan river launch

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and San Miguel Corporation (SMC) formally launched the Tullahan-Tinajeros river system dredging project. The project is a vital part of the Manila Bay rehabilitation program and will help address flooding in low-lying areas near the river such as Bulacan province. SMC has long been a partner of the DENR in cleanup efforts for the Tullahan river and has pledged P1 billion for this project. It acquired brand-new backhoes, cranes, barges, tug boats and dump trucks and will also provide manpower and logistics support.



■ DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu (4th from left) and SMC President and COO Ramon Ang (3rd from left) inspected the new equipment in Navotas with (from left) SMC VP and Special Assistant to the President Col. Ariel Querubin, DILG Usec. Epimaco Densing, Navotas Mayor Tobias Tiangco, Malabon Mayor Antolin Oreta, MMDA Chair Danilo Lim, and Bulacan Governor Daniel Fernando.



MANILA BAY REHAB

# TULLAHAN RIVER DREDGING EASES BULACAN FLOODS

CITY OF MALOLOS—The P1-billion Tullahan River dredging and expansion project will help solve the perennial flooding in Bulacan province, San Miguel Corp. (SMC) said here on Tuesday.

SMC has committed to fund the project to clean the often-clogged waterway that feeds into the heavily polluted Manila Bay.

Officials of SMC and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) inaugurated the project that they said would also boost the ongoing rehabilitation of Manila Bay.

Ramon Ang, SMC president, said dredging the Tullahan River would prevent flooding in low-lying areas in Bulacan that would host the P735-billion New Manila International Airport.

Bulacan villagers expressed fears that the land development project for the airport in a 2,372-hectare of idle fishponds in Bulakan town would worsen flooding in the area during high tide. The site of the planned airport is 5 kilometers from Tullahan River.

"The airport, envisioned as the country's largest and most modern, is being framed by [some] as a potential source of flooding in the province," Ang said.

### Environmental risks

But he said the part of preparatory work for the airport was hiring expert foreign consultants to study the flooding situation in Bulacan.

"One hundred percent, this [airport] project will not worsen flooding in Bulacan, it will actually solve it. In the first place, foreign banks will not lend money for such major projects if they are not assured that you have addressed all environmental risks," Ang said.

He said SMC had already identified the rivers, creeks, tributaries and bodies of water that needed to be cleaned, deepened, widened and improved, to address flooding in the province.

CARMELA REYES-ESTROPE INQ



STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE

PHILIPPINE DAILY  
BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS  
**INQUIRER**

A-16  
PAGE

UPPER  
 LOWER

PAGE 1

BANNER  
STORY

EDITORIAL

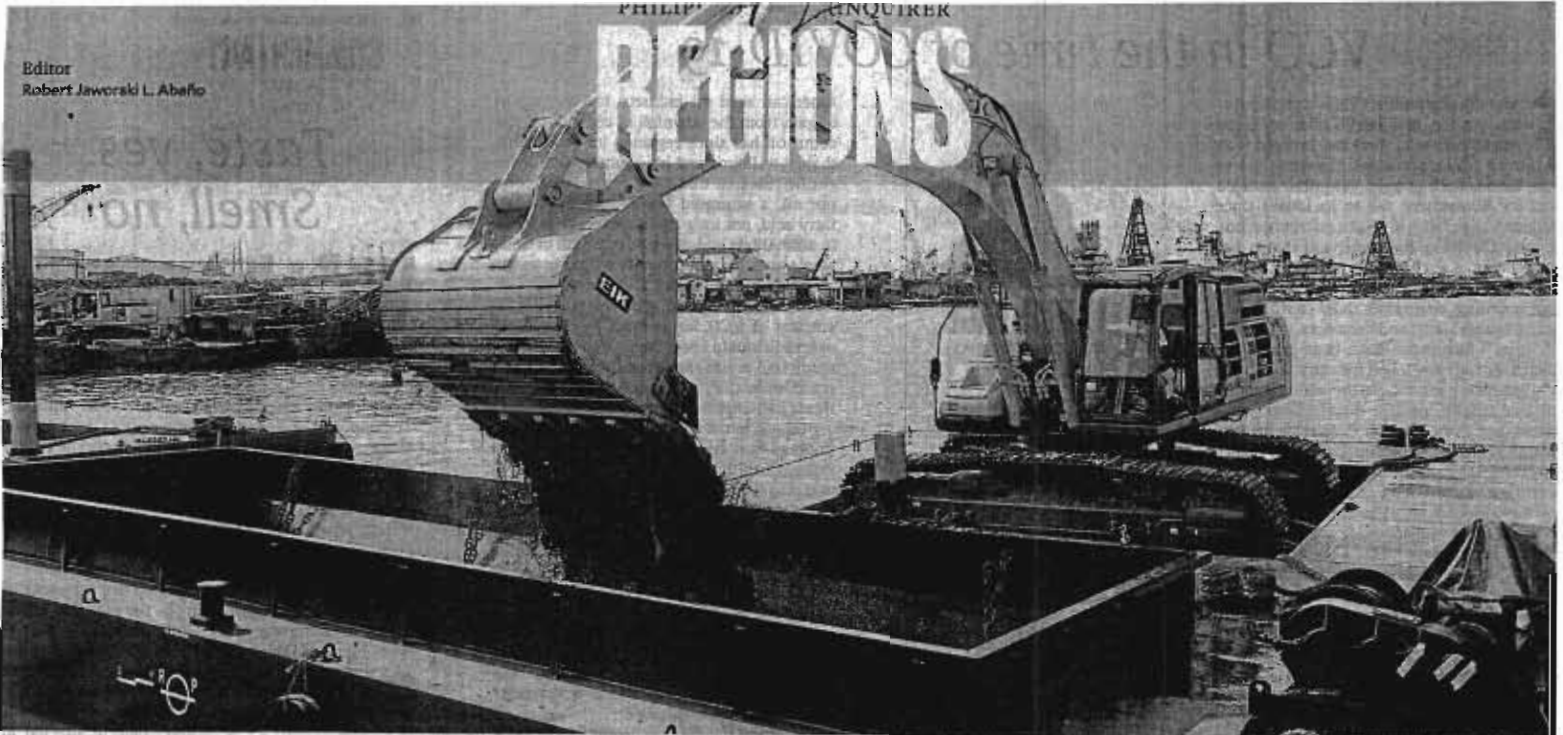
CARTOON

02 27 20

DATE

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

PAGE: \_\_\_\_\_



Editor  
Robert Jaworski L. Abaño

**DIGGING UP** The Tullahan River dredging and expansion project, which began on Sunday, is expected to clean the clogged waterway and prevent the perennial flooding in Bulacan province. —CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



**IPINAGMALAKI** ni Navotas City Mayor Toby Tiangco ang pagkasungkit ng lungsod at makamit ang 94.2% sa 2019 Assessment of Compliance of Local Government Units to Manila Bay Clean-up, Rehabilitation and Preservation Program. (Beth Samson)

## 94.2% sa Manila Bay Clean-up compliance, nakuha ng Navotas

**NAKATANGGAP** ang Pamahalaang Lungsod ng Navotas nitong Miyerkules ng 94.2% na marka sa 2019 Assessment of Compliance of Local Government Units to Manila Bay Clean up, Rehabilitation and Preservation Program (MBCRPP).

Kasama ang Navotas sa top five na mga LGU na nagtaguyod ng Supreme Court mandamus na nag-uutos sa mga ahensya ng gobyerno na linisin, ayusin at ipreserba ang Manila Bay at ibalik ang water quality nito para pwede ng paglanguyan o gamitin sa contact recreation.

Hinikayat ni Mayor Toby Tiangco ang mga Navoteño at opisyal ng barangay na ipagpatuloy ang pagsisikap na manatiling malinis ang mga katubigan sa lungsod.

"Ang pangangisda ang ating pangunahing pinagkukunan ng kabuhayan at bilang fishing community, dapat binibigyan natin ng lubos na pagpapahalaga ang kalusugan at kondisyon ng ating mga dagat at ilog," aniya.

"May mga polisiya at programa tayó para mapanatiling malinis ang ating mga dagat at ilog at ibalik ang water quality nito sa

swimming level. Ngunit, kailangan natin ang suporta at pakikilahok ng lahat para magtagumpay ang mga polisiya at programang ito," dagdag niya.

Ipinapatupad ng Navotas ang mga ordinansa ukol sa anti-littering, maayos na sewage at seepage sa mga kabahayan, opisina at establisimiyento, at iba pa.

Aktibo rin itong nakikilahok sa Battle for Manila Bay clean-up drive at nakakolekta ito ng 2,267,087 kilo ng basura noong Enero hanggang Disyembre 2019.

Dagdag pa rito, patuloy na nagsisikap ang lungsod na makapagbigay ng bagong tahanan sa mga informal settler families na nakatira sa tabing-dagat o ilog.

Ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources at San Miguel Corp., sa kabilang banda, ay nagsimula ng magsagawa ng sustainable dredging program para sa Tullahan-Tinajeros river system.

Maliban sa pagtanggap ng silt, debris at basura sa ilalim ng ilog, inaasahang makatutulong ang dredging program para maiwasan ang pagbaha sa Bulacan.

(Beth Samson)



## DREDGING PROGRAM NG DENR, SMC SA NAVOTAS

"KAILANGAN natin ang sustainable dredging program para masiguro na ang tagumpay na nakakamit natin dito ay pangmatagalán at matatamasa ng mga susunod na henerasyon."

Pahayag ito ni Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco sa harap ng mga opisyal ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources na pinangunahan nina Sec. Roy Cimatu at Undersecretary Benny Antiporda at San Miguel Corp. President/COO Ramon S. Ang at iba pa.

"Dati hindi parating nakapagsasagawa ng dredging dahil sa kawalan ng pondo. Kaya natutuwa tayo na may partnership ang DENR at SMC na nangakong magbibigay ng P1 billion para sa proyektong ito," dagdag pa ng alkalde. "Ang dredging ng 36.4-kilometrong Tullahan-Tinajeros River System ay bahagi ng kampanya na linisin at ayusin ang marine ecosystem ng Manila Bay."

### Pasado sa Good Financial Housekeeping

"Dahil sa tapat na pamamahalang pampinansyal, pasado ang pamahalaang lungsod sa 2019 Good Financial Housekeeping standards ng DILG at pinagtibay nito ang ating pagsisikap na gugulin ang pondo ng bayan sa hayag at tapat na paraan," wika ni Mayor Toby.

Labis ding ikinatuwa ni Cong. John Rey Tiangco ang panibagong recognition ng lungsod na naging consistent awardee tulad ng Seal of Good Local Governance kahit noong panahon n'ya bilang mayor dahil na rin sa pagsulong ng mabuting pamamahala at kalidad na serbisyo-publiko.

"Ang pagtanggap natin ng pagkilalang ito ay nangangahulugan lang na

nasa tamang landas tayo tungo sa pagsisiguro na ang buwis ng mamamayan ay nagagamit nang mahusay para sa mga serbisyo at programang naging bebenepisyo sa mga Navotefio," ayon sa Tiangco brothers.

### Pagpapasalamat sa mga sumusuporta sa PAO

Hindi naging balakid kay Public Attorney's Office chief Persida Acosta ang pagkawala ng pondo forensic laboratory ng PAO dahil marami pa rin ang naniniwala sa gawain ng ahensya, lalo na ang pagtulong nito sa mahihirap na Pinoy na naghahanap ng hustisya.

Todo ang kanyang pasasalamat sa iba't ibang indibidwal at grupo sa kanilang pagbibigay-suporta at tulong sa ahensya kaya naman kahit kulang sa personnel at overworked ay determinado ang PAO sa patuloy na pagtulong nito sa maraming tao.

Isa si Chief Acosta na may pusong-makatao at sinserong umaasista na ipinaglalaman ang hinaing ng mga naagrabyadong sektor sa ating bansa. Tulad na lang sa mala-tortur na kamatayan ng mga naniniksiyunang ng Dengvaxia at sa naging pagdurusa ng kapamilya ng mga nasawi dahil lang sa kawalang-ingat ng mga nagsakatuparan ng maliwakang pagbabakuna laban sa dengue sa pangunguna nina dating health secretary Janette Garin at Sec. Francisco Duque.



## Ban single-use plastics now, says House leader

AN OPPOSITION leader in the House of Representatives on Wednesday lauded the national government for "leading by example" after the National Solid Waste Management Commission issued a resolution banning the use of single-use plastics in all government offices.

House Minority Leader Bienvenido Abante Jr. of Manila said the move highlighted the need to pass a law to permanently prohibit the manufacture, importation, sale, and use of single-use plastic products in the country.

NSWMC chair Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatú signed NSWMC Resolution No. 1363, Series of 2020 on Feb. 12. The issuance directs the DENR to prepare and implement the ban on the use of unnecessary single-use plastic products by national government agencies, local government units, and all other government-controlled offices.

The plastic products covered by the prohibition are cups less than 0.2 millimeter in thickness, drinking straws, coffee stirrers, spoons, forks, knives, "labo" or thin and translucent plastic bags, and thin-filmed sando bags lower than 15 microns.

"This is a step in the right direction and, I believe, a signal to those of us in Congress to finally pass a law to prohibit the use of single-use plastics in our country," said Abante.

Abante filed House Bill 3773 or the "Single-use Plastic Product Ban of 2019." The bill bans the manufacture, importation, sale and use of single-use plastic products.

If enacted, Abante said HB 3773 would prohibit the "manufacture, importation, sale, and use of all single-use products" one year after the effectivity of the law.

The measure defines single-use plastic as "disposable plastic products which are commonly used for packaging and include items to be used only once that are thrown away or recycled." Examples of these products are grocery bags, food packaging containers and bags, water bottles, straws, stirrers, styrofoam, cups, sachets, and plastic cutlery. **Maricel V. Cruz**





## 163M plastic sachet itinatapon araw-araw

Ni Leifbilly Begas

ISINULONG kahapon sa Kamara de Representantes ang tuluyang pagbabawal sa paggawa, importasyon at paggamit ng single-use plastic sa buong bansa.

Ani House Minority Leader Benny Abante Jr., may-akda ng Single-use Plastic Product Ban bill (House bill 3773), hindi lamang sa mga tanggapan ng gobyerno dapat ipagbawal

ang mga single-use plastic kundi sa buong bansa.

"Data shows that we use more than 163 million plastic sachet packets daily, or around 60 billion sachets a year.

Many of these used sachets find their way to our seas, as studies shockingly show that 80 percent of ocean plastics come from land-based sources--not from fishing vessels or the fisheries sector," dagdag pa ni Abante.

Kamakailan ay nagpalabas ng resolusyon ang National Solid Waste Management Commission na nagbabawal sa mga single-use plastic sa mga tanggapan ng gobyerno.

Kasama sa ipinagbabawal ang plastic cup na hindi tataas sa 0.2 millimetro ang kapal, drinking straws, coffee stirrers, kutsara, tinidor at panghiwa at thin-filmed sando bag na hindi aabot sa 15 microns ang kapal.



## Pollution levels alarm advocacy groups

Concerned groups on Tuesday raised the alarm following recent reports on poor air quality in the country.

A global report launched this week showed that air quality in the Philippines contains PM2.5 pollution levels that significantly exceed the safety limits prescribed by the World Health Organization (WHO).

The groups – Greenpeace Philippines, Clean Air Asia, Center for Energy, Ecology and Development, Health Care without Harm, the Philippine Movement for Climate Justice, and the World Wide Fund for Nature-Philippines – called on the Philippine government to revamp and improve current air pollution monitoring systems in order to provide more reliable information on whether the air in communities is still safe for daily living.

The recent 2019 Air Visual report places the Philippines in 58th spot out of 98 countries with locations from where air quality data were collected. But the groups emphasized that while available Air Visual data did not place the Philippines among the countries with the worst air quality, the data nevertheless showed that the country still has very polluted air.

Year-on-year data also showed that the country's air quality is getting worse. Average PM2.5 pollution levels in Air Visual sites increased from 14.6 micrograms per cubic meter in 2018 to 17.6  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  in 2019. The safety limit set by the WHO is 10  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ .

The groups also noted that the report only looks at PM2.5 pollution, and does not include other pollutants such as sulfur oxide, nitrous oxide, ozone and other contaminants that carry deleterious health risks.

A report released by Greenpeace Philippines earlier this month showed that these and other toxic emissions can cost Filipinos as much as 1.9 percent of gross domestic product loss and 27,000 premature deaths.

The groups are calling for better air pollution standards in the Philippines, including improved monitoring, transparency and analysis. In the case of the 2019 Air Visual report, the quantity and placement of air monitors from which data were collected provide only a snapshot of the threat of PM 2.5 air pollution.

To be effective, Greenpeace said that the government should monitor places close to main sources of air pollution, such as coal-fired power plants and high traffic areas of motorized vehicles.

"President Duterte should declare air pollution as a national issue and to order all line agencies involved in air quality monitoring and regulation to prioritize this issue," the groups said.

At the same time, they cited the need to enhance transparency and expedite the review and update of the air pollution standards under Republic Act 8749 or the Clean Air Act of 1999.

They added that it is also important to fully prepare and implement a National Plan on the Reduction of GHG (greenhouse gas emissions), as mandated by Section 31 of the Philippine Clean Air Act.

The groups said it is important to address the root cause of air pollution in the country by implementing a transition plan away from the use of coal energy and fossil fuels in the transport sector.

– Rhodina Villanueva



## Angat water allocation kept at 42 cms

RAW water allocation from Angat Dam, Metro Manila's primary source of water, will be maintained at 42 cubic meters per second (cms) in March amid water supply interruptions, according to the National Water Resources Board (NWRB).

In a text message, NWRB Executive Director Seville David Jr. said water allocation from Angat Dam for next month is "maintained at 42 cms" for domestic water consumption in Metro Manila and adjacent areas.

The raw water allotted to the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage

System (MWSS), which the agency then splits between Manila Water Co. Inc. and Maynilad Water Services Inc., remains below the normal allocation of 46 cms from the dam.

David told *The Manila Times* the NWRB also kept the allocation to the National Irrigation Administration at 20 cms to meet irrigation requirements in Bulacan and Pampanga.

As of Wednesday, Angat's water level was at 202.41 meters, up by 0.18 meters from 202.23 meters recorded on Tuesday. On the other hand, Ipo Dam's water level was

unchanged at 100.06 meters, based on data from the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

Earlier, Manila Water and Maynilad said they were implementing rotating water service interruptions lasting for several hours as water levels from Angat and Ipo dams continue to decline. This was also being done to maximize the already limited water supply throughout the year.

Amid little to no water supply in their respective coverage areas, the two water service providers and the

MWSS Regulatory Office (MWSS RO) urged consumers to store just enough water for the duration of the water service interruption.

"The MWSS RO assures the public that it is closely monitoring the compliance of the two concessionaires with their announced water service interruption schedules," the agency had said in its advisory.

The MWSS RO also asked the public to report to them any inconsistency between the announced interruption schedules and the actual interruption hours.

**JORDEENE B. LAGARE**

EDITORIAL

A member of the  
**PPPI** Philippine  
Press  
Institute  
The National Association of Philippine Newspapers

## Brace for a waterless summer

**T**HE National Water Resources Board (NWRB) warned the public last week to brace for a decrease in water allocation for household use in Metro Manila as the government tries to make the most out of the available water for homes, offices and factories, and for agriculture. NWRB Executive Director Sevilla David Jr. has a terse announcement: "Authorities cannot increase the water allocation for houses to the normal 46 cubic meters per second from the current 40 cubic meters per second because Angat Dam, Metro Manila's main water source, was still below its normal operating level."

Mindful of the irrigation needs of farmers in Luzon, David meanwhile assured them "the allocation for agriculture will stay at about half of the normal 40 cubic meters." It should be noted that since January, the NWRB has regulated the water supply allocation to minimum levels to ensure ample water supply in the coming months.

Water is a most important resource, and many residents in urban areas admit that they can do without electricity for some time, but they need water every day. Last summer's water shortage was indeed serious, with both Maynilad and Manila Water customers reeling from more than 12 hours of water interruption and the usually messy activity of water rationing.

**'With so many government agencies involved in the Kaliwa Dam project, it looks like it will take years before this single major solution to the water shortage in Metro Manila will see the light of day.'**

Starting with the first week of March last year, some 50,000 households in the National Capital Region began to suffer from a severe water shortage. La Mesa and Angat dams had alert levels that were below critical, and even President Duterte was alarmed. The President summoned all the officials of government and the private sector involved in water to Malacañang for a dressing-down, with threats and other strong words urging them to act, and act fast. The Chief Executive also said he will terminate the government's contracts with the two water concessionaires in Metro Manila as the problem deepened and there was no temporary solution in sight. Under pressure from the Palace, the water officials managed to restore water supply by the end of March, although water pressure was still low. The public did not know how they did this, but we can only surmise that the allocation for irrigation and agriculture was decreased to somehow alleviate the suffering in the cities.

There are many reasons that contribute to the water shortage in the whole country, not just in Luzon. The concessionaires enumerated some of these factors as increased demand, lack of rainfall in many areas, delays in water infrastructure projects that are intended to boost supply, the declining water levels in La Mesa Dam, etc. Environmentalists will say that climate change has something to do with this shortage and, for course, the depletion and degradation of our forests and watersheds.

Our water officials have only palliative measures to deal with the real water crisis, such as identifying and digging new deep wells, tapping whatever clean water is left in the Laguna de Bay. Some measures such as the restoration of the Wawa Dam may be feasible but the most long-term and permanent solution, as President Duterte himself admitted, is the construction of the Kaliwa Dam in Quezon province and part of Rizal province.

The New Centennial Water Project or Kaliwa Dam is a new water source proposed to be developed in order to meet the increasing water demand of MWSS's domestic water supply in its service area. The dam has a project cost of P12.20 billion coming from Official Development Assistance loans. It is located in Sitio Cabiao, Barangay Pagsangahan, General Nakar, Quezon province, extending to Sitio Queborosa, Barangay Magsaysay, Infanta, Quezon. A tunnel to move water from the dam to water distribution channels in Metro Manila will traverse Teresa, Rizal.

President Duterte himself acknowledged the need to fast-track the Kaliwa Dam project, despite the opposition from minorities living in the mountain areas of Infanta and General Nakar towns. The status of the project as of to date, after many years of waiting, is that there is an ongoing acquisition of lots required for the Tunnel Outlet Portal, and almost never-ending coordination with the various local and national government offices concerned is under way. Involved in these coordination efforts are Infanta, Real, General Nakar in Quezon province; Tanay, Morong and Baras towns in Rizal province; the offices of the governors of Quezon and Rizal; the National Commission on Indigenous People Region 4-A; the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Environment Management Bureau - Central Luzon; the DENR Region 4; and the Protected Area Management Board. Added to these Executive department offices are the NEDA and the Department of Finance, and the Office of the President itself. And then again, there is Congress of the Philippines, with the Senate already scheduling a committee hearing to give critics and proponents of the Kaliwa Dam project a venue for their arguments.

With so many government agencies involved in the Kaliwa Dam project, it looks like it will take years before this single major solution to the water shortage in Metro Manila will see the light of day.

In the meantime, let us brace for a waterless summer and feel the heat.



## EDITORIAL

### Are we ready for summer's problems?

**A**BOUT the middle of this week, the cold winds from the northeast – the "amihan" – will start to weaken, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said. The days will gradually become warmer as the amihan gives way to the warmer winds from the east.

Light rains will start falling over Northern Luzon and the Bicol region, with possible flash floods, PAGASA said. Metro Manila, the rest of Luzon, and the Visayas, will have isolated rains, but there will be thunderstorms that may cause flooding.

This is all part of the yearly sequence of seasons in the Philippines. The cool amihan season in December, January, and February, which we associate with the Christmas holidays, is giving way to the hot summer of March, April, and May.

Summer brings us many problems, and this early, we have been warned to expect rolling brownouts as demand rises beyond the ability of power grids to meet, especially if some power plants choose to undergo their annual maintenance shutdowns at this time of the year.

This early, the Department of Energy has issued an appeal to consumers to save energy, especially in April, May, and June. Various sectors in the field, including the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines, electric cooperatives, and the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market have already cautioned that there may be periods this summer when the supply will reach critical levels resulting in brownouts.

The National Electrification Administration (NEA) has forecast highly probable red alert conditions in the power system on April 18-21

and then on May 20-22, when shortfalls of 81 megawatts are expected. The NEA alerted electric cooperatives to maximize the use of their "embedded power facilities" to reduce, if not eliminate, rotating brownouts during peak hours. Those that do not have such embedded power plants, the NEA said, are advised to work with big electricity consumers for them to reduce their consumption when the demand is high or when an alert is issued.

There is another problem that arises during the hot summer months – the reduction of water supply to households as the water level at Angat Dam falls below critical levels. This problem hit the eastern sector of Metro Manila last summer, managed by Manila Water, prompting President Duterte to warn the water concessionaires and the Metropolitan Water and Sewerage System (MWSS).

We have long lived with these problems that come with the summer season. It is said that the government has so many requirements that the private power sector cannot meet and so we are doomed to suffer this annual summer shortage. Surely the Duterte administration, which has become known for decisive action, can find a way to solve this old problem of inadequate power supply.

As for the annual water shortage, many decisions were made last summer, including the restoration of Wawa Dam and the building of a new Kaliwa Dam, along with tapping of Laguna de Bay and new deep wells. We may continue to have the old problem of water shortage because it will take time to bring all these projects into full operation, but we should have a better overall water supply situation this summer than last year.



## EDITORIAL

### Handa na ba tayo para sa mga problema sa tag-araw?

SA kalagitnaan ng linggong ito, ang malamig na hangin mula sa hilagang-silangan - ang "amihan" - ay magsisimulang hihina, sinabi ng Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, at Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA). Ang mga araw ay unti-unting magiging mas mainit sa pagbibigay-daan ng amihan sa mas maiinit na hangin mula sa silangan.

Magsisimulang bumagsak ang mahihinang ulan sa Hilagang Luzon at rehiyon ng Bicol, na may posibleng mga biglaang pagbaha, sinabi ng PAGASA. Ang Metro Manila, ang nalalabing bahagi ng Luzon, at ang Visayas, ay magkakaroon kalat-kalat na pag-ulan, ngunit magkakaroon ng mga bagyo na maaaring magdulot ng pagbaha.

Ang lahat ng ito ay bahagi ng taunang pagkakasunud-sunod ng mga panahon sa Pilipinas. Ang malamig na panahon ng amihan noong Disyembre, Enero, at Pebrero, na iniuugnay natin sa Kapaskuhan, ay nagbibigay daan sa mainit na tag-araw sa ng Marso, Abril, at Mayo.

Ang tag-araw ay naghahatid sa atin ng maraming mga problema, at ngayon pa lamang ay binalaan na tayo na asahan na ang pag-ikot ng mga brownout habang tumataas ang demand na lampas sa kakayahang matugunan ng power grids, lalo na kung ang ilang mga power plant ay pipiliin isagawa ang kanilang taunang maintenance shutdown sa panahong ito ng taon.

Ngayon pa lamang ay naglabas na ang Department of Energy ng apela sa consumers na magtipid ng enerhiya, lalo na sa Abril, Mayo, at Hunyo. Nagbabala ang iba't ibang mga sektor sa larangan, kabilang ang National Grid Corporation of the Pilipinas, electric cooperatives at ang Wholesale Electricity Spot Market ay na maaaring may mga panahon ngayong tag-araw na maabot ng suplay ang mga kritikal na antas na magresulta sa mga brownout.

Tinaya ng National Electrification Administration (NEA) na mataas ang posibilidad ng red alert conditions sa sistema ng kuryente sa Abril 18-21 at pagkatapos ay sa Mayo 20-22, kung kailan inaasahan ang mga pagkukulang ng 81 megawatts. Inalertuhan ng NEA ang electric cooperatives na i-maximize ang paggamit ng kanilang "embedded power facilities" upang mabawasan, kung hindi matanggal, ang umiikot na brownout sa peak hours.

Ang mga walang ganoong naka-embed na mga planta ng kuryente, sinabi ng NEA, ay pinapayuhan na magtrabaho sa malalaking mga mamimili ng kuryente para mabawasan nila ang kanilang pagkonsumo kapag mataas ang demand o kapag inisyu ang isang alerto.

May isa pang problema na lumilitaw sa panahon ng mainit na buwan ng tag-araw - ang pagbawas ng supply ng tubig sa mga kabahayan dahil sa pagbaba ng lebel ng tubig sa Angat Dam sa ilalim ng mga kritikal na antas. Ang problemang ito ay nakaapekto sa silangang sektor ng Metro Manila na pinamamahalaan ng Manila Water noong tag-araw, na nagtulak kay Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na balaan ang mga water concessionaires at ang Metropolitan Water and Sewerage System (MWSS).

Matagal na tayong nabubuhay sa mga problemang ito na kasama ng panahon ng tag-init. Sinasabi na napakaraming mga kinakailangan ang gobyerno na hindi matugunan ng pribadong sektor at sa gayo'y mapapahamak tayo na magdusa sa taunang kakulangan sa tag-araw. Tiyak na ang administrasyong Duterte, na kilala sa mapagpasyang pagkilos, ay maaaring makahanap ng paraan upang malutas ang lumang problemang ito ng hindi sapat na suplay ng kuryente.

Tungkol naman sa taunang kakulangan ng tubig, maraming mga pagpapasya ang nagawa noong nakaraang tag-araw, kasama na ang pagpapanumbalik ng Wawa Dam at ang pagtatayo ng isang bagong Kaliwa Dam, kasama ang paggamot sa Laguna de Bay at mga bagong malalim na balon.

Maaaring magpatuloy na magkaroon ng lumang problema sa kakulangan ng tubig dahil kakailanganin ang oras upang maipasok ang lahat ng mga proyektong ito, ngunit dapat tayong magkaroon ng isang mas mahusay na pangkalahatang sitwasyon ng suplay ng tubig ngayong tag-araw kaysa sa nakaraang taon.



## EDITORIAL

# The air we breathe

**W**E CAN take some solace this week that the Philippines is nowhere near the top 10 list of the most polluted countries, nor is Manila among the most polluted cities, based on the 2019 World Air Quality Report from IQAir, a Swiss and American company specializes in technology solutions that help protect people from airborne pollutants.

The distinction of most polluted country belongs to Bangladesh, while the most polluted city in terms of air quality was New Delhi, India.

The report focuses on PM2.5 concentrations, which are ambient airborne particles measuring up to 2.5 microns in size. This type of pollutant is widely regarded as most harmful to human health, as its microscopic size allows particles to enter the blood stream through the respiratory system and travel throughout the body, causing far-reaching health effects, including asthma, lung cancer and heart disease.

Air pollution has also been associated with low birth weight, increased acute respiratory infections and stroke.

Out of 98 countries surveyed, the Philippines ranked 57th, with a PM2.5 concentration of 17.6 micrograms per cubic meter of air ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ).

This compares favorably to 56 other countries, including Bangladesh (83  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ), Pakistan (65.8), Mongolia (62.0), Afghanistan (58.8), and India (58.1).

Within Southeast Asia, air quality in the Philippines was better than Indonesia (51.7), Vietnam (34.1), Myanmar (31.0), Thailand (24.3), Laos (23.1), Cambodia (21.1), Malaysia (19.4), and even Singapore (19.0).

Manila, which ranks 47th among the most polluted cities, had a score of 18.2  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ , in comparison with New Delhi (98.6), Jakarta (49.4), Hanoi (46.9), Beijing (42.1), Seoul (24.8) and Bangkok (22.8).

That we are not as bad as our neighbors in the region or other nations in the world shouldn't make us complacent, however.

The country's 17.6  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  PM2.5

reading was actually higher than the 14.6  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  registered in 2018, indicating a drop in air quality. Similarly, Manila's 18.2  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  in 2019 was higher than the year before, at 14.3  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ .

Moreover, the country's 17.6  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  PM2.5 reading is 76 percent higher than the level recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO), which sets an annual mean exposure of 10  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  to minimize health risks from PM2.5.

Environmental groups note that the IQAir report looks only at PM2.5 pollution and does not include other pollutants such as sulfur oxide, nitrous oxide, ozone and other contaminants that carry deleterious health risks.

A report released by Greenpeace Philippines earlier this month, for example, showed that these and other toxic emissions can result in 27,000 premature deaths and cost Filipinos as much as 1.9 percent drop in gross domestic product growth. The groups are calling for better air pollution standards in the Philippines, including improved monitoring, transparency and analysis—a call we should all get behind.



STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE

# Manila Standard

A-4  
PAGE

UPPER  
LOWER

PAGE 1  
STORY

BANNER  
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

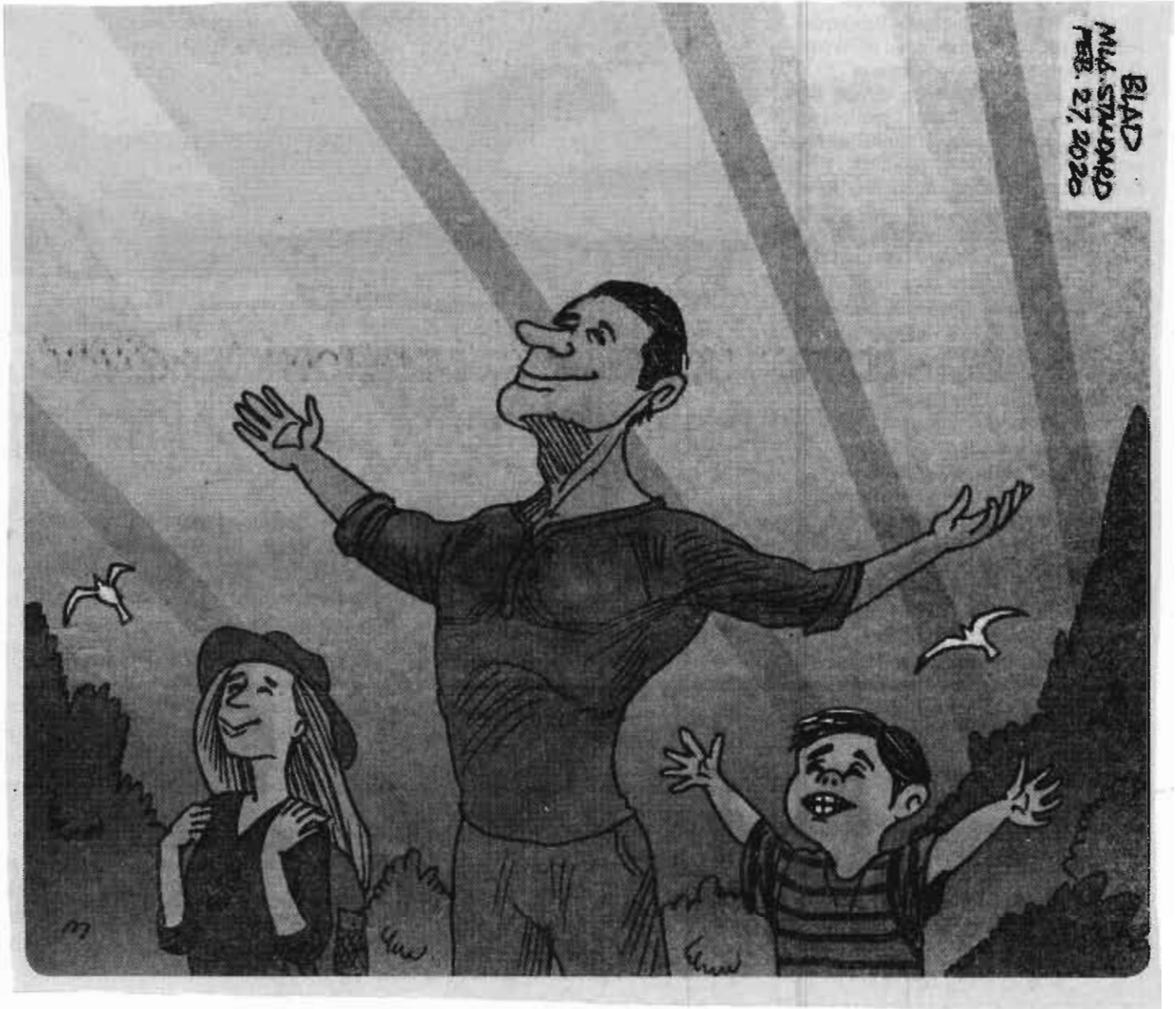
02 27 20

TITLE:

PAGE 1/

DATE

CONT. THE AIR WE BREATHE







# Climate crisis needs everyone to act now

**F**ormer United Nations climate chief Christiana Figueres was a key architect of the landmark 2015 Paris Agreement, due to go into effect at the end of the year.

The Costa Rican diplomat spoke about her new book, *The Future We Choose*, which lays out the best- and worst-case scenarios awaiting humanity as fossil fuel emissions continue to warm the Earth.

## Why did you decide to write this book now?

FIGUERES: Three reasons. First, we wanted to reach beyond those who are dedicated to working on climate change. It's important to reach out to educated but less informed people, the critical mass that we need to reach in order to make the necessary changes.

The second is we really wanted to highlight that we have the most extraordinary responsibility/opportunity to wake up to the fact that we have one critical decade in which the human species is going to write the history of the planet for the next hundreds of years.

Third, we wanted to create a sense of optimism and empowerment that we can do this. There's quite a bit of grief, despair, and hopelessness around climate change. It's important to honor that grief but transform that into a can-do attitude.

## The book lays out best- and worst-case scenarios for the planet. Which do you think is the most likely?

If we don't choose to act, we are going to go in the direction of the first world that we describe - a world that results from business as usual, that is a consequence of not choosing to do otherwise. It results in constraint and increasing level of infrastructure disruption, human pain, biodiversity loss, economic fragility.

It is not a world we want to hand over to the next generation. It is, however, the world we are heading for unless we make the choice

to do otherwise in these 10 years.

## Who is responsible for taking the choice to act?

Everyone. We need systemic transformation that can only be designed by government policy and massive financial shifts and mass technology development, from the private sector.

Equally important is individuals waking up to the opportunity that is staring us in the face. Consumer demand sends strong signals to business.

## What are three things we as citizens can do to help?

If we live or work in homes or offices that are energy inefficient, the very first thing we should do is get an audit and figure out where we are wasting energy. If we don't do that, we are hurting the planet and our wallets.

Another place we can change is transport. The more we use ourselves to transport ourselves, the better it is for our planet and our health.

Finally, not everyone is in the happy position of having savings. But those who are should really look at where those savings are. Most financial institutions have realized that a sizeable presence of high-carbon assets is very risky and they are beginning to shift. We should be asking whoever is managing our assets if they are in the right place. Are they safe?

## Five years since the Paris deal, emissions are still rising. Are you still confident the agreement is fit for purpose?

There is very little left to negotiate at COP26 (climate negotiations in Glasgow in November). This is more



STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE

CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE OF THE PHILIPPINE CONSTITUTION  
1987  
**MANILA BULLETIN**  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

05  
PAGE

✓  
METER  
LOW

PAGE 1  
STORY

PAGE 2  
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

02 27 20

THE: "Climate crisis needs everyone to act now"

PAGE 17

2/3

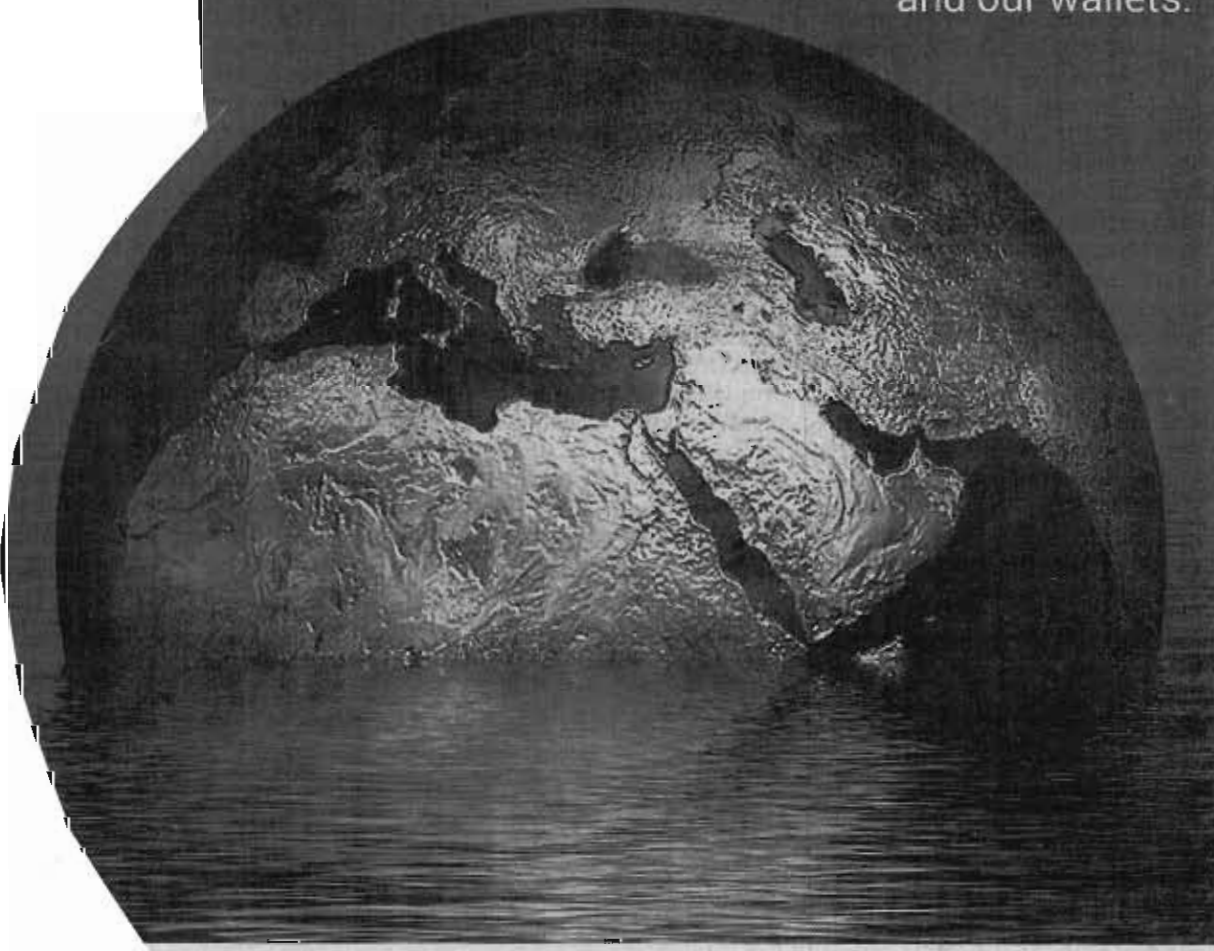
DATE

Section Editor: JOHANNES L. CHUA  
Go Green, send us an email:  
EnvironmentMB@gmail.com

about the five-year cycle included in the Paris agreement where countries make a decision on shifting capital, increasing technology, and progressing policy. Those three things should allow them to increase their ambition.

There are only a few countries that have registered their new emissions reductions plans, we know that there are around 80 countries that will be doing so as we get closer to COP26. That's not necessarily good news because many of those are small economies. What we really need is the large economies to be doing more.

If we live or work in homes or offices that are energy inefficient, the very first thing we should do is get an audit and figure out where we are wasting energy. If we don't do that, we are hurting the planet and our wallets.





# 'Climate change to lead to war, unrest'

**D**UBAI: Pressures from global warming could intensify political tensions, unrest and conflict; fuel violent extremism; and break down government security systems, the experts said in a report by the Center of Climate and Security, a nonpartisan policy institute.

War-torn countries in Africa and the Middle East were cited as most at risk, but industrialized regions are vulnerable, it said. "Even at scenarios of low warming, each region of the world will face severe risks to national and global security in the next three decades," the report said.

"Higher levels of warming will pose catastrophic, and likely irreversible, global security risks over the course of the 21st century."

Concerns over the impact of climate change have led to calls to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and slow the pace of global warming amid instances of climate-related extreme weather such as wildfires and floods.

A United Nations report last year warned of dire consequences as well. The research released on Monday warned of displaced populations driven from their homes by rising heat, drought, and dwin-

dling water and food supplies.

Disease would spread, and border security and infrastructure would break down as resources grow more scarce, fueling extremism, crime and human trafficking, it said.

"We're really looking at a bleak future if we see more and more countries become fragile," said Rod Schoonover, a former intelligence analyst and coauthor of the report, who spoke at a briefing about the report.

Panel members included former United States government security officials and climate security experts. The experts assessed threats under two scenarios — if the planet warmed by 1 to 2 degrees Celsius (C) or by 2 to 4 C — by the end of the century.

The UN has warned that if emis-

sions are not drastically lowered, the average global temperature will increase by 4 C by then.

A global pact to fight climate change was agreed upon in Paris in 2015 that aimed to keep the Earth's temperature rise well below 2 C. The administration of President Donald Trump has initiated efforts to pull the US out of the Paris pact.

"I don't mean to be a doom-sayer, but this is bad stuff," said retired General Gordon Sullivan, a former US Army chief of staff, who spoke at the briefing but was not directly involved in the report.

"My question is, 'Is the US going to lead or are we going to stand around and watch?'" he said. "We need someone to step up and say 'I'll do it. Send me.'"

**GLOBAL TIMES**



# Oil, gas may be far bigger threat than imagined

Oil and gas production may be responsible for a far larger share of the soaring levels of methane, a powerful greenhouse gas, in the Earth's atmosphere than previously thought, new research has found.

The findings, published in the journal *Nature*, add urgency to efforts to rein in methane emissions from the fossil fuel industry, which routinely leaks or intentionally releases the gas into air.

"We've identified a gigantic discrepancy that shows the industry needs to, at the very least, improve their monitoring," said Benjamin Hmiel, a researcher at the University of Rochester and the study's lead author. "If these emissions are truly coming from oil, gas extraction, production use, the industry isn't even reporting or seeing that right now."

Atmospheric concentrations of methane have more than doubled from preindustrial times. A *New York Times* investigation into "super emitter" sites last year revealed vast quantities of methane being released from oil wells and other energy facilities instead of being captured.

The extent to which fossil fuel

emissions, as opposed to natural sources, are responsible for the rising methane levels has long been a matter of scientific debate. Methane seeps from the ocean bed, for instance, and also spews from land formations called mud volcanoes.

To shed light on the mystery, researchers at Rochester's Department of Earth and Environmental Studies examined ice cores from Greenland, as well as data from Antarctica stretching back to about 1750, before the industrial revolution.

They found that methane emissions from natural phenomena were far smaller than estimates used to calculate global emissions. That means fossil-fuel emissions from human activity — namely the production and burning of fossil fuels — were underestimated by 25 to 40 percent, the researchers said.

The scientists were helped in their analysis by different isotopes found in methane emissions from natural sources, compared to emissions from the production of fossil fuels. Isotopes are versions of an element that have very slight differences, allowing the researchers

to differentiate between them.

They used a melting chamber with a set of high-power burners to melt more than 2,000 pounds of ice cores to extract and examine air samples from the past. "It looked like a little rocket ship," said Vasilii Petrenko, a co-author of the *Nature* study and an associate professor at Rochester. "Think of a rocket engine, but except the flames pointing at the device."

Robert Howarth, an Earth system scientist at Cornell University who was not involved with the research, called it "a very important study." He said it was consistent with recent research, like a study he published last year that estimated that North American gas production was responsible for about a third of the global increase in methane emissions over the past decade.

"Emissions from fossil sources are correspondingly larger than many have been estimating," Howarth said. "I find it very convincing."

Daniel Jacob, professor of atmospheric chemistry and environmental engineering at Harvard University, also described the findings as significant. Current estimates of methane from geological sources "were widely

considered too high by atmospheric modelers such as myself," he wrote in an email.

But he took issue with the suggestion that emissions from fossil fuel production were larger than previously estimated. Fossil fuel emissions are "based on fuel production rates, number of facilities, and direct measurements if available. The natural geological source is irrelevant for these estimates," he said.

The disagreement reflects an overall discrepancy between what are called "bottom-up" measurements of emissions, those from individual oil and gas sites, as opposed to "top-down" calculations like the ones carried out by the Rochester researchers.

"Bottom-up" measurements can be unreliable because of a lack of data from individual oil and gas sites. With "top-down" measurements, on the other hand, the exact source of emissions can be hard to pin down.

The findings come as oil and gas companies face increased pressure to rein in greenhouse gas emissions from their operations to address rising concerns about climate change.

- NYT



## 2 LALAKI KULONG SA PAGTATAPON NG TOXIC WASTE

**BULACAN** - KALABOSO ang dalawang lalaki makaraang mahuli sa akto na nagtatapon ng nakalalasang chemicals o toxic waste sa Brgy. Poblacion, Pandi.

Sa report na ipinadala ni Acting PNP Provincial Director P/Col. Lawrence Cajipe kay PNP Regional Director PBGen. Rhodel Sermonia, kinilala ang nadakip na sina Romeo Cruz, 62-anyos, caretaker ng dumpsite, at si Roberto Diela, helper.



Sa imbestigasyon ni P/Maj. Joy Placido, una na silang nakatanggap ng report kaugnay sa isang aluminum van na nagtatapon ng mga naka-drum na chemicals.

Aniya, agad rumesponde ang mga pulis kasama ang mga barangay tanod na Kalikasan volunteer sa lugar at nakita ang mga drum na puno ng domestic, industrial, commercial waste (toxic chemicals).

Nakumpiska ng awtoridad ang 35 drums ng toxic waste materials mula sa isang kompanya sa Pasig City na lulan ng six-wheeler truck.

Samantala, paglabag sa RA 9003 (Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000) ang isasampa laban sa mga suspek habang naka-impound ang kanilang sasakyan.

**THONY ARCENAL**



**NAPAKAHALAGANG** bahagi ng ating kasaysayan ang People Power.

Dito ipinadarama ng mamamayan ang kanilang kapangyarihan na kaya nilang itumba ang sinomang nasa poder na abusado sa kapangyarihan, magnanakaw sa kaban ng bayan at iba pa.

Hindi kailangang hintayin ng mga mamamayan ang pagdating ng susunod na halalan, lalo na sa parte ng mga nakaupo sa Malakanyang.

Dalawag beses na itong naganap at nagtagumpay.

Kaya naman, hindi masusukat ang kahalagahan nito at dapat lang na bigyang-buhay ito kahit kailan, lalong-lalo na sa petsang Pebrero 25 na kinaganapan ng pambansang pag-aalsa o People Power Revolution kung tawagin.

### NILANGAW

Itong ika-34 na paggunita ng People Power, nakalulungkot isiping nilangaw ang okasyon ng paggunita.

Mas marami pa ang mga pulis na naroon sa EDSA Shrine kaysa mga dumalo.

Wala rin tayong nabalitaan na nagsipaglundagan sa entablado bilang bahagi ng anibersaryo.

Mas marami pa ang mga nagpupunta sa mga sabungan kaysa magpunta sa okasyong ito.

Dahil na rin sa naganap, halos walang laman din ang mga pahayagan at naging matamlay ang mga telebisyon at radio na kumober.

### COVID-19 ANG MAY SALA?

May nagpapalabas na ang Corona Virus Disease-19 ang dahilan kung bakit ayaw ng mga tao ang dumalo sa okasyon.

Hindi mo naman masisisi ang mga taong umayaw sa pagdalo dahil sa takot na mahawa at maaaring mamatay sa sakit na ito.

Mas mahalaga nga naman ang buhay at kalusugan na pangalagaan kaysa pag-aalsa sa isang nakaraan, gaano man mahalaga ito sa pambansang buhay.

Sinikil din umano ang mga mamamayan sa karapatan nilang magtipon-tipon dahil kinailangan nilang kumuha ng permit para rito.

Pero naroon naman ang mga hindi kumuha ng permit at malaya pa nga silang nagsalita laban sa gobyernong Duterte.

May nagsabi ring kagagawan ito lahat ng mga gustong sumira sa diwa ng EDSA.

Sino ba sila, nosi balasi ang mga gustong sumira?



**ULTIMATON**  
Ni BENNY ANTIPORDA

## PEOPLE POWER, NILANGAW; ANYARE?

### OTSO DIRETSO NAULIT?

Habang pinagmamasdan natin ang aerial view ng EDSA, maaaring tama ang sinasabi ng iba na nilangaw ang People Power.

Noong halalang 2016, ipinakita ng mga nang-aangkin ng People Power ang kanilang lakas.

Milyones naman ang nakalap nilang boto para sa Otso Diretso

Pero na-zero sila sa Senado, walang nakalutos kahit isa man lang sa Otso Diretso para maging senador.

Ang binansagan nilang mga baluktot at hindi direktso na kandidato ang nanalo.

Ngayon, mga Bro, hindi kaya ang pagkalangaw ng 34th EDSA ang ekstensyon ng halalang 2016 at sinapit ng Otso Diretso?

Maituturing na nilangaw noon ang pwersang People Power na nasa likod ng Otso Diretso at ito pa rin ang katotohanan sa kasalukuyang panahon?

### NAKAPAPRANING

Aminin man o hindi ng mga nang-aangkin ng People Power, may problemang maiaki sa kanilang hanay.

Dapat silang magtanong sa taumbayan kung bakit walang interesadong sumali sa napakahalagang bahaging ating kasaysayan.

Ginamit na nga nila ang problema sa prangkisa ng ABS-CBN, hindi pa rin nakumbinse ang milyones na mamamayan para sumali sa okasyon.

Sabi ng ating Uzi, kumalat ang balitang dadagsain ng mga artista at apiktadong obrero sa ating hanay sa media ang People Power pero hindi naman nangyari.

Sa kanilang pagkapaning sa nilangaw na People Power anniversary, kung ayaw nilang magtanong sa mga mamamayan, baka naman mas panahon nang tanungin nila ngayon ang kanilang mga sarili.

"Saan ba tayo nagkamali?" ang dapat na tanong.

Itong talaga ang dapat na tanong ng mga nangagalali kung bakit nilangaw ang EDSA at ibinabato ang sisi sa COVID-19, sa administrasyong Duterte at sa iba pang mga dahilan at hindi sa kanilang mga sarili.

### MATATAPANG SA SOCIAL MEDIA

Heto pa ang isang na-

pansin natin, mga Bro..

Bago ang 34th People Power, puno ang social media ng panawagan para sumali ang mga mamamayan sa okasyon, siyempre pa, laban kay Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte at ang kanyang administrasyon.

Nagsilabasan ang mga matatapang, totoo at matutuwid na tao laban sa pwersa ng sinasabi nilang masamang pamahalaan at anti-mamamayan.

Pagdating sa kalsada, sa EDSA, na siyang dapat pagdausan ng pagbuhos nila ng lahat ng kanilang kapangyarihan laban sa kanilang mga kalaban, tila hindi naman sila natagpuan?

Anyare?

Eh, kasi, may corona virus o may hindi nagpahintulot sa kanila o may sumisira sa diwa ng EDSA?

Kaya, gaya ng nangyayari sa Singapore at Hong Kong na online na lang ang misa, kahit pa sa Ash Wednesday kahapon, sa online o social media na lang lahat?

Parang may malaking mali.

Warm bodies ang kailangan, tayo lahat, dapat nasa EDSA para gunitain ang EDSA Revolution.

Dapat nating alalahanin na lumaya tayo sa diktadurya at nagkaroon muli tayo ng kalayaan, maging ang kalayaan sa media at pamamahayag.

Pero nakalulungkot talaga na wala ang milyones doon sa EDSA at nasa mga upuan lang na nageo-social media ang marami sa pamamagitan ng kompyuter, laptop, cellphone at iba pa.

Next year na lang siguro natin pag-isipan kung paano tayo magkaisa para gunitain ang makabuuhan ang People Power.

Pero ang isang isalang-alang natin na pinakamahalaga, pag-aari ng taumbayan ang People Power at hindi ng illan na umaangkin nito saka abusuhin din ang kapangyarihan at kontrollin ang ekonomiya ng bansa.

oOo

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