

DATE : FEB 29 2020

DAY : Saturday

**DENR**

**IN THE NEWS**

**Strategic Communication and Initiative Service**



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### *Editorial*

## Single-use plastics bawal na sa gov't offices

**S**A wakas, isang kapaki-pakinabang na resolusyon ang inaprubahan ng National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) na nag-aatas sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na i-implement ang pagbabawal sa paggamit ng plastics sa lahat ng tanggapan ng pamahalaan. Kabilang sa mga ibabawal ay ang plastic cups, drinking straws, coffee stirrers at mga disposable na kutsara, tinidor at kutsilyo. Kumikilos na ang DENR para ipatupad ang kautusan.

Marami na ang namumulat sa masamang dulot ng single-use plastics o disposable plastics at karamihan ay gusto na itong ipagbawal o mawala na sa buhay ng mga Pilipino. Problema ang plastic pollution sa bansa at kung hindi ipagbabawal, mas malubha pang problema ang kahaharapin ng mamamayan.

Ayon sa survey ng Social Weather Stations (SWS) 7 sa bawat 10 Pilipino ang gustong ipagbawal na ang paggamit ng plastics. Kabilang sa mga plastic na gustong ipagbawal ay ang tinatawag na sando bags, plastic straws at stirrers, plastic labo bags, styrofoam containers, sachets, tetra pack ng juices, plastic na baso, kutsara, tinidor, botelya ng juice at tubig. Ayon pa sa survey, 59.8 bilyong piraso ng plastic sachets at 17 bilyon na shopping bags ang ginagamit sa bansa taun-taon at ang mga ito ay humahantong sa mga estero, ilog at dagat. Ang Pilipinas ay pang-apat sa mga bansa sa Asia na malakas magtapon ng mga basurang plastic sa karagatan.

Noong nakaraang taon, nagpahiwatig si President Duterte na balak niyang ipagbawal ang paggamit ng plastic sa buong bansa. Nabanggit niya ito sa Cabinet meeting at maaaring lagdaan niya ang isang kautusan ukol dito. Maganda ang naisip na ito ng Presidente at narapat niyang ituloy para makalaya sa plastic ang mga Pinoy. Maaari namang mabuhay na wala ang bagay na ito.

Panahon na para mawala sa buhay ng mga Pilipino ang single-use plastic. Labanan ang plastic pollution para maisalba ang pagkasira ng kapaligiran at pati na rin ang buhay ng mga lamandagat. Pati mga balyena ay namamatay dahil nakakain nila ang mga plastic na inaanod sa karagatan. Ito na ang tamang panahon para ibawal ang plastics.



# Onus on LGUs to clean waste

By Jimbo Gulle

*(Conclusion, continued from yesterday)*

**W**HILE the efforts of private firms like Metro Clark Waste Management Corp. to build world-class engineered landfills are to be lauded, Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act—a law crafted 20 years ago—places the onus on local government units (LGUs) for effective and efficient solid waste management in their areas.

The law specifically prohibits the use of open dumps for solid waste disposal (hence the closure of the Payatas dumpsite in Quezon City, which used to be Metro Manila's preferred trash bin, in 2017), and enjoins the LGUs to convert their open dumps into sanitary landfills.

Materials Recovery Facilities (MRFs) are a crucial mandate of RA 9003, as every village in every locality is required to have one for processing recyclable and biodegradable waste.

But as of 2016, the National Solid Waste Management Council reported that just one-third of the country's 42,000 barangays had a functioning MRF serving them, with Metro Manila's rates unclear.

The law also requires at least 25 percent

of all solid wastes from waste-disposal facilities to be diverted or recovered through reuse, recycling, composting, and other resource-recovery activities.

However, the diversion rate for solid waste in Metro Manila as of 2015 is just 48 percent; outside NCR, the rate is 46 percent, according to a paper by the Senate Economic Planning Office in November 2017.

That means the other half of the solid waste LGUs should be processing in their areas is going elsewhere—and, as one Asian Development Bank officer noted in a paper in 2017, a crucial limitation to building municipal solid waste (MSW) facilities was local officials' own "Not in My Back Yard" (NIMBY) mentality.

"The biggest constraint to establishing proper urban waste disposal facilities in the country is refusing to accept them in your own city," noted Aldrin B. Plaza, ADB Urban Development Officer. "It's like saying 'yes, we need dumpsites, but please put them somewhere else.'"

That's another reason why waste-to-energy (WTE) technologies hold much allure to officials looking for new ways to treat and dispose solid waste without burning it—another no-no under RA 9003. In fact, two senators recently submitted bills to adopt WTE across the country.

Senator Sherwin Gatchalian, who heads the Senate energy committee, filed Senate Bill 363 that seeks to provide a framework for the entire value chain of WTE facilities, and, in turn, ensure the uninterrupted supply of waste as feedstock for renewable energy (RE) generation.

Senator Francis Tolentino has also filed SB 401, which seeks to establish guidelines for the use of WTE technology to reduce solid waste and increase energy generation.

The dumpsite in Capas, incidentally, has Germany technology in place that would help it transition from being just a sanitary landfill to become a high-tech recycling and RE operation via WTE, said Metro Clark Waste Management president and CEO Rufo Colayco.

"Garbage is a by-product of economic prosperity. As the Philippines' economy

improves, we will only continue to produce more and more garbage. Where will all this be dumped?" he said last November.

ADB's Plaza, however, observed that apart from NIMBY, financing and governance are other hurdles for LGUs planning to operate their own landfills. He also noted that the Philippines is the only country globally that bans incineration of solid wastes, "which eliminated a viable alternative to landfilling."

"The investment costs and management burden of a comprehensive MSW management system are too burdensome for many cities. But the law does not cite specific enforcement actions, and many LGU officials lack management and technical competency," Plaza added.

Unlike their peers in the countryside, Metro Manila's mayors may not lack in experienced executives and consultants to help figure out their gargantuan garbage problem. But Navotas is still the only city in NCR with an engineered landfill in its area (operated by Phil Ecology Systems Corp. in Barangay Tanza) while it and the Rodriguez dumpsite are close to being filled.

In other words, Metro Manila, MMDA and the national government are short on time, both to avoid the continued destruction to the environment and from being engulfed in a tidal wave of trash—not unless a better alternative is set in place.



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## Coke, Nestle dinemanda sa plastic pollution

NAGSAMPA ng kaso ang environmental group Earth Island Institute laban sa 10 malalaking kompanya, kabilang ang Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, at Nestle, kaugnay sa ambag ng mga ito sa plastic pollution.

Sinampa ng grupo ang bukod-tanging kaso sa isang California state court nitong Miyerkoles ng hapon, Pebrero 26, 2020.

"This is the first lawsuit directly to take on these plastic peddlers who for years have spread the fake narrative that their products can be recycled when

they know in many cases this is simply not true," sabi ni Earth Island Board of Directors president Josh Floum sa kaniyang journal.

"Fundamentally, the lawsuit seeks to hold corporations accountable for their share of plastic pollution and their claims that plastic packaging is recyclable," paliwanag naman ni Sumona Majumdar, general counsel for Earth Island.

Sa 2018 report ng kampanyang Break Free from Plastic, napag-alamang 14% ng plastic sa mga karagatan ay dinulot

ng mga kompanyang Coke, Pepsi, at Nestle.

Ang 10 dinemandang kompanya ang tinukoy bilang most responsible for plastic pollution sa 2019 audit ng parehong kampanya. Ilan sa mga kasong pinupukol ang public nuisance, breach of warranty, at negligence claims.

Layon ng grupo na singilin ang mga korporasyon na kumikita sa pagbebenta ng mga single use plastic, at mapanumbalik ang ilang gastos sa plastic waste cleanup sa mga anyong-tubig sa California. (Riley Cea)



# Cavaliers, Warriors start title showdown

Games tomorrow (Paco Arena, Manila)  
3 p.m. - 3x3 elims  
3:30 p.m. - NHA vs Judiciary  
5:30 p.m. - AFP vs DENR  
6 p.m. - 3x3 Final

Expect a fierce duel as  
Armed Forces of the Philippines  
(AFP) and Department of  
Environment and Natural

Resources (DENR) start their eighth UNTV Cup best-of-three title series tomorrow at the Paco Arena in Manila.

Match is set at 5:30 p.m. with the AFP Cavaliers hoping to become the first back-to-back champions and the DENR Warriors out to complete a Cinderella season.

The Cavaliers are proud owners of three titles but yet to win two in a row. Another challenge for them is how to stop the DENR Warriors who have been playing solid on both ends since the first time they clashed in the elims.

The DENR Warriors are also looking for a piece of history after reaching the finals on their rookie year in the event organized by UNTV through its president and CEO Dr. Daniel Razon.



## UNTV CUP AFP, DENR KICK OFF TITLE DUEL

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**(Paco Arena, Manila)**  
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Armed Forces of the Philippines and Department of Environment and Natural Resources start their best-of-three title series tomorrow in the 8th UNTV Cup at Paco Arena in Manila.

The match is set at 5:30 p.m. with the AFP Cavaliers hoping to become the first back-to-back champions and the DENR Warriors out to complete an incredible season.

Though the Cavaliers are already owners of three titles, they have yet to win two in a row.

Another challenge is how to stop the DENR Warriors who have been playing solid since the first time they clashed in the elims.

The Warriors are also looking for a piece of history after reaching the finals on their rookie year in the event organized by UNTV through its president and CEO Dr. Daniel Razon.

Razon said the chosen charity of the champion team will receive a tax-free ₱4-million top prize while the foundation selected by the runner-up will get ₱2 million. The charities of the third and fourth placers will get ₱1 million and ₱500,000 prizes, respectively.

The league, meanwhile, will launch its 3x3 tournament starting 3 p.m. in support of the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas which is trying to heighten interest in the event.

AFP and DENR, which finished 1-2 in the two-stage elims, arranged a title series after sweeping Judiciary and National Housing Authority in their respective best-of-three series.

NHA and Judiciary clash at 3 p.m. for third place.

The Cavaliers have beaten the Warriors in the elims but veteran players of the team like Eugene Tan and Boyet Bautista are taking no chances since their rivals have what it takes to pull off a surprise.



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**BOYET** Bautista hopes to lead the AFP Cavaliers to their second straight championship and fourth overall when they clash with the DENR Warriors in the 8th UNTV Cup Finals starting tomorrow.

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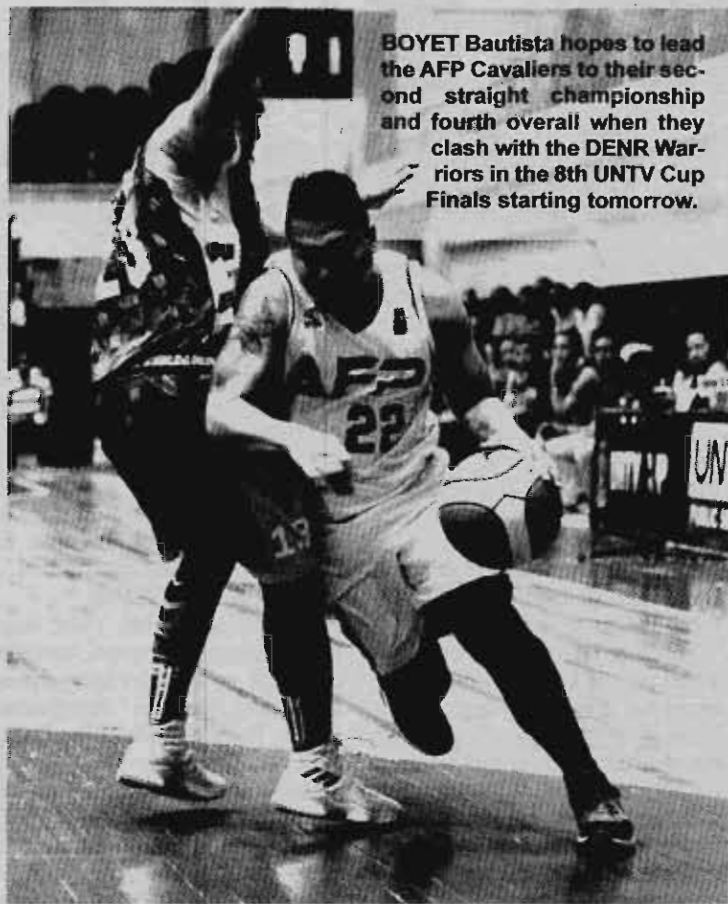
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rivals have what it takes to pull off a surprise.

Expected to carry the load for the Warriors are Ralph Lansang, Archie Gamboa and Ed Rivera.





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## AFP, DENR brasuhan sa Game 1

**Mga laro bukas:  
(Paco Arena, Ma-  
nila)**

**3:30pm -- NHA  
vs Judiciary (Battle-  
for-3rd)**

**5:30pm -- AFP vs  
DENR (Game 1/Best-  
of-3 Finals)**

Asahan ang nag-  
babagang bakbakan sa  
pagitan ng defending  
champion Armed Forces  
of the Philippines (AFP)  
at Department of Envi-  
ronment and Natural  
Resources (DENR) sa  
Game 1 ng kanilang  
best-of-three finals bu-  
kas sa 8th UNTV Cup  
sa Paco Arena, Maynila.

Asam ng AFP Cava-  
liers ang back-to-back  
championship sa taon-  
taong liga para sa mga  
public servant.

Samantala, ang  
DENR Warrriors naman  
ay naghahangad ng ma-

la-historic event para  
abutin ang pinakaunang  
titulo sa liga.

Ang mananalo sa  
ligang inorganisa ni  
UNTV president at CEO  
Daniel Razon ay maka-  
kakuha ng tax-free P4  
million mula sa napiling  
charity. P2 million para  
sa runner-up at P1 mil-  
lion sa 3rd and 4th  
placers.

Bukod sa 5-on-5  
match ay aariba rin ang  
liga sa 3x3 match alas-  
3:00 ng hapon upang  
ipaabot ang suporta sa  
Samahang Basketbol ng  
Pilipinas (SBP). (AE)



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## AFP, DENR magtutuos bukas

**LARO BUKAS**  
*(Paco Arena, Manila)*  
3 p.m. - 3x3 elims  
3:30 p.m. - NHA  
vs Judiciary  
5:30 p.m. - AFP  
vs DENR (Finals,  
Game 1)

6 p.m. - 3x3 Final

Sisimulan ng Armed Forces of the Philippines at Department of Environment and Natural Resources ang kanilang inaabangang best-of-three title series para sa 8th UNTV Cup bukas sa Paco Arena sa Manila.

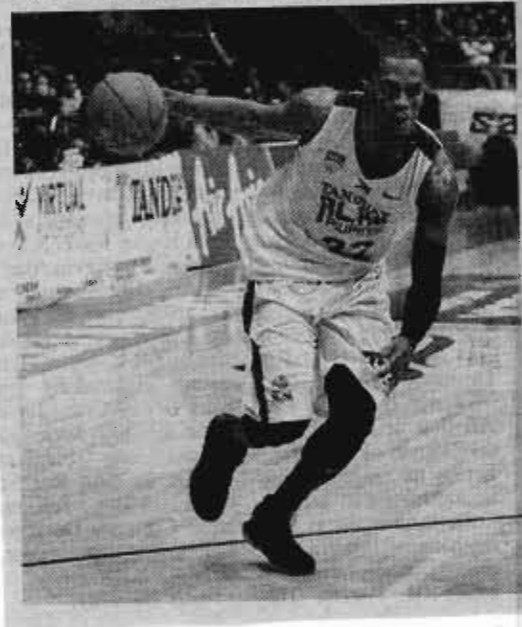
Nakatakda ang Game One sa alas-5:30 ng ha-

pon kung saan hangad ng AFP Cavaliers ang unang back-to-back titles.

Ito naman ang pipili-ting pigilan ng DENR Warriors sa annual event para sa mga public ser- vants.

May dalawang korona ang Cavaliers, ngunit hin- di pa sila naghahari ng da- lawang sunod na taon.

Nakatutok naman ang Warriors sa paggawa ng kasaysayan bilang unang rookie team na nakapasok sa finals ng event na inor- ganisa ni UNTV presi- dent at CEO Dr. Daniel Razon.





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1998  
**MANILA BULLETIN**  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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THE MEDIUM OF THE PHILIPPINE PROGRAM  
**MANILA BULLETIN**  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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STORY

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CARTOON

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# Watch out for forest fires this summer

**F**or eight days in the middle of this month, forest fires raged in the pine forests of Kabayan, Benguet.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) reported extensive damage to the natural pine forests as well as to forest plantations that had been established under the Expanded National Greening Program.

Destroyed in the natural forests were 452 hectares with nearly 5,000 young trees. In the plantations, over 160,000 trees in 191 hectares were destroyed. Total damage was estimated at ₱1.5 million. The Bureau of Fire Protection said the fires may have started at a site where cows are maintained, but there was no definite finding of what caused the fires.

The Benguet fires are small ones compared to the ones that have hit California in the United States and in the southeastern areas of Australia.

For several months in 2018 and 2019, 8,527 fires raged in 766,000 hectares in various parts of southern California, destroying forests along with 22,751 homes and other buildings, at a total cost of \$35 billion. The fires in Australia also raged for months in 2019, one of them even threatening the national government center in Canberra after razing over 35,800 hectares of forests and farmlands.

Our Benguet fire was but a small one compared

to these huge conflagrations in the US and Australia but they all had a common cause – dry weather related to climate change, plus some accidental spark from a careless camp fire.

We are now at the end of our seasonal “amihan weather” in the Philippines. The cool northeast breezes from the arctic regions in the northeast will soon give way to the warm winds from the Pacific in the east. These next three months make up our annual summer season,

Alerts have already been issued for possible power deficiencies as the heat of summer raises our power consumption. We may also suffer periods of water rationing, as the water level in Angat Dam, our principal source of water in Metro Manila, steadily goes down through many rainless weeks.

The Benguet forest fires are a third summer threat that we must now guard against. We have so few forests left and the ones in Benguet are of particular importance to the people of Luzon, for they make up a major part of the natural greenery that draws the people of the lowlands to Baguio and nearby highlands on weekends.

We thus call on the DENR and all the other agencies concerned with our forests to be on special alert to ensure that our forests are safe this summer. We should, as a matter of fact, be drawing up plans to develop more of these forests to make up for the decades of deforestation in our country.



# Benguet forestlands gone to ashes

BY ALDWIN QUITASOL

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet – The environment agency of Benguet claims that almost 900 hectares of forestlands were burnt thanks to both natural and man-made causes.

According to Benguet Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer (PENRO) Edgardo Flor, at least 12 significant forest fires have occurred in 8 of the 13 towns in Benguet in February.

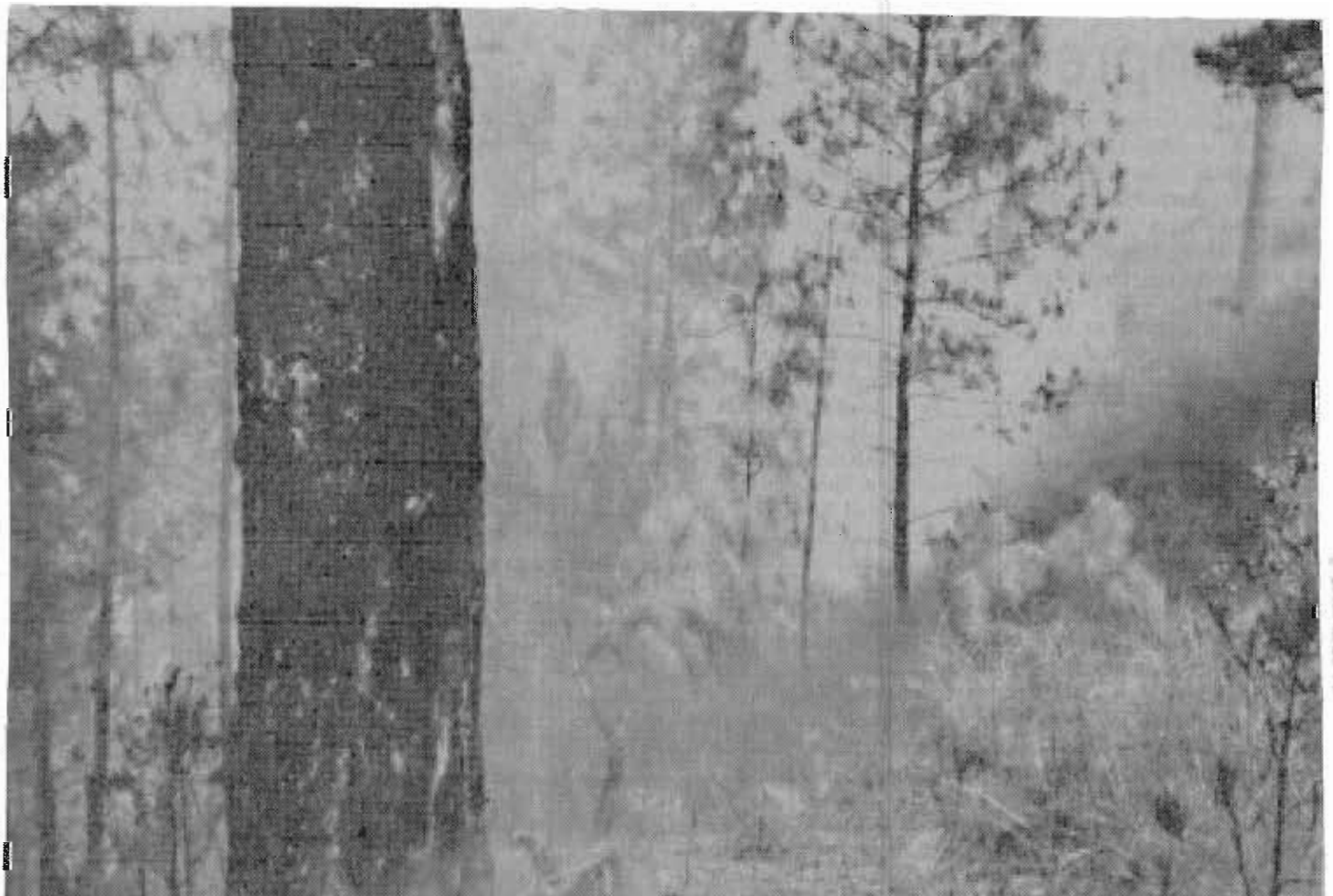
Damages have been estimated to reach P2.077 million.

Kabayan town, where Mt. Pulag, the second highest peak in Luzon and “mecca” of mountain climbers shares its boundaries with Ifugao and

Nueva Vizcaya, was the hardest hit with 643.69 hectares of burnt forest which included the 191.54 hectares of National Greening Program areas and even affected identified protected forest areas within the upper Agno River Basin.

The environment official added that the absence of rains in past several months and the wind from the northeast monsoon fanned the forest fires while attributing the causes to cattle rustling, slash and burn or “kaingin” practice of the locals and negligence.

Dousing the fires were difficult, PENRO Flor added, because of the mountainous terrain, steep slope and absence of access road.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF BFP KABAYAN

Almost helpless Benguet firefighters are having a hard time suppressing forest fires because of the terrain and absence of access roads.



**EDITORIAL**

## Bantayan ang posibilidad ng forest fire ngayong tag-init

**S**A nakalipas na araw sa kalagitnaan ng buwan, sunod-sunod na forest fire ang nanalasa sa Kabayan, Benguet.

Iniulat ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang malaking pinsala sa natural pine forests gayundin sa forest plantation na itinatag sa ilalim ng Expanded national Greening Program.

Kabilang sa napinsala sa natural forest ang 452 ektarya kasama ang halos 5,000 batang puno. Sa plantasyon, higit 160,000 puno sa 161 ektarya ang nasira. Tinatayang nasa P1.5 milyon ang kabuuang pinsala. Ayon sa Bureau of Fire Protection posibleng nagsimula ang sunog sa lugar kung saan inaalagaan ang mga baka, bagamat wala pang tiyak na dahilan ng sunog.

Maliit lamang ang sunog na naganap sa Benguet kung ikukumpara sa nanalasa sa California sa United States at sa southeastern areas ng Australia.

Sa loob ng ilang buwan noong 2018 at 2019, nasa 8,527 sunog ang nanalasa sa 766,000 ektarya sa iba't ibang bahagi ng southern California, na sumira ng mga kagubatan kasama ang 22,751 tahanan at iba pang establisyamento, sa kabuuang \$35 bilyon. Ilang buwan ding nanalasa ang sunog sa Australia noong 2019, kung saan nanganib din maging ang sentro ng national government sa Canberra matapos matupok ang nasa 35,800 ektarya ng kagubatan at sakahan.

Ang sunog sa Benguet ay maliit lamang kumpara sa nanalasa sa US at Australia ngunit iisa ang dahilan nito – ang tuyong panahon (dry weather) na maiugnay sa climate change, dagdag pa ang ilang insidente na nagpasiklab dahil sa 'di maingat na camp fire.

Nasa huling bahagi na tayo ngayon ng panahon ng amihan sa Pilipinas. Unti-unti nang mawawala ang malamig na hangin umiihip mula sa northeast sa arctic region para mabigaydaan naman sa pagpasok ng mainit na hangin mula sa Pasipiko sa silangan. Ang tatlong susunod na buwan ang sumasakop sa ating panahon ng tag-init.

Nagtaas na ng alerto para sa posibilidad ng kakulangan ng kuryente lalo't ang init ng summer ay nagpapataas sa power consumption. Maaari ulit tayong makaranas ng pagra-rasyon ng tubig, sa patuloy na pagbaba ng lebel ng tubig sa Angat Dam, ang pangunahing pinagmumulan ng suplay ng tubig sa Metro Manila, dahil sa ilang linggo nang 'di pagbuhos ng ulan.

Ang forest fire sa Benguet ang ikatlong banta ng tag-init na dapat nating bantayan. Kakaunti na lamang ang nanatira nating kagubatan, at ang nasa Benguet ay partikular na mahalaga para sa mga tao ng Luzon, dahil malaking bahagi ito ng natural na ganda na umaakit sa mga tao mula sa mabababang lugar upang bumisita sa Baguio at kalapit na highlands tuwing weekend.

Kaya naman nananawagan tayo sa DENR at sa iba pang kaugnay na ahensiya para sa ating mga kagubatan na matutukan upang masiguro na magiging ligtas ang mga ito ngayong tag-init. Sa katunayan, dapat na tayong bumuo ng plano upang bumuo pa ng mas maraming kagubatan para tugunan ang ilang dekada ng deforestation sa bansa.



## EDITORIAL

### Watch out for forest fires this summer

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The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) reported extensive damage to the natural pine forests as well as to forest plantations that had been established under the Expanded National Greening Program.

Destroyed in the natural forests were 452 hectares with nearly 5,000 young trees. In the plantations, over 160,000 trees in 191 hectares were destroyed. Total damage was estimated at ₱1.5 million. The Bureau of Fire Protection said the fires may have started at a site where cows are maintained, but there was no definite finding of what caused the fires.

The Benguet fires are small ones compared to the ones that have hit California in the United States and in the southeastern areas of Australia.

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# Redeveloping the Baguio we know



GOLDEN HOUR Sunsets in Baguio City are among the priceless moments for residents and visitors of the summer capital. —EV ESPIRITU

**By Vincent Cabreza**  
@InqNational

**F**ormer Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo remembered Baguio through vignettes about shopping at the public market where he would reconnect with friends.

"You can buy anything in the market—vegetables and strawberries—which the city's frequent visitors take back home, and walk through its fog-wrapped streets or take boat rides at Burnham Lake," said the 86-year-old Romulo, also a former senator.

Much has improved, Romulo said, admitting he was pleasantly surprised that traveling to this city these days has become a much shorter trip.

"I started from Manila at 7 a.m. and I was here at 11 a.m.," he said. Romulo was here last month to open a P4.3-billion credit facility for Baguio's redevelopment projects as chair of the Development Bank of the Philippines.

He was the latest official to offer Baguio a hand, following a public clamor to address overcrowding and the city's overdevelopment.

## Claustrophobia

During the last election campaign, Mayor Benjamin Magalong said he had a front-seat preview of the claustrophobia some residents lamented they suffered from unending high-rise constructions, the vanishing pine trees, the deteriorating market, traffic gridlocks, and a growing trash and sewage problem.

As soon as he assumed office in July, Magalong set off to find solutions.

In January, Romulo's daughter, Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat, allocated P480 million for the century-old Burnham Park—a prelude to the modernization of many of the city's tourist destinations.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu and Interior Secretary Eduardo Año promised to shepherd a proposed moratorium on tree cutting and future building constructions.

## Fixing the city

Some 20 companies, technology leaders and businessmen have pitched ideas to fix Baguio's problems.

Among them are professionals like architect Rafael Chan, who submitted designs for parking buildings for Burnham Park as a way to discourage vehicles from entering this most visited Baguio greenbelt.

"My designs are my strongest contribution to the improvement of the city. My personal advocacy is to make the whole park free of cars. We grew up biking around the lake, using park roads, which motorists now use as a shortcut," Chan said.

## Coarse correction

In February, families who have spent their lives selling at the market have invited residents to share their resources with a homegrown development company that intends to bid for some projects and prevent big developers from ta-





*Redeveloping the Baguio we know*

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or take boat rides at Burnham Lake**

**Alberto Romulo**  
Former Foreign Secretary

**THE MARKET**

Set up as soon as the American colonial government opened Baguio's doors to migrants after 1909, the market had always been the center for trading vegetables, fruits, flowers and souvenirs produced by farmers, artists and craftsmen of Benguet.

The Baguio government initiated the modernization of the market in 1995, but its lease development project was stalled in court for 20 years when vendors questioned its constitutionality.

**Master plan:** Last year, a new master plan approved by the vendors introduced four interconnected buildings where shoppers could buy meat, fish, vegetables, fruits, flowers and souvenir items.

The buildings would have small parks, a series of walkways connecting the city to downtown Baguio and Burnham Park, and parking spaces.

But the project would cost the government at least P6 billion. Baguio intended to secure a loan and build the market. But mall giants SM and Robinsons have submitted unsolicited proposals to build the market, which the Baguio government may open to a Swiss challenge. Magalong assured Baguio vendors that they would be protected from unfair competition.

**THE POWER PLANT**

The first key undertaking in Baguio's redevelopment was the installation of a waste-to-energy plant which would be fueled by 200 tons of waste generated by the city each day.

Initiated by the previous administration, the plan was revived last year when the Department of Energy invited officials of Japanese engineering firm Toyo Energy Solutions Inc. Toyo offered to build a biomass generator, originally

king over prime real estate.

Magalong said the city government was not reconstructing Baguio, which was built by the American colonial government at the start of the 20th century.

He said many of the issues required "coarse correction." Traffic pylons, for example, were installed to keep traffic flow moving in congested areas where rerouting schemes were employed.

Backyard piggeries were planned to reduce pollution at the headwaters of rivers that

flow from Baguio down to the provinces of Benguet and La Union.

City Hall has also reviewed and upgraded its business and environment fees, and has asked for an increase in property taxes because the city government needs money to finance these projects, Magalong said.

**Big-ticket projects**

But plans for big-ticket projects drawn up by private and public experts are ambitious and herculean and will take more time to complete, although some are scheduled to start this year.

These were drawn up to deal with resources that no longer serve the current population, pegged by a 2019 Baguio carrying capacity study at 700,000 during daytime.

According to the study, Baguio's huge population breached the carrying capacity of its roads in 1985, solid waste management facilities in 1995, water resources in 2002, wastewater treatment in 2007, and its forest cover in 2012. INQ

at the Baguio Dairy Farm on Marcos Highway.

**Waste to energy:** As of Feb. 24, the Japanese government had approved a grant for the power generation plant, which would be relocated to Barangay Pinsao, according to City Administrator Bonifacio dela Peña.

The Japanese government negotiated the revenue shares of Baguio, the Philippine National Oil Co. that facilitated the government-to-government arrangement, and Toyo and a local contractor.

At least five other waste management companies offered solutions that would convert Baguio waste to electricity, which the city government was considering to handle medical waste and toxic trash.

At present, Baguio has been hauling its waste to commercial landfills in Tarlac and Pangasinan provinces since the closure of its only dump at Irisan.

**CLEANING WASTEWATER**

The summer capital was one of the first urban areas to be served by a sewage treatment plant, which was put up 33 years ago through a Japanese grant.

The plant cleans wastewater discharged into the Balili River, which flows to vegetable gardens in nearby La Trinidad Valley in Benguet. The facility, however, is outdated and will need upgrades to expand its services from the current 10 percent of the Baguio population.

**Sewer lines upgrade:** The city government will also need to repair and expand its sewer lines spanning 61 kilometers. City officials have met with the Asian Development Bank, which is studying the proposed sewage upgrade. Initial estimates indicate that the comprehensive sewage project could cost up to P22 billion. Several wastewater companies have proposed to build three more satellite treatment plants along three other river headwaters.

**Septic management:** On Feb. 24, the city council approved on second reading a proposed septic management ordinance which would enforce periodic treatment of household septage and regulate "poso negro" (septic tank cleanup) providers.

The city government also discussed the enforcement of a sewage treatment fee to be included in water rates collected by the water utility and by private water delivery services. INC2



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TO MAXIMIZE STEAM

## LOPEZ FIRM TO EXPAND CAPACITY OF GEOTHERMAL PLANTS

Lopez group-owned Energy Development Corp. (EDC) is looking to establish binary plants at its existing geothermal facilities in the country by the end of this year to boost its power-generation capacity.

EDC head of corporate social responsibility Allan Barcelona said at a media briefing at the sidelines of the 3rd Philippine Environmental Summit in Cagayan de Oro City that this was the company's response to the growing demand for renewable energy and the shrinking number of areas for geothermal plants.

"We are now complying with the permit requirements," he said. "These binary plants are actually to maximize steam

and there's no need to build power plants."

Binary plants have the capacity to provide 5 to 20 megawatts and are easier to set up compared to conventional power plants, although the latter has a bigger capacity of 100 MW or more.

Barcelona explained that most of the remaining areas for geothermal energy in the country were already considered protected areas, making the move to binary plants the most practical decision.

EDC has the biggest portfolio of power plants that use renewable technology. It operates in Leyte, Negros Oriental, Cotabato and Albay with a combined power generation

capacity of up to 1,400 MW.

About 37 percent of the country's total renewable energy power generation market is already cornered by EDC.

While projects may be established in protected areas, doing so could be very tedious given the presence of important ecosystems and wildlife that thrive in those locations.

Barcelona also noted that tampering with the country's protected areas would go against the company's commitment to protect and preserve the environment.

The company has yet to disclose its earnings for 2019, but the official said that last year was a record-high for EDC. —KARL R. OCAMPO INQ



## Science and environmental law: Do it as it is

IT is a fact that many laws came into being on account of scientific developments. This is borne out by history, i.e. the industrial revolution, which gave way to chemical and energy-driven industries, as well as the accompanying rules of law to regulate them. Likewise, the world discovered so many uses for natural resources to the extent of controlling nature through various scientific techniques. Experience proved, however, that control is beyond the power of science alone. It needed law.

The response was modernization of laws, both new and revision of old ones. The old use-oriented natural resources laws were converted into resource-oriented laws. Be that as it may, progress in science was so tremendous that some laws needed expansion in so short a period of time — e.g., the law of the sea, chemical legislations, disaster management and emergency response, etc. In the course of events, modern science brought forth grave consequences to the environment. Among them: carbon dioxide poisoning of the air, toxic wastes, plastic pollution, etc. Another serious consequence is that biological diversity became endangered and risked extinction.

What ought to be done is to



AMBASSADORS'  
CORNER

AMADO S.  
TOLENTINO JR.

direct achievements in science to the prevention of the destruction of the environment so it would serve the betterment of society as a whole as directed by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. In this regard, law must provide the adequate reply. Through legislation, science should be harnessed in the service of social and economic development of countries. While the scientist is occupied with physical possibilities, lawyers should confront the legal implications of scientific advancement. After all, science and law have a bearing on peoples' lives.

The function of law, therefore, is not only as an instrument to solve environmental problems, but to channel or direct science to positively productive social and economic consequences, which will serve the interest of all. This is the path for law within the growing field of science vis-à-vis man and nature.

The following actions, among others, could be taken at the national, regional and international levels, as may be ap-

propriate: 1) The educational system must be revised to bring together science and law in both formal and non-formal education. Scientific environmental concepts, as well as its legal aspects must permeate the mass media and formal education. What is needed is a corpus of professionals who could work at the policy/legal level and at the scientific level; 2) A university program on the environment should not only emphasize technical expertise, but also legal rules and regulations. In short, environmental science should be problem-oriented and multidisciplinary (emphasizing law), not simply focused subjects like environmental geology, environmental physics, environmental planning, environmental health, etc.; 3) Country development plans, at all levels, must be reexamined in the context of environmentalism and its legal implications. Environmentalists with law background should participate in the planning process; 4) Scientific expert groups should participate in the formulation and implementation of environmental laws and multilateral environmental agreements at the national and international levels; 5) More economic instruments for sus-

tainable development should be adopted and used. This requires scientific and legal inputs; 6) Wider utilization of the "polluter pays principle" should be thought of. For instance, developing countries should consider adopting an effective system of effluent charges instead of the installation of pollution control equipment, which failed in many jurisdictions.

Most important is public trust in the government's environmental agencies. Primarily regulatory in nature, staff in the environmental agencies must have the discipline and confidence that their decisions are being driven by science and an unbiased interpretation of the law and not a political agenda.

In this era of great industrial-environmental linkage, the following activities could be stimulated: a) tripartite (government, nongovernment organizations and business) review of the regulatory system; b) conduct of environmental audits for all important industrial processes; and c) formulation of regulations for full product lifetime liabilities for manufacturers.

At no other time is the urgent need for close coordination and collaboration between science and law more pronounced than

► TolentinoA8

today in the area of climate change and its dangers. Despite the 97-percent endorsement of scientific consensus on anthropogenic global warming, there seems to be a "denial machine" that espouses that human beings are not causing global warming. The most prominent among them is, of course, US President Donald Trump. Science denial has spread to other areas of environmental relevance and even evolution theory.

Scientists are fighting back. The last three years saw mass rallies against science denial via "Marches for Science" and, by 2019, the youth movement "Fridays for Future" had garnered a large number of scientists' support. Declaring

themselves to be Scientists for Future, they spell out the facts that motivate the movement for climate action. Obviously, the facts are so inconvenient that they trigger angry denial.

Fortunately, science and legal minds are at the forefront during UN conferences or negotiations to effectively implement the UN Climate Change Convention's Paris Agreement (to reduce greenhouse gas emission for health benefits), as well as the Convention on Biodiversity Conservation (for food security) and its Protocols, etc.

Climate change and its dangers are real. Both scientists and environmental lawyers must live up to their duty. It is to do things like they are.



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## Climate emergency aksiyunan – Legarda

NAGHAIN ng resolusyon si Antique Representative Loren Legarda na humihimok sa mga ahensiya ng pamahalaan para ideklara ang climate at environmental emergency at gumawa ng mga aksiyon para rito.

Sinusuportahan ng House Resolution No. 724 ang dineklarang climate emergency ng National Panel of Technical Experts, an advisory body ng

Climate Change Commission.

“There is a growing consensus that the entire planet is under climate emergency and that failure to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions and to build the adaptive capacities of communities to climate change would lead to unprecedented loss to human society, environment and global economy,” ani Legarda. **(Prince Golez)**