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**DENR**

**IN THE NEWS**

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



## DENR vows to restore 2 rivers in Marinduque

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources on Monday promised to take all interventions to restore two Marinduque rivers hit by "one of the worst mining and environment disasters in the Philippine history."

"We made a plan to restore all the rivers in the Philippines, including the Boac and Mogpog rivers. We will clean them up and we have a way of doing that using non-government resources," he said.

He said it was high time the government spearheaded a massive clean-up and rehabilitation of the Boac and Mogpog rivers for the benefit of the people of Marinduque who continued to suffer from the effects of the catastrophic tailings spills from the site of Marcopper Mining Corp. in 1993 and 1996.

"The environmental damages and unresolved issues brought about by the Marcopper mining operation in Marinduque for several decades now, must be put to an end," he lamented.

According to the DENR chief, he has approved an initial P5-million funding for the construction of the 90-meter-wide Gabion dam across the Mogpog River, particularly the downstream portion of Maguila-guila Creek, to prevent further siltation in its basin.

The planned river rehabilitation would include the dredging of the two rivers by a private contractor at no cost to the government, he added.

The private contractor would foot the bill of the dredging operation in exchange for whatever minerals that he may recover provided he would pay the corresponding 4 percent excise tax.

On March 24, 1996, a fracture in the drainage tunnel of Marcopper's Taipan pit spilled more than 1.6 million cubic meters of toxic mine tailings, flooding villages and poisoning the Boac River.

Three years before that, the firm's Maguila-guila siltation dam also burst, flooding the town of Mogpog, where two children drowned in the mine waste.

The incident "practically killed the Mogpog River with its toxic mine tailings," the DENR said.

Cimatu said he would immediately issue a department administrative order as soon as the Marinduque provincial government submits a formal request to place the Boac and Mogpog rivers under rehabilitation. **Rio N. Araja**



## DENR TO REHAB 2 RIVERS IN MARINDUQUE

**ENVIRONMENT** Secretary Roy Cimatu has vowed to restore two rivers in Marinduque province hit by the "Marcopper mine disaster" described as one of the worst mining disasters in Philippine history.

According to Cimatu, they will rehabilitate the Boac and Mogpog Rivers.

"Lilinisin natin 'yan and we have a way of doing that using non-government resources," the DENR chief told a cheering crowd, where he was guest in the centennial celebration of the province on invitation from the provincial officials led by Gov. Presbitero Velasco Jr. and son Congressman Lord Allan Velasco.

In March 1996, a fracture in the drainage tunnel of Marcopper's Taipan pit spilled more than 1.6 million cubic meters of toxic mine tailings, flooding villages and poisoning the Boac River.

Three years before that, the Maguil-guila siltation dam also burst, flooding the town of Mogpog, where two children drowned in the mine waste. It practically killed the Mogpog River with its toxic mine tailings.

Cimatu said it is high time the government lead a massive cleanup and rehabilitation of the Boac and Mogpog Rivers for the benefit of the people of Marinduque who continue to suffer from the

effects of the catastrophic tailings; spills from the site of Marcopper Mining Corporation in 1993 and 1996.

"The environmental damages and unresolved issues brought about by the Marcopper mining operation in Marinduque for several decades now must be put to an end," Cimatu said.

Marcopper, which started its copper mining operations in the province in 1969, had been dumping millions of tons of mine waste or tailings directly into the Calancan Bay, destroying corals and seagrasses.

Cimatu said he would immediately issue a Department Administrative Order once the Marinduque provincial government submits a formal request to place the Boac and Mogpog Rivers under rehabilitation.

The planned river rehabilitation, he said, would include the dredging of the two rivers by a private contractor at no cost to the government.

Under the plan, a private contractor will have to shoulder all the expenses of the dredging operation in exchange for whatever minerals that he may recover, provided he pays the corresponding four percent excise tax.

Cimatu revealed that he already approved an initial P5 million funding for the construction of the

90-meter-wide Gabion Aam across the Mogpog River, particularly the downstream portion of Maguila-guila Creek, to prevent further siltation in its basin.

Regional director Roland De Jesus of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau in Mimaropa said the amount will cover the first phase of the project, which include the conduct of feasibility study, technical data gathering, design and planning for the construction of the Gabion Dam.

"The result of the first phase will yield crucial information on geological, geotechnical and hydraulic analysis of the Maguila-guila Creek, which will determine the design of the structure," De Jesus said.

**Joel dela Torre**



## Mga ilog ng Marinduque na sinira ng Marcopper ibabalik

**NANGAKO** si Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu ng pagpapanumbalik ng mga ilog ng probinsya ng Marinduque na sinira ng tinaguriang isa sa mga pinakamalalang mining disasters sa kasaysayan ng Pilipinas.

Si Cimatu ang panauhing pandangal sa pagdiriwang ng 100th anniversary ng Marinduque bilang probinsya, sa pangunguna ni Governor Presbitero Velasco Jr. at ng kanyang anak na si Congressman Lord Allan Velasco.

Ayon kay Cimatu, panahon nang pangunahan ng pamahalaan ang massive clean-up at rehabilitation ng mga ilog ng Boac at Mogpog para sa kapakanan ng mga taga-Marinduque na patuloy na naghihirap sa epekto ng mapanirang tailings spills mula sa Marcopper Mining Corp. noong 1993 at 1996.

Ang Marcopper, na nagsimula ng copper mining operations sa Marinduque noong 1969, ay nagtatapon ng milyon na tonelada ng mine waste o tailings direkta sa Calancan Bay, na sumisira sa corai at seagrasses.

Sinabi ni Cimatu na agad siyang maglalabas ng department administrative order kapag nagsumite ang Marinduque provincial government ng pormal na kahilingan na ilagay ang mga ilog ng Boac at Mogpog under rehabilitation.

Dagdag ni Cimatu, ang pribadong kontratista ang sasagot sa lahat ng gastos ng dredging operation, kapalit ng ano mang mineral na makukuha rito, sa kondisyon na magbabayad ito ng kaukulang four percent excise tax.

**JAY REYES**



## Mayor Tiangco thanks DENR, SMC, for dredging project

MAYOR Toby Tiangco showed gratitude to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and San Miguel Corp. (SMC) for the start of a sustainable dredging program.

"We need to have a sustainable dredging program to ensure that the success we will achieve through this will last for a long time and benefit future generations," he said in his speech during the official launch of the dredging of Tullahan-Tinajeros river system.

The mayor noted that silts and sediments, as well as garbage, continue to accumulate at the bottom of rivers and other bodies of water but are not removed regularly.

"Previously, budgetary constraints hamper dredging efforts. This is why the partnership between DENR and San Miguel Corp, which has pledged P1 billion for this project, is a welcome development," he added.

Tiangco also ordered all barangay executives to strictly implement the city's anti-littering ordinance.

The dredging of the 36.4-kilometer Tullahan-Tinajeros river system is part of the ongoing campaign to clean up and restore the marine ecosystem of

Manila Bay. The river system extends from La Mesa Dam in Quezon City to the Centennial Park in Navotas.

SMC will undertake the project in partnership with the DENR. Both SMC President and Chief Operating Officer Ramon Ang and DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu led the launching.

Aside from Tiangco, other officials who attended the ceremony included Vice Mayor Clint Ceronimo, city councilors and department heads, and barangay chairpersons.

Also present were Malabon City Mayor Antolin Oreta 3rd; Bulacan Governor Daniel Fernando; 2nd and 3rd District of Bulacan Representatives Gavini Pincho and Lorna Silverio; and Meycauayan and Obando Mayors Linabelle Ruth Villarica and Edwin Santos.

Other key personalities were Metro Manila Development Authority Chairperson, Gen. Danilo Lim; Department of the Interior and Local Government Undersecretary for Operations, Epimaco Densing 3rd; Department of Public Works and Highways Assistant Secretary Antonio Molano Jr.; and DENR Undersecretaries Rodolfo Garcia, Atty. Jonas Leones, Analiza Rebueta-Teh, Juan Miguel Cuna, and Benny Antiporda.



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## DOH RECORD: 900 PATAY SA DENGAXIA VACCINES

AYON kay Public Attorney's Office (PAO) chief Persida Rueda-Acosta, masahol pa sa corona virus outbreak ang Dengvaxia vaccines dahil mismo, aniya, may records ang Department of Health (DoH) na may mahigit 900 nang bata ang mga nangamatay dahil sa kontrobersyal na bakunang ito.

"May black and white copy ang DoH, inilintay ko ngang magpa-presscon si Secretary (Francisco) Duque para personal at direkta n'yang maipaliwanag at masabihan ang mga magulang," saad ni Chief Acosta.

Lumalabas na may mahigit isang milyong Pinoy, 800,000 dito'y mga bata mula sa pampublikong paaralan at health centers at tinatayang 12,000 na kapulisan, ang nabakunahan mula nang ipag-utos ng DoH ang mass vaccination gamit ang Dengvaxia.

Kaya nga, matagal ko nang sinasabi na bakit hindi na lang aminin ng mga opisyal na sangkot sa pangunguna nina dating Health Secretary Janette Garin at kasalukuyang Sec. Duque ang kanilang kasalanan dahil tiyak gagaan ang kanilang kaso, aminin na nila, pagdidiin ng PAO chief.

### Medical mission nationwide isasagawa

Isa sa mandato ng PAO bukod sa pagtulong-ligal, lalo sa mga mahihirap, ay ang pagbibigay ng tulong-medikal kaya naman naka-set ito na magsagawa ng nationwide medical mission upang matulungan sa abot ng makakaya nito iyong mga nabakunahan ng Dengvaxia.

Makailang ulit nang nagsasagawa ng ganitong aktibidad ang PAO sa Quezon City head office nito at kanilang isusunod ang parehong gawain, lalo na sa Regions 3 at 4-A at maging sa Cebu, ani Chief Acosta.

Mahalagang maisagawa namin ito lalo na roon sa mga lugar na naisagawa ang mass vaccination upang masagip pa ang mga nabubuhay



## GOOD RIDDANCE

ni ARLIE CALALO

pero nabakunahan ng Dengvaxia dahil ang manufacturer nito mismo na Sanofi Pasteur Inc. ang umamin na mas delikado ito, lalo roon sa nabakunahan pero hindi pa nagkaka-Dengue.

Nauna nang sinabi ni Chief Acosta na hindi siya patitinag sa kabila ng kaliwa't-kanang paninira sa kanya dahil, aniya, kakampi niya ang Panginoon at mas nakararaming Pinoy, lalo iyong patuloy na tinutulungan ng kanyang ahensya, upang magkaroon ng hustisya sa kanilang mga naging suliranin at kasama na ryan ang libo-libong apektado ng Dengvaxia.

### Cimatu nanawagan ng pagkakaisa

Nanawagan si Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu ng pagkakaisa sa mga Filipino upang matulungan ang pamahalaan na mabigyan ng solusyon ang mga problema sa ating kalikasan.

Panahon na upang magkaisa ang sambayanang Filipino dahil na rin sa ginagawang pagtutok ng Duterte administration sa pagpapatupad ng environmental laws, aniya.

Binanggit nito ang rehabilitasyon ng Boracay kung saan anim na buwan itong isinara sa publiko noong 2018 dahil na rin sa polusyon at "overdevelopment." Bagama't marami ang kumontra sa pagpapasara dahil na rin sa kanilang pansariling interes ay itinuloy pa rin ito ng kalihim.

Kinondena rin ng DENR chief ang mga kumontra sa pagpapatupad ng environmental laws at nangmamaliit sa gobyerno sa ginagawang rehabilitasyon sa mga nasirang kapaligiran.



## DENR, CEZA unite to save Nangaramoan

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has partnered with the Cagayan Economic Zone Authority (CEZA) to ensure the protection and sustainability of Nangaramoan Beach in Cagayan Valley province.

The partnership was sealed with the signing of a memorandum of agreement (MoA) by DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu and CEZA Administrator and Chief Executive Officer Raul Lambino, held last 18 February at the DENR Central Office in Quezon City.

Nangaramoan Beach is famous for its pristine waters and white powdery

sand comparable to the world-renowned Boracay Island. It is located in the town of Santa Ana, which is within the Cagayan Special Economic Zone and Freeport that is managed and supervised by CEZA.

In October 2017, CEZA – in coordination with the DENR and the local government of Santa Ana – shut down the 500-meter-long white sand beach for failure of operators to comply with environmental regulations and sanitation standards.

Under the MoA, the DENR will help CEZA in crafting the Nangaramoan Comprehensive Area Development and Management Plan. *MBA @tribunephil\_mba*



### MMPC, DENR to start phase two of plantation project

MITSUBISHI Motors Philippines Corporation (MMPC) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sealed the second phase of its on-going plantation project as both parties recently signed the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) at a simple ceremony held at DENR's central office in Quezon City.

The second phase covers 30 hectares of forestland in Barangay Kapatalan, Municipality of Siniloan, Laguna. MMPC shall provide P1.3M to initially cover the implementation of the various activities such as site preparation, seedling production and protection of the established plantations.

It can be recalled that MMPC and DENR signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) on the establishment of a plantation convergence project last 2017 which covers 100 hectares within a span of four to five years in the areas of Region I-IVA as qualified and endorsed by the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer (PENRO). This paved the way for the first plantation project between both parties in Ilocos Norte last 2018.

Present during signing ceremony were DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu, MMPC President and CEO, Mitsuhiro Oshikiri, PENRO-Laguna, Ronilo Salac, MMPC Senior Vice President for Corporate Division, Yasuki Maruyama, and other key officials from DENR and MMPC.

"I commend DENR for their commitment in ensuring the sustenance of the environment in the different regions of the Philippines. For our part, MMPC is committed to stand with you in your advocacy and rest assured that we, too, will be doing our part for the betterment of the environment," MMPC President and CEO Mitsuhiro Oshikiri said in a statement.





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ACCESS TO REFORESTATION AREA IN MASUNGI GEORESERVE BLOCKED

## DENR HELP SOUGHT IN PROTECTING RIZAL

### NATURE PARK FROM QUARRYING

By **Jhesset O. Enano**  
@JhessetEnanoINQ

Ecotourism and conservation site Masungi Georeserve on Monday appealed for swift action from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), after a quarry company had fenced off at least 500 hectares of government forestland that was being prepared for reforestation.

On Friday last week, Masungi Georeserve Foundation, the governing body for the project, sent an "urgent appeal for help" to Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, seeking his action to stop the fencing, which had already cordoned off a quarter of the 2,000 ha reserved for Masungi's conservation work.

The DENR had yet to act on the matter, Billie Dumaliang, the foundation's managing trustee and advocacy specialist, said on Monday.

"We're hoping for decisive action from the DENR," she told the Inquirer, noting that if the quarrying operations continue, the project would surely fail.

#### Barbed wire fence

On Feb. 26, a park ranger roving the privately managed conservation area in Baras

town, Rizal province, discovered the 100-meter barbed wire fence, effectively cutting off their team from a new area that was being cleaned for reforestation and a new trail.

Dumaliang said more men arrived the following day to reinforce the fence. The group, however, failed to show any

permit or document for the activity, saying they were only following orders.

Dumaliang said employees of the company had reportedly threatened Masungi's workers that they would mobilize members of the Philippine National Police's Special Action Force to continue cordoning off the area.

Masungi said it was not the first time that it had collided with the company. It said policemen, a few years ago, arrested members of its project team who were protecting the government land against real estate speculators and illegal loggers.

The Inquirer had called the company's office for comment, but had not received a response from any of its officials on Monday.



REGIONS

## Stop quarry firm, geopark asks DENR

Ecotourism site Masungi Georeserve on Monday appealed for action from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, after at least 500 hectares of forestland was fenced off by a quarrying company, preventing Masungi workers from reforesting the area. Despite failing to show permits, the group that cordoned off the area reportedly threatened employees at the park with police action.—STORY BY JHESSET O. ENANO

A7



**NATURE BATHING** A group of tourists communes with nature at Masungi Georeserve in Rizal province. At right, a section of Masungi's forestland has been fenced off by barbed wire, preventing workers of the foundation guarding the nature reserve to conduct reforestation activities. —CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



#### No quarry permit

Wilfredo Moncano, acting director of the DENR's Mines and Geosciences Bureau, said that to his knowledge, there were no quarrying permits issued for Masungi.

Located 45 kilometers east of Metro Manila, the Masungi Georeserve is a conservation area that features ancient limestone formations and hosts more than 400 wildlife species.

The nature reserve and its surrounding areas, however, were heavily deforested in the 1990s. It was also threatened by land-grabbing activities and large-scale quarrying.

In 1993, the DENR issued Administration Order No. 33, declaring the area as a strict nature reserve and wildlife sanctuary. Under the order, it was declared closed to mining, exploration, development, exploitation and other activities that can adversely impact the habitat.

In 2017, DENR signed an agreement with Masungi Georeserve Foundation to work toward the protection, conservation and sustainable development of the geopark.

Since then, at least 47,000 native trees had been planted in 100 ha of land. The Masungi Georeserve has also become an ecotourism site, featuring several trails for hikers. INQ



# RARE MIGRATORY BIRDS SEEN FOR FIRST TIME IN PH

NEWS / A6

**SIARGAO STOP** The discovery of hooded cranes on Siargao Island is the first documented sighting of this migratory bird species in the Philippines. The birds are usually seen in the cooler climes of Japan and Korea at this time of the year. —ROBERT HUTCHINSON / CONTRIBUTOR

NEW FEEDING GROUNDS IN SURIGAO DEL NORTE

## SIARGAO SIGHTING: RARE MIGRATORY BIRDS SEEN FOR FIRST TIME IN PH

By Robert Hutchinson  
Contributor

The recent arrival of a flock of rare hooded cranes (*Grus monacha*) on Siargao Island in Surigao del Norte province has stirred excitement among bird lovers in the country, as this is the first time that this species has made landfall in the Philippines.

Greg Laude, resident bird watcher and author of the website [www.wildsiargao.com](http://www.wildsiargao.com), first spotted the group of seven cranes on Feb. 25 near Barangay Libertad in Santa Monica town in Siargao.

Laude was able to secure photographs to allow the record to be quickly confirmed, but these friendly birds, standing a meter tall, had already attracted the attention of local farmers who reported that the cranes had been sharing their fields for the past week.



**SIARGAO VISITORS** A flock of spectacular hooded cranes on Siargao Island has caused great excitement among residents and bird watchers alike. The rare birds, usually seen in the cooler climes at this time, are likely to have been blown further south by the northeast monsoon. —ROBERT HUTCHINSON/CONTRIBUTOR

### Declining population

The hooded crane breeds far to the north of the Philippines—in eastern Russia and northern China—heading further south during winter. A majority of these birds settle in Japan, where the species is welcomed in large numbers each winter, and are carefully protected.

The species is considered vulnerable and threatened with

possible extinction due to a small and declining population on a global scale, according to bird experts.

Arne Jensen, associate expert and ornithologist of Wetlands International, said: "Hooded cranes mostly winter in Japan and this group [was] likely to have been blown further south than usual by recent strong northerly *amihan*

(northeast monsoon) winds."

"The Philippines lies on the East Asian Flyway and is a very important area for many migratory birds, and we are happy these cranes have made Siargao their temporary home," he said.

According to Jensen, wild birds, such as the hooded crane, are protected by law, with stiff penalties awaiting those who hunt endangered species.

He said the cranes appeared happy with their new feeding grounds, and were expected to continue feeding in the area before heading northward to Russia in time for their breeding season.

### Big surprise

Mike Lu, president of the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines, was thrilled with the sighting.

"Last November, during the Korean Bird Fair, we witnessed thousands of hooded cranes in Suncheon Bay. It comes as a big surprise, actually more of disbelief, that this flock of hooded cranes will show up, of all places, in Siargao in Mindanao," Lu said.

"By a stroke of luck and timing, these birds were seen by a bird watcher. It makes me won-

der what other bird species are out there that we are missing out on, and might we one day see the sarus cranes (*Grus antigone*) return to the Philippines," he added. **INQ**

*(Editor's Note: The author is a member of the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines, coauthor of "A Naturalist's Guide to the Birds of the Philippines," and a director of Birdtour Asia.)*



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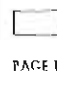
# The Manila Times



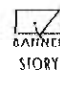
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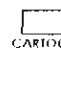
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# The Manila Times

TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2020

www.manilatimes.com

Trusted since 1898

ALMOST EM

A handful of tourists enjoy the powder sun in Boracay. At this time of year, beach would have been crawling with

PHOTO BY BI

## Boracay shutdown feared amid virus scare

BY BEN KRITZ

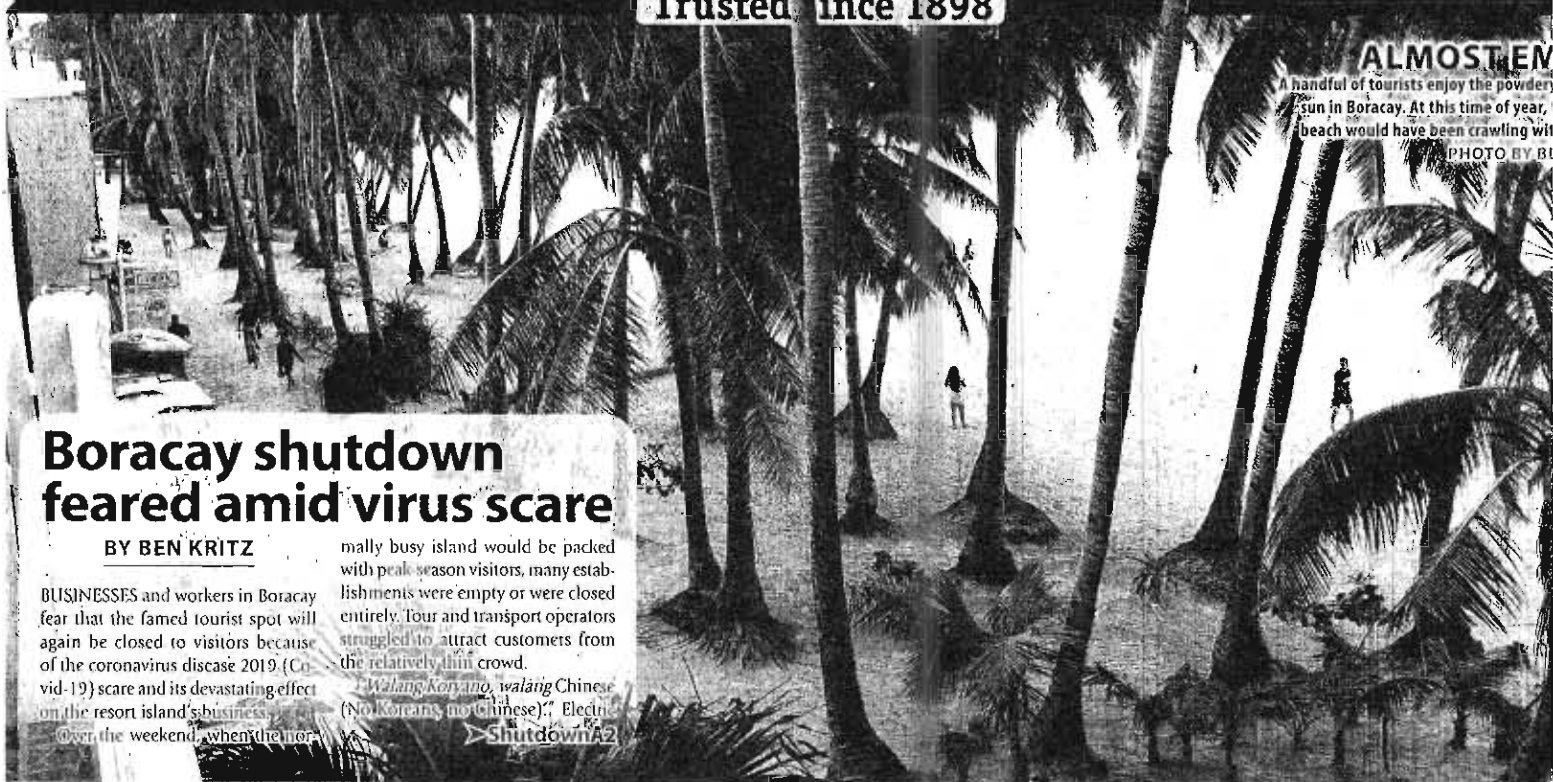
BUSINESSES and workers in Boracay fear that the famed tourist spot will again be closed to visitors because of the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) scare and its devastating effect on the resort island's business.

Over the weekend, when the mor-

mally busy island would be packed with peak season visitors, many establishments were empty or were closed entirely. Tour and transport operators struggled to attract customers from the relatively thin crowd.

"Walang Korano, walang Chinese (No Korans, no Chinese)," Electr-

➤ Shutdown A2





## SHUTDOWN FROM A1

# Boracay

tricycle operator Noli Solidum lamented, pointing out closed restaurants, tour operators and other businesses along Boracay's main road. "Normally, we (Solidum's transport cooperative) have about 4,000 passengers per day," during this time of year, he explained. "Now, maybe 2,000. So, *kalahati lang* (only half)."

Travel restrictions imposed by the Philippines to and from China and South Korea, as well as those countries' own restrictions on travel due to the Covid-19 epidemic, have prevented virtually all Korean and Chinese tourists from visiting Boracay. Solidum estimated that Korean and Chinese visitors ordinarily account for more than half of Boracay's tourism business.

Solidum's estimate was the most optimistic of any of the several local business people *The Manila Times* spoke to; the consensus was that business on Boracay is down about 80 percent since the beginning of February for lack of visitors.

"We just got over Typhoon 'Ursula' (international name: 'Phanfone') [in December], and now this," one of Solidum's colleagues chimed in. "A lot of people are worried they will close Boracay again."

In April 2018, Boracay was ordered closed for six months by the government in order to carry out a large-scale rehabilitation of the popular tourist destination.

A number of other vendors and local workers also confirmed that "people are talking about the island closing again."

## Safe to travel

Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo Puyat, however, said there were no plans to close Boracay because of the Covid-19 epidemic.

In a brief statement to *The Manila Times*, Puyat clarified, "No closure of Boracay."

"Also, there is no local transmission [of Covid-19] in the country," the Tourism chief added. "So, it's safe [to travel] in the country."

News reports over the weekend claimed that 11 South Korean visitors in Boracay from South Korea's North Gyeongsang were suspected of being infected with the coronavirus. They were allowed to depart on February 28 and 29 after they exhibited no

symptoms of Covid-19.

The Philippines banned the entry of visitors from North Gyeongsang on February 26. The city of Daegu, where the largest number of Covid-19 cases in South Korea were recorded, is located in the province.

## Small comfort

Puyat's reassurance that Boracay will not be closed likely comes as small comfort for local businesses and entrepreneurs struggling to make ends meet in what should be their most profitable season.

"There is almost no business now," tour coordinator Ferrick Arellano said. "A lot of places have just closed and a lot of people have lost their jobs," most of them seasonal or contractual workers.

Several vendors said 700 to 800 people had been put out of work by the downturn in visitors, but *The Manila Times* was unable to independently confirm those figures with local government officials or the Department of Labor and Employment.

Arellano did confirm, however, that he and the several other employees of the tour company he works for had been informed that they would be reduced to half-salary as of March 1 "indefinitely."

"Before, P20,000 [per month] — now P10,000," he said. "They said until further notice. We don't know when it will get better. And almost everybody has the same problem."

"I don't know what we're going to do," he added, visibly worried at the thought.

## Silver lining

Not everyone is unhappy with the virtual collapse of business on the island, however.

"It's okay for us," a group of police officers casually observing the passers-by told *The Manila Times*. "Not too many people, not much trouble."

The visitors who did make it to Boracay were apparently enjoying the quieter surroundings.

"It's fantastic, isn't it?" Mark Wells, an Australian visiting Boracay with his wife Terri said as he waited in line for coffee on Sunday morning. "It's beautiful weather, the beach isn't crowded at all, you don't have to wait to get a table for dinner. I know the people are having problems because there's not as much business, but it's been lovely for us. If you ask me, this is a great time to come here."

WITH REPORT  
FROM FAYE ALMAZAN



# Supreme Court bans single-use plastics in its offices

By **EVELYN MACAIRAN**

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday announced that it has banned unnecessary single-use plastics in its offices, as the high court works toward turning the judiciary into a more environment-friendly government branch.

The SC sent the memorandum through its Office of Administrative Services, directing the implementation of the outright ban on single-use plastics in its offices.

SC spokesman Brian Keith Hosaka said that while there was no mention of sanctions imposed on those who would not abide by the memorandum, it is believed that taking care of the environment should be everyone's concern.

"There is no sanction as per the memo... I guess when it comes to the environment it is a given that we should help and protect it," Hosaka said.

In the memo dated Feb. 28, SC Deputy Clerk of Court and Chief Administrative Officer Maria Carina Cunanan said, "The Court is adopting the solid waste avoidance and waste management strategy of the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC), which is under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The NSWMC Resolution No. 1363, series of 2020, considers the following items as unnecessary single-use plastics: "Plastic cups (lower than 0.2 mm in thickness), plastic drinking straws, plastic coffee stirrers, plastic spoons, plastic forks, plastic knives and plastic labo and thin-filmed sando bags (lower than 15 microns)."

Cunanan said the directive is consistent with the SC's efforts toward sustainability.

On Oct. 22, 2019, the Court presented to the public the project for the construction of the Manila Hall of Justice, which is certified as the first green courthouse in the Philippines. It is scheduled to be completed by 2022.

The new building would feature three environment-friendly and green certified interconnected buildings.



## SC bans use of single-use plastics in its offices

THE Supreme Court on Monday started implementing the ban on single-use plastics in its offices as part of its program to transform the judiciary into a more environment-friendly government branch.

The SC, through its Office of Administrative Services, disseminated the memorandum mandating the outright ban of unnecessary use of single-use plastics in its offices.

SC spokesperson Brian Keith Hosaka said that while there was no mention of sanctions imposed on those who would not abide by the memorandum, it is believed that taking care of the environment should be everyone's concern.

"There is no sanction as per the memo... I guess when it comes to the environment it is a given that we should help and protect it," Hosaka said.

In a memo dated Feb. 28, SC Deputy Clerk of Court and Chief Administrative Officer Maria Carina Cunanan said, "the Court is adopting the solid waste avoidance and waste management strategy of the National Solid Waste Management Commission, which is under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The NSWMC Resolution No. 1363, series of 2020 considers the following items as unnecessary single-use plastics: "plastic cups (lower than 0.2 mm in thickness), plastic drinking straws, plastic coffee stirrers, plastic spoons, plastic forks, plastic knives, and plastic labo and thin-filmed sando bags [lower than 15 microns]."

Cunanan said the directive is consistent with the SC's efforts towards sustainability.

On Oct. 22, 2019, the Court presented to the public the project for the construction of the Manila Hall of Justice, which is certified as the first green courthouse in the Philippines. It is scheduled to be completed by 2022.

The MHOJ would feature three interconnected buildings that are environment-friendly and green certified. **Rey E. Requejo**



## #nationataglance



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### NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION: MANILA

#### **Supreme Court bans single-use plastic in its offices**

SINGLE-USE plastic products are now banned at the Supreme Court (SC) offices in line with the country's waste management campaign. Deputy Clerk of Court and Chief Administrative Officer Maria Carina M. Cunanan issued a memorandum dated February 28, saying the court is "adopting the solid waste avoidance and waste management strategy of the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC)." The memorandum is addressed only to all heads of the SC offices and does not include all courts

in the country. Under NSWMC Resolution No. 1363-2020, "plastic cups (lower than 0.2 mm in thickness), plastic drinking straws, plastic coffee stirrers, plastic spoons, plastic forks, plastic knives, and plastic labo and thin-filmed sando bags (lower than 15 microns)" are the items considered unnecessary single-use plastic. The SC, in a statement, said the policy is also in line with the court's plans of sustainability. The SC announced in October last year that it will have the Manila Hall of Justice as the "first green courthouse in the Philippines" by 2022. — **Vann Marlo M. Villegas**



## SC bans single-use plastics at offices

An outright ban on the unnecessary use of single-use plastics in all its offices was issued by the Supreme Court (SC).

In a memorandum dated 28 February 2020 addressed to all heads of SC offices, Deputy Clerk of Court and Chief Administrative Officer Atty. Maria Carina M. Cunanan stated the Court is adopting the solid waste avoidance and waste management strategy of the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC), which is under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Under NSWMC Resolution 1363, series of 2020, it considers the following items as unnecessary single-use plastics: "plastic cups (lower than 0.2 mm in thickness), plastic drinking straws, plastic coffee stirrers, plastic spoons, plastic forks, plastic knives and plastic *labo* and thin-filmed *sando* bags (lower than 15 microns)."

This directive is consistent with the Court's efforts towards sustainability.

On 22 October 2019, the Court presented to the public the project for the construction of the Manila Hall of Justice, which is certified as the first green courthouse in the Philippines.





## Single-use plastics banned by SC

**THE Supreme Court through the Office of Administrative Services yesterday came up with a memorandum banning the use of single-use plastics in its offices.**

In a memorandum addressed to all heads of offices of the SC, Deputy Clerk of Court and Chief Administrative Officer Atty. Maria Carina M. Cunanan said that the high court is adopting the solid waste avoidance and waste management strategy of the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC), which is under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

NSWMC Resolution No. 1363, series of 2020 considers the following items as unnecessary single-use plastics: "plastic cups (lower than 0.2 mm in thickness), plastic drinking straws, plastic coffee stirrers, plastic spoons, plastic forks, plastic knives, and plastic labo, and thin-filmed sando bags (lower than 15 microns)."

**Hector Lawas**



## Bontoc trash collectors, plumbers to get hazard pay

**BONTOC, Mountain Province:** Garbage collectors and pipefitters/plumbers (*tubero*) who are regular employees of the Bontoc local government unit will soon start to receive hazard pay.

The *Sangguniang Panlalawigan* (Provincial Council) of Mountain Province approved Municipal Ordinance 313-2019 of the municipality of Bontoc that grants hazard pay to regular employees of the Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office (Menro) and the Municipal Waterworks Office.

The ordinance covers only personnel of the Menro and Municipal Waterworks directly engaged in jobs with high risks of exposure to health hazards and personnel who got sick because of their hazardous work but who, however, remained functional

and were reassigned to other duties and tasks.

The hazard pay shall be equal or across-the-board for all qualified Menro and Municipal Waterworks personnel regardless of rank or salary grade.

Personnel who are not entitled to hazard pay are those assigned to administrative work in the office; those who are on leave of absence for five consecutive days of the month; and those who incur unauthorized leaves of absence.

A maximum amount of P1, 000 per month shall be granted to all qualified personnel of the Menro and the Municipal Waterworks.

The *Sangguniang Bayan* (Municipal Council) passed the municipal ordinance recognizing the contribution of the

garbage collectors and the Municipal Waterworks personnel and the risks they face in delivering public service.

Mayor Franklin Odsey said the local government has to protect its workers and provide them equitable compensation.

"Our garbage collectors and [pipefitters/plumbers] are performing duties and responsibilities that are hazardous to their health and they deserve to be granted hazard pay allowed under existing rules and regulations," the mayor added.

Councilor Jerome Tudlong Jr., who sponsored the ordinance, thanked the members of the *Sangguniang Bayan*, the *Sangguniang Panlalawigan* and Odsey for their support in the passage of the ordinance. **DEXTER A. SEE**



## CBCP opposes China-funded Kaliwa project

THE Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines has joined widening calls to stop the construction of Kaliwa Dam in Quezon which will be funded by loans from China.

"The Church is not against development as long as it does not sacrifice the 'common good' in the name of progress," said Bishop Romulo Valles of Davao.

"The ongoing Kaliwa Dam project of the government, in the guise of providing water to Metro Manila, is to our mind against inclusive development," added Valles.

He stressed that bishops were against the project as it would destroy the biodiversity at Sierra Madre Mountains, which is the home of the Dumagat-Remontados tribe.

According to CBCP, it is better to look for an appropriate solution to the worsening water shortage in Meyro Manika based on experts' suggestion.

"We, therefore, call on the government agencies concerned and other proponents of the Kaliwa Dam project to stop its implementation," the bishops' statement said.

"For the sake of the common good, we strongly recommend that ecologically sustainable alternatives be carefully considered," the CBCP added.

Earlier, Antipolo Bishop Francisco de Leon warned of the dangers posed by the dam to indigenous communities of the Dumagay-Remontados tribe in the mountains of Sierra Madre.

He said that 300 forest hectares in Sierra Madre might be submerged in water, endangering 126 wildlife in the area.

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System claims that Kaliwa Dam will provide additional 34 million liters of water daily to Metro Manila and nearby provinces.



## CBCP blocks Kaliwa Dam project

SAYING that progress should be for the common good, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) has supported calls to stop the construction of the Chinese-funded Kaliwa Dam project in Quezon Province.

Davao Archbishop Romulo Valles, CBCP president, bared that "the Church is not against development as long as it does not sacrifice the 'common good' in the name of progress."

"The ongoing Kaliwa Dam project of the government, in the guise of providing water to Metro Manila, is to our mind against inclusive development," he said in a pastoral statement.

"For the sake of the common good, we strongly recommend that ecologically sustainable alternatives be carefully considered," he added.

Antipolo Bishop Francisco de Leon has also warned of the dangers posed by the dam to indigenous communities of the Dumagay-Remontados tribe in the mountains of Sierra Madre.

He said if the dam project pushes through, 300 hectares in Sierra Madre might be submerged in water, endangering wildlife in the area.

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System said Kaliwa Dam would provide additional 34 million liters of water daily to Metro Manila and some nearby provinces.

The project drew criticism from various environmental groups. They warned that the project would only bury the Philippines in debt.

In 2018, 51 Catholic bishops and four priests expressed support

to a pastoral letter titled "No to Kaliwa Dam, Yes to Alternative Sources of Water."

Valles said bishops were against the project because it would destroy the biodiversity at Sierra Madre Mountains, the home of the Dumagay-Remontados tribe.

The CBCP urged the government to look for an appropriate solution to the water problems in Metro Manila.

"We, therefore, call on the government agencies concerned and other proponents of the Kaliwa Dam project to stop its implementation," the bishops' statement read.

"For the sake of the common good, we strongly recommend that ecologically sustainable alternatives be carefully considered," the CBCP pointed out.

JOMAR CANLAS



## Gobyerno gagastos lang nang malaki **CBCP NO SA KALIWA DAM**

**NANAWAGAN** ang Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) sa pamahalaan na itigil ang konstruksiyon ng Kaliwa Dam na popondohan ng utang mula sa China.

Ang apela ay nakasaad sa isang statement na ipinalabas ng CBCP noong Pebrero 26, kung saan binigyang-diin ng mga obispo na ang proyekto ay mapanganib sa kalikasan at gagastusan lamang nang malaki ng gobyerno.

"The Church is not against development as long as it does not sacrifice the 'common good' in the name of progress," wika ni Bishop Romulo Valles ng Davao.

"The ongoing Kaliwa Dam project of the government, in

the guise of providing water to Metro Manila, is to our mind against inclusive development," sabi pa ni Valles.

Binigyang-diin niya na tumutol ang mga obispo sa proyekto dahil wawasakin nito ang biodiversity ng Sierra Madre Mountains, ang tahanan ng Dumagat-Remontados tribe.

Ayon sa CBCP, mas makabubuting humanap na lamang ng akmalang tugon sa kalamalang problema ng kakapusan ng suplay ng tubig sa Metro Manila na base na rin sa mungkahi ng mga eksperto.

"We, therefore, call on the government agencies concerned and other proponents of the Kaliwa Dam project to stop its implementation," na-

kasaad sa statement ng mga obispo.

Hiniling din ng Simbahan na rebisahan ang proyekto para maitama ang mga kamalian nito.

"For the sake of the common good, we strongly recommend that ecologically sustainable alternatives be carefully considered," dagdag pa ng CBCP.

Nauna nang ibinabala ni Antipolo Bishop Francisco de Leon ang panganiib ng itatayong dam sa komunidad ng mga katutubong naninirahan sa Dumagat-Remonta-

dos sa kabundukan ng Sierra Madre.

Aniya, mahigit 300 ektarya ng kagubatan sa Sierra Madre ang maaaring lumubog sa tubig na magdudot naman ng panganiib sa 126 wildlife sa kabundukan.

Sinabi ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) na ang Kaliwa Dam ay magbibigay ng karagdagang 34 million liters ng tubig araw-araw sa mga lugar sa Metro Manila at mga kalapit na lalawigan.

Sa kabila nito ay umani ng batikos ang proyekto mula

sa simbahan at iba't ibang environmental groups.

Noong 2018, hindi bababa sa 51 Catholic bishops at apat na pari ang nagpahayag ng kanilang suporta para sa isang pastoral letter na nilagdaan ng mga obispo ng Infanta, Quezon na may titulong "No to Kaliwa Dam, Yes to Alternative Sources of Water."

Bukod sa mawawasak na kalikasan, nagbabala rin ang mga kritiko na ang proyektong pinondohan ng China ay magbabaon sa Filipinas sa utang. **RNT**



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## Gobyerno gagastos lang nang malaki CBCP tutol sa pagpapagawa ng

### Kaliwa dam

Nanawagan ang Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) sa pamahalaan na itigil ang pagpapagawa ng Kaliwa Dam na popondohan ng loans mula sa China. Ang apela ay na-

kasaad sa isang statement na ipinalabas ng CBCP noong Pebrero 26 kung saan idiniin ng mga obispo na ang proyekto ay mapanganib sa kalikasan at gagastusan lamang nang malaki ng gobyerno. "Hindi kontra sa pagpa-

paunlad ang Simbahan hangga't hindi nasa-sakripisyo ang kagalingan ng lahat sa ngalan ng progreso," wika ni wika ni Bishop Romulo Valles ng Davao.

Idiniin niya na tumutol ang mga obispo sa

proyekto dahil wawasakin nito ang biodiversity ng Sierra Madre Mountains, ang tahanan ng Dumagat-Remontados tribe.

Ayon sa CBCP, mas makabubuting humanap na lamang ng ak-mang tugon sa luma-

lalang problema ng kapusan ng suplay ng tubig sa Metro Manila na base na rin sa mung-kahi ng mga eksperto. Nauna nang ibinabala ni Antipolo Bishop Francisco de Leon ang panganib ng itatayong dam sa komu-

nidad ng mga katutubong naninirahan sa Dumagat-Remontados sa kabundukan ng Sierra Madre.

Aniya, mahigit 300 ektarya ng kagubatan sa Sierra Madre ang maaaring lumubog sa tubig na magdulot ng panganib

sa 126 wildlife sa kabundukan.

Bukod sa mawawak na kalikasan, nagbala rin ang mga kritiko na ang proyektong pinondohan ng China ay magbabaon sa Pilipinas sa utang.



## Apela ng mga obispo sa pamahalaan

# STOP KALIWA DAM PROJECT

**N**AKIISA ang Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) sa malawakang panawagan na itigil ang pagpapatayo ng Kaliwa Dam sa Quezon na popondohan ng loans mula sa China.

Sa isang statement noong Pebrero 26, sinabi ng CBCP na ang proyekto ay mapanganib sa kalikasan at gagastusan lamang nang malaki ng gobyerno.

"The Church is not against development as long as it does not sacrifice the 'common good' in the name of progress," wika ni Bishop Romulo Valles ng Davao.

"The ongoing Kaliwa Dam project of the government, in the guise of providing water to Metro Manila, is to our mind against inclusive development," sabi pa ni Valles.

Binigyang-diin niya na tumututol ang mga obispo sa proyekto dahil wawasakin nito ang biodiversity ng Sierra Madre Mountains, ang tahanan ng Dumagat-Remontados tribe.

Ayon sa CBCP, mas makabubuting humanap na lamang ng akmang tugon sa lumalalang problema ng kakapusan ng suplay ng tubig sa Metro Manila na base na rin sa mungkahi ng mga eksperto.

"We, therefore, call on the government agencies concerned and other proponents of the Kaliwa Dam project to stop its implementation," nakasaad sa statement ng mga obispo.

Hiniling din ng Simbahan na rebisahan ang proyekto para maitama ang mga kamalian nito.

"For the sake of the common good, we strongly recommend that ecologically sustainable alternatives be carefully considered," dagdag pa ng CBCP.

Nauna nang ibinabala ni Antipolo Bishop Francisco de Leon ang panganib ng itatayong dam sa komunidad ng mga katutubong naninirahan sa Dumagat-Remontados sa kabundukan ng Sierra Madre.

Aniya, mahigit 300 ektarya

ng kagubatan sa Sierra Madre ang maaaring lumubog sa tubig na magdudot naman ng panganib sa 126 wildlife sa kabundukan.

Sinabi ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) na ang Kaliwa Dam ay magbibigay ng karagdagang 34 million liters ng tubig araw-araw sa mga lugar sa Metro Manila at mga kalapit na lalawigan.

Sa kabila nito ay umani ng batikos ang proyekto mula sa simbahan at iba't ibang environmental groups.

Noong 2018, hindi bababa sa 51 Catholic bishops at apat na pari ang nagpahayag ng kanilang suporta para sa isang pastoral letter na nilagdaan ng mga obispo ng Infanta, Quezon na may titulong "No to Kaliwa Dam, Yes to Alternative Sources of Water."

Bukod sa mawawasak na kalikasan, nagbabala rin ang mga kritiko na ang proyektong pinondohan ng China ay magbabaon sa Filipinas sa utang.



## Makasisira sa kalikasan

# KALIWA DAM INALMAHAN NG CBCP

**IPINABABASURA ng Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) ang pagpapatayo ng China-funded Kaliwa Dam sa Quezon.**

Sa isang statement dated Pebrero 26, binigyang-diin ng CBCP na gagastos lamang ng malaking halaga ang gobyerno sa naturang proyekto, bukod pa sa makasisira ito sa kalikasan.

"The Church is not against development as long as it does not sacrifice the 'common good' in the name of progress," wika ni Bishop Romulo Valles ng Davao.

"The ongoing Kaliwa Dam project of the government, in the guise of providing water to Metro Manila, is to our mind against inclusive development," sabi pa ni Valles.

Binigyang-diin niya na tumutulong ang mga obispo sa proyekto dahil wawasakin nito ang biodiver-

sity ng Sierra Madre Mountains, ang tahanan ng Dumagat-Remontados tribe.

Ayon sa CBCP, mas makabubuting humanap na lamang ng akmang tugon sa lumalalang problema ng kakapusan ng suplay ng tubig sa Metro Manila na base narin sa mungkahi ng mga eksperto.

"We, therefore, call on the government agencies concerned and other proponents of the Kaliwa Dam project to stop its implementation," nakasaad sa statement ng mga obispo.

Hiniling din ng Simbahan na rebisahan ang proyekto para maitama ang mga kamalian nito.

"For the sake of the common good, we strongly recommend that ecologically sustainable alternatives be carefully considered," dagdag pa ng CBCP.

Nauna nang ibinabala ni Antipolo Bishop Francisco de Leon ang panganim ng itatayong dam sa komunidad ng mga katutubong naninirahan sa Dumagat-Remontados sa kabundukan ng Sierra Madre.

Aniya, mahigit 300 hektarya ng kagubatan sa Sierra Madre ang maaaring lumubog sa tubig na magdudot naman ng panganim sa 126 wildlife sa kabundukan.

Sinabi ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) na ang Kaliwa Dam ay magbibigay ng karagdagang 34 million liters ng tubig

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Bukod sa mawawasak na kalikasan, nagbabala rin ang mga kritiko na ang proyektong pinondohan ng China ay magbabaon sa Filipinas sa utang.





## Gobyerno gagastos lang nang malaki

# CBCP NO SA KALIWA DAM

**NANAWAGAN** ang Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) sa pamahalaan na itigil ang konstruksiyon ng Kaliwa Dam na pondo-dohan ng loans mula sa China.

Ang apela ay nakasaad sa isang statement na ipinalabas ng CBCP noong 26 Pebrero, na binigyang-diin ng mga obispo na ang proyekto ay mapanganib sa kalikasan at gagastusan lamang nang malaki ng gobyerno.

"The Church is not against development as long as it does not sacrifice

the 'common good' in the name of progress," wika ni Bishop Romulo Valles ng Davao.

"The ongoing Kaliwa Dam project of the government, in the guise of providing water to Metro Manila, is to our mind against inclusive development," ani Valles.

Binigyang-diin niya na tumututol ang mga obispo sa proyekto dahil wawasakin nito ang biodiversity ng Sierra Madre mountains, ang tahanan ng Dumagat-Remontados tribe.

Ayon sa CBCP, mas makabubuting humanap

ng akmang tugon sa lumalalang problema ng kakapusan ng supply ng tubig sa Metro Manila na base sa mungkahi ng mga eksperto.

"We, therefore, call on the government agencies concerned and other proponents of the Kaliwa Dam project to stop its implementation," naka-saad sa statement ng mga obispo.

Hiniling din ng Simbahan na rebisahin ang proyekto para maitama ang mga kamalian nito. "For the sake of the common good, we strongly

recommend that ecologically sustainable alternatives be carefully considered," dagdag ng CBCP.

Nauna nang ibinabala ni Antipolo Bishop Francisco de Leon ang panganib ng itatayong dam sa komunidad ng mga katutubong naninirahan sa Dumagat-Remontados sa kabundukan ng Sierra Madre.

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Bukod sa mawawasak na kalikasan, nagbabala rin ang mga kritiko na ang proyektong pinondohan ng China ay magbabaon sa Filipinas sa utang.



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WARNING TO MAYNILAD CUSTOMERS

**'BRACE FOR STRICTER WATER INTERRUPTION'**

**By Ronnel Domingo**  
@RonWDomingoINQ

Maynilad Water Services Inc. on Monday warned its customers of a "stricter implementation" of its rotational service interruption schedule that has been in place for several months now as the water level at Ipo Dam goes down.

Also, Maynilad and Manila Water Co. Inc. have cued pre-

ventive maintenance and repair activities in preparation for the summer months when raw water supply at the dams—including Angat in Bulacan and La Mesa in Quezon City—are reduced significantly.

"Water level at Ipo Dam has been going down gradually due to less runoffs at the Ipo watershed," Maynilad said in an advisory.

The Pangilinan-led concessionaire of the Metropolitan

Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) said Ipo's stock was no longer reaching the maintaining level of 101 meters above sea level in the past few days. As of 6 a.m. on Monday, water level at Ipo Dam was pegged at 100.05 masl.

Allocation of raw water from Angat remains at 42 cubic meters per second. The MWSS allocation was maintained at that subnormal level—normally at

46 cms—as part of efforts to conserve supply for the summer months, according to the National Water Resources Board.

"Because of this, we advise our customers to be mindful of their assigned rotational service interruption schedule," Maynilad said. "Expect a more strict implementation of the schedule in the coming days until the water level at Ipo Dam increases. Store only the volume

of water that you need daily."

Also, Maynilad announced network enhancement activities in the cities of Muntinlupa and Parañaque to mitigate the impact of the reduced raw water allocation from Angat Dam in preparation for the summer months.

As a result, some Maynilad customers in parts of Muntinlupa and Parañaque and even Las Piñas City will experience temporary water service inter-

ruption from 6 a.m. of March 4 until 7 a.m. of March 5.

The company said it had water tankers on standby, ready to deliver water to affected areas as needed.

"Please be advised that after the said activities, the rotational water service interruption schedule—due to reduced raw water allocation from Angat Dam—in these areas will remain in effect," Maynilad added. INQ



# Manila Water's 2019 income down by 16% after a series of supply woes

By MADELAINE B. MIRAFLOR

It's been two full months into 2020, but the series of water supply mess that was experienced across Metro Manila last year still haunts East Zone concessionaire Manila Water Company, Inc.

In a statement, the Ayala-led company revealed that it booked a consolidated net income of ₱5.5 billion for 2019, which is lower by 16 percent from the ₱6.5 billion it earned in 2018.

"This has been anticipated considering the challenges the company faced last year, with the East Zone concession severely impacted by the water supply shortage in March," Manila Water said.

In 2018, Manila Water's operation was largely backed by its Manila Concession, bolstered by the regulatory approval of its higher tariff adjustment and business plan.

Things completely changed for the company last year when its

Manila Concession's net income for the year declined by 22 percent to 5.1 billion while the Philippine government is now bent on overhauling Manila Water's concession agreement with Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS).

From January to December last year, Manila Water's costs and expenses for the East Zone also increased 32 percent to ₱6.3 billion, mainly driven by the ₱534 million penalty imposed by MWSS and additional service recovery and operations costs.

To recall, the decline in La Mesa dam water levels caused Manila Water's service availability within its Manila Concession to drop significantly. For its severely affected customers, Manila Water implemented a one-time Bill Waiver Program.

Then in July last year, raw water allocation from Angat Dam hit its lowest, with releases limited to 35 cubic meters per second for the

MWSS Concessionaires.

To mitigate the impact of low raw water supply, Manila Water pushed for network efficiency to maintain service availability, with at least 7 pounds per square inch (psi) of pressure, enough to reach the ground floor level, enabling it to serve more than 7 million people in the East Zone with safe and reliable water supply, covering over 1.3 million households and with more than 5,000 kilometers of network pipeline.

Likewise, Manila Water affirmed its wastewater commitment of providing 32 percent coverage of the East Zone by 2021.

"Wastewater coverage in the East Zone is now over 30 percent, equivalent to 2 million people served through nearly 400 kilometers of laid sewer network. This is a significant increase from only 3 percent coverage when Manila Water took over operations from MWSS in 1997," Manila Water said.



■ KRITZ FROM B1

## Blame govt for power and water

shortages are exactly the same as they have been every year they have occurred: Electricity demand during the hot months exceeds the available generating capacity, and dry weather conditions have lowered water levels in the Angat-Ipo reservoir complex that serves as practically the only source of water for Metro Manila.

In the case of the electricity supply, the culprit is the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira) of 2001, the brainchild of then-president Gloria Arroyo. Although she probably did not intend it, Epira has turned out to be an abomination, accomplishing precisely the opposite of everything it was meant to provide: a sufficient, stable, competitively-priced supply of electricity; an attractive investment environment for new sources of power; and an effective mechanism for eliminating a mountain of bad debts and worse assets that the government accumulated during the years of state control of the sector.

The simple, obvious solution to the country's chronic shortage of electricity is more generating capacity. Given the country's rate of expansion, it ought to be adding 200 to 300 megawatts of new capacity per year; if it had been doing that since the passage of Epira, the Philippines by now would have a comfortable supply margin regardless of the "maintenance shutdowns" or "forced outages" of some power plants, which always seem to happen at the worst possible times.

Epira, however, provides an odd

framework that somehow manages to simultaneously under-regulate the most important aspects of electric infrastructure development and over-regulate things that should be relatively simple, such as power supply agreements. The system is so byzantine that legitimate investment in new capacity, particularly in renewable energy, is largely discouraged, while aggressive rent-seeking, even to the point of manipulating electricity spot market prices, is tacitly encouraged.

The water supply problem is more directly government's fault. As most people are by now aware, thanks to the scandal over the shenanigans of Maynilad Water Services Inc. and Manila Water Co. Inc., the two concessionaires who distribute water to the western and eastern halves of the greater Metro area, water and sewerage services were made possible by the privatization of the water distribution system during the time of former president Fidel Ramos. The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, however, is still responsible for bulk water supply; the distribution concessionaires, as consumer-unfriendly as they can be sometimes, cannot distribute water they are not supplied in the first place. The fact that supplies are insufficient is not their fault, but that of successive administrations who do not understand that an increasing number of water users require an increasing amount of water.

What needs to be done, obviously, is that the Epira law needs to be comprehensively overhauled, and new water sources need to be prioritized; in the latter case, that means stuffing the dissent to proceeding with the Kaliwa Dam and Laguna Lake supply projects and getting on with the job already. In the case of the Epira law, things will be a little more complicated, and probably require a multi-year effort.

What the current administration has signaled that it will do instead, much to the disappointment of many who expected a better show of political will, is exactly the same sort of completely ineffectual stopgap measures implemented every year the inevitable utility shortages arise. The country will collectively grin and bear it, soldier on through six to eight weeks of discomfort until the rains return to fill the reservoirs and the power situation stabilizes.

The responsible authorities will observe that "something needs to be done" to prevent the shortages...and next year we'll do it all over again. At this point, we are faced with the dubious likelihood that our best chance of seeing substantial changes to resolve the annual problems will be a full-scale disaster in which significant electricity supply shortages and lack of water become more or less permanent.

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**MULING nakibahagi ang mga tauhan ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) sa isinagawang clean-up drive sa BASECO Beach at sa kahabaan ng Manila Bay bilang bahagi ng kampanyang 'Battle for Manila Bay' ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources alinsunod sa Mandamus Order ng Supreme Court at direktang kautusan ni Pangulong Digong Duterte. ANG NWRB ay nasa ilalim ng DENR.**

Nakasama ng NWRB



## NWRB LUMAHOK SA MANILA BAY CLEAN-UP

ang mga tauhan ng Land Management Bureau sa pangunguna ni DENR undersecretary for priority programs and field operations - Luzon Atty. Juan Miguel Cuna na siya ring Manila Bay Task Force Ground Commander.

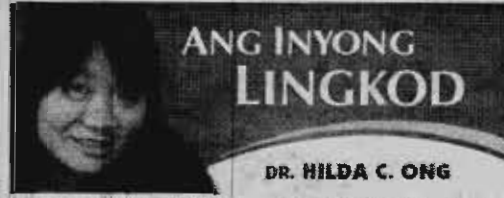
Matapos isara at linisin ang buong Boracay island noong taong 2018 hanggang 2019, sunod na ipinalilinis ni Pangulong Duterte ang Manila Bay na isang mahalagang pook pangkasaysayan dahil sa mga naganap na digmaan dito noong 1898 at 1945 maliban pa sa Manila-Acapulco Galleon Trade noong 1565 hanggang taong 1815.

Naglaan ang DENR ng halagang Php 42.95 Billion para sa tatlong taong rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay na may lawak na 1,994 km<sup>2</sup> at coastline na 190 km. Matapos ang isang taon, sa ulat ni DENR secretary Roy Cimatu, bumubuti na ang kalagayan ng look. Sunod na tututukan ng inter-agency MBTF ang paglilipat sa 44,124 informal settlers families (ISFs) na naninirahan sa paligid ng Manila Bay katulad ng Ila ng bahagi ng BASECO at Parola, Happy Land, Aroma at Helping Complex sa Vitas, Tondo, at iyong mga nasa tributary esteros.

Hanggang sa kasalukuyan malaking volume pa rin ang nahahakot na basura sa tuwing magsasagawa ng paglilinis.

-ooOoo-  
**'PREVENTIVE CARE' ISUSULONG NG PHILHEALTH ALINSUNOD SA UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE**

Para palakasin ang preventive care services alinsunod sa Republic Act No. 11223 o ang Universal Health



## ANG INYONG LINGKOD

DR. HILDA C. ONG

Care for All Filipinos, sisimulan ngayong March 2020 ng Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHILHEALTH) ang pagpapatala sa mga primary health care institutions katulad ng health centers, rural health unit at mga primary clinics.

Nakatakda na kasing simulan sa 2nd quarter ng taong kasalukuyan ang programang Konsultasyong Sulit at Tama (KONSULTA) kung saan puwedeng magpa-konsulta ang ating mga kababayan para malaman nila ang kanilang kondisyong medikal bago pa man ito lumala.

Ipagkaloob ng libre ang 17 laboratory procedures kabilang ang CBC with platelet count, urinalysis, fecalysis, sputum microscopy, fecal occult blood, Pap smear, Lipid profile, fasting bloodsugar, oral glucose tolerance test, ECG, chest X-ray at creatine. Isasama rin ang digital rectal at breast examinations sa kababaehan.

Magkaloob din ng

mga medisina para sa anti-microbial, fluid and electrolytes, anti-asthma, anti-pyretics, anti-dyslipidemia, anti-diabetic at anti-hypertensive drugs.

Sa KONSULTA, siguraduhin ng PHILHEALTH at ng Duterte administration na wala ng Pilipino pa ang mamamata sa kanayunan na hindi natitingnan ng isang doktor o nabibigyang lunas man lamang ang kanyang karam-daman.

Ibig sabihin nito, kailangan muna nating sumailalim sa KONSULTA para sa ating mga nararamdaman at tsaka pa lamang tayo papayagan na sumailalim sa mga espesyalista o higher hospitalization kapag na-check-up muna ng mga centers at RHUs.

Kaya panawagan ng PHILHEALTH sa mga local chief executives agapayan ang mga residente sa pagpapalista at magpakalat ng tamang impormasyon lamang.



# Sangley pivot rides on global success stories

**THE development of Sangley Point International Airport in Cavite to relieve the pressure on the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) is inspired by successful experiences of other countries that resorted to reclamation for the expansion of their respective international gateways to handle increasing air traffic.**

SPIA development is a huge undertaking that would require reclamation of at least 1,400 hectares of land off Manila Bay.

During the inauguration of the SPIA development project last February 15, 2020, President Rodrigo Duterte stressed he would not allow massive reclamation in Manila Bay initiated by the private sector but those connected with government projects may be allowed to proceed.

"I will only allow maybe plans of whatever reclamation if it's in connection with the government projects," Duterte said. According to reports, the Provincial Government of Cavite had awarded the initial phase of the Sangley Point International Airport (SPIA) project to the consortium of state-run China Communications Construction Co. Ltd. (CCCC) and MacroAsia Corp. of taipan Lucio Tan.

Under the joint venture between the Cavite government and the private sector, the government will reclaim the land and lease it to the winning bidder while the private partner will build the airport and facilities.

Many of the world's biggest and busiest airports like Singapore's Changi Airport Singapore, which was voted as the World's Best Airport 2019 by international air travelers for the seventh consecutive year, were constructed on reclaimed land.

About 870 hectares of land reclaimed were from the sea off the eastern tip of Singapore to accommodate the Changi Airport.

As of December 2019, Changi Airport is serving more than 100 airlines flying to 380 destinations in around 100 countries and territories worldwide. Each week, around 7,400 flights arrive or depart at the airport.

Likewise, the construction of Hong Kong International Airport, located on the Chek Lap Kok Island in the western waters of the territory, required the reclamation of 1,248 hectares of land. The San Francisco International Airport, as well as the Kansai International Airport and the Tokyo International Airport in Japan, also involved reclamation to expand their operational capacity.

Aside from reclamation activities directly related to the SPIA development, the Cavite provincial government earlier stressed that additional reclamation is necessary.

"In fact, the Sangley Point has been shown to be the most feasible area for the airport-seaport complex with enabling reclamation component. With this, it is necessary for Cavite to provide large parcels of land to accommodate the envisioned developmental growth," the provincial government said in its application for Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) for the proposed, 1,331-hectare Cavite Reclamation Project (CRP).

Bacoor City, also in Cavite, has likewise proposed a 420-hectare reclamation project that could provide the needed additional space and features congruent with the SPIA development.

Bacoor is strategically-located being less than 30 kilometers away from Sangley and just around 20 kilometers away from NAIA and would provide an ideal location for the planned road connectors to both airports.

With mixed use development that includes residential, commercial, hotel and recreation, tourism, as well as a Science Park, the Bacoor reclamation projects would be able

to accommodate a large portion of the foreign arrivals at SPIA.

In addition, the Bacoor reclamation projects are also meant to attract investments and new businesses, both foreign and local, whose operations would involve shipment of goods and travel of personnel utilizing either SPIA or the NAIA.

Bacoor City leaders believe the proposed reclamation project would propel the city's rise as a new growth center adjacent to Metro Manila, generate at least 700,000 new jobs for its residents and those in nearby areas and enable the city government to improve the delivery of basic services for its people.

The reclamation project was pushed to provide additional land space necessary for new developments and accommodate the projected growth of the city's population of around 600,000 that is expected to double by 2025. As of today, at least 73 percent of the city's land area is devoted to residential use.

Bacoor leaders said the project will also hasten the Manila Bay clean up drive in compliance with the 2008 mandamus of the Supreme Court with the in-city relocation of ISFs who are at risk in coastal areas. ISFs will be relocated at "Ciudad Kaunlaran in Molino II, while affected families of fishermen will be resettled at the "Fisherman's Village" in Brgy. Alima.

The Bacoor city government also cited the studies conducted by leading international experts that show the project poses no significant adverse environmental impact on Manila Bay and the adjacent areas.

Incorporating deep water channels connecting to Manila Bay, the reclamation project is also intended to complement the anti-flood projects of the government through the Department of Public Works and Highways to mitigate the perennial flooding in the city that is identified as a catch basin of Cavite.



## Reclamation susi sa magarang Sangley Airport

MATAGUMPAY na karanasan ng ibang mga bansa gamit ang reclamation ang modelo ng nakakasang Sangley Point International Airport (SPIA) na inasahang solusyon sa pagkakabuhol-buhol ng mga flight sa Ninoy Aquino International Airport dahil sa dumaraming pasahero at biyahe ng mga eroplano.

Aabot sa 1,400 ektarya ng lupa ang kailangang idagdag sa Sangley Point sa pamamagitan ng reclamation para maitayo ang kabuuan ng SPIA.

Nang nilunsad ang SPIA noong Pebrero 15, 2020, sinabi ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na hindi niya papayagan ang malakihang reclamation sa Manila Bay ng pribadong sektor maliban na lamang kung konektado ito sa proyekto ng gobyerno.

"I will only allow maybe plans of whatever reclamation if it's in connection with government projects," sabi ng Pangulo.

Ayon sa ulat, ang kontrata para sa unang bahagi ng SPIA ay nasungkit ng consortium na binubuo ng China Communica-

tions Construction Co. Ltd. (CCCC) at Macro Asia Corp. ng bilyonaryong si Lucio Tan.

Sa ilalim ng joint venture agreement ng Cavite Provincial Government at ng pribadong sektor, ang gobyerno ang magsasagawa ng reclamation samantalang ang huli ang magtatayo ng airport at iba pang mga pasilidad.

Marami sa mga pinakamalaking airport sa mundo, tulad ng Changi Airport sa Singapore, na muling napili nitong 2019 sa ikapitong sunod na taon bilang World's Best Airport, ay tinayo sa reclaimed land.

Pero hindi lamang ang reclamation na direktang gagamitin ng SPIA ang kinakailangan, ayon sa Cavite Provincial Government.

"Kinakailangan din na maglaan ang Cavite ng malawak na kalupaan para sa kasabay na kaunlaran," ayon sa application ng probinsya para sa Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) ng isinusulong nitong 1,331 hectare Cavite Reclamation Project (CRP).



## Bacoor reclamation likened to Denmark project

DENMARK'S ambitious project to create a floating "Silicon Valley" off the coast of Copenhagen which is expected to attract as many as 380 companies in the biotech, pharmaceutical and life sciences sector and create as many as 12,000 new jobs for the Danish people, has a counterpart here in the Philippines.

Announced last year, the Holmene project involves massive land-reclamation that would see the creation of nine new islands 10 kilometers south of Copenhagen, adding 3.1 million square meters of new land and 17 kilometers of new coastline in the area.

Bacoor City leaders view their

proposed reclamation project as the local version of Denmark's program, citing many similarities in terms of economic benefits and green features between Holmene and their own development plan.

Bacoor is seeking to reposition itself as a new growth center, comparable to the existing central business districts in the National Capital Region.

"The City of Bacoor is known to be the gateway and a bedroom community of Metro Manila. This proposed project aims to create a unique identity for Bacoor with well-planned, integrated and mixed-use development

characteristics," Bacoor said in its documents.

"It will also address some of the city's need for extra residential and commercial land, as well as provide much needed community, high quality landscape and public open space to the people of Bacoor," they added.

They noted that almost 73 percent of Bacoor's total land area, estimated at 4,511 hectares, is already devoted to residential use. On the other hand, the city's agri-fishery area has shrunk to only 6.1 percent of Bacoor's total land area amid creeping urbanization and development of new subdivisions.





# Green groups urge gov't to address PH air quality

By Steph Llarena

**O**UR country's polluted air will only worsen if not addressed immediately, according to environmental groups.

Environmental, science, and health groups last week raised the alarm following recent reports on the poor air quality in the Philippines; calling on the government to address the problem before it gets worse.

The 2019 Air Visual Report revealed that air quality in the Philippines contains PM 2.5 (particulate matter is less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter) pollution levels, which "significantly exceed" the safety limits prescribed by the World Health Organization.

The said pollutant can come from various sources, especially combustion of fuels. Because of its small size, it can impair lung function and is known to cause respiratory illnesses, heart disease, and premature death.

In addition, the report places us in the 58<sup>th</sup> spot out of 98 countries with locations from where air quality data were collected.

Greenpeace Philippines, Clean Air Asia, Center for Energy, Ecology and Development (CEED), Health Care Without Harm, the Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PM CJ), and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Philippines emphasize that while available Air Visual data did not place the Philippines as among the countries with the worst air quality, the data nevertheless show that the country still has very polluted air.

Year-on-year data show that the country's air quality is getting worse. Average PM2.5 pollution levels in Air Visual sites increased from 14.6 µg/m<sup>3</sup> (micrograms per cubic meter) in 2018 to 17.6 µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2019. The safety limit set by WHO is 10 µg/m<sup>3</sup>.

While useful, the groups 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 harmful health risks.

"This report is helpful in as much as it reveals the levels of one dangerous air pollutant, PM2.5, in the country.

PM2.5 is a very dangerous air pollutant, but so are others like PM10, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, carbon dioxide, etc., that are not covered by the report," explained Paeng Lopez, health energy initiative campaigner at Health Care Without Harm.

Lopez added the report underscores the need to upgrade "our obsolete air quality standards, as well as the fundamental duty of the government to make information on air pollution available and easily accessible to the general public."

"It fails to present a whole-of-nation situation on the air quality of the country," seconded Ian Rivera, national coordinator of PM CJ.

Rivera continued, "This might be misleading for a country that the report puts in a relatively high rank compared to others, but the instrumentation and methodology do not really indicate the real situation of what is happening on the ground, particularly in areas around coal-fired power plants."

The groups are calling for 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 small snapshot of the threat of PM 2.5 air pollution.



THE: Green groups urge gov't to address PH air quality PAGE 2/2

In a disclaimer published on its website, Air Visual said air quality data were collected from consumer-grade air quality sensors, however, "while readings have been validated against high-grade air quality monitoring stations in multiple locations, reliance on consumer-grade sensors entails a higher degree of measurement error."

"Greenpeace understands the limitation that the rankings are subject to measurement error and so they are indicative, not absolute," it added.

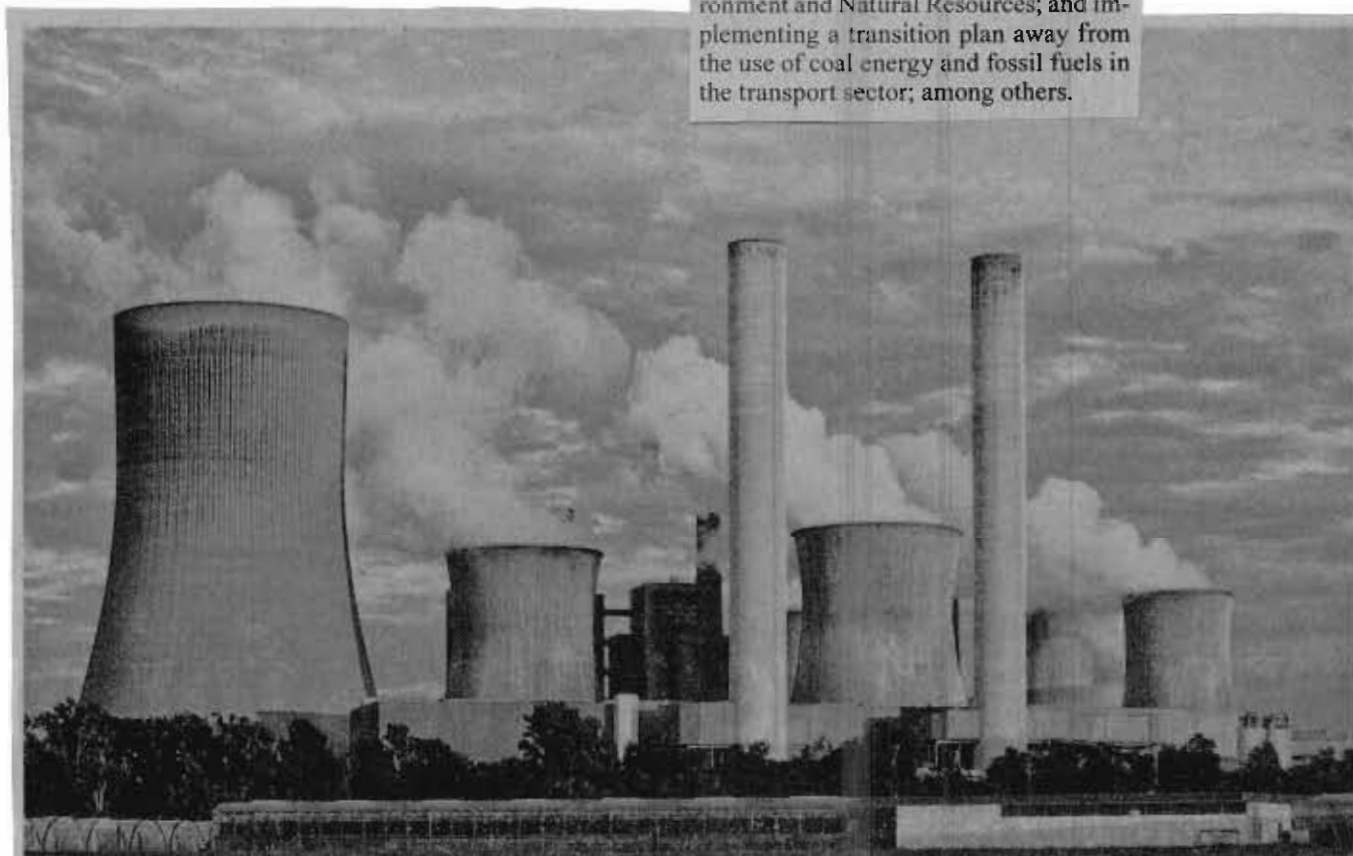
To be effective, the groups assert the government should monitor places close to main sources of air pollution such as coal-fired power plants and high traffic areas of motorized vehicles.

"The Philippine government should see the data as an impetus to overhaul air quality monitoring systems in the country, as well as to transition away from highly polluting facilities such as coal plants," said Greenpeace Philippines campaigner Khevin Yu.

The groups have also called on the government to implement measures that will address the impacts of air pollution, such as declaring air pollution as a national issue as well as enhance transparency and expedite the review and update of the air pollution standards under the Republic Act 8749 or the Clean Air Act of 1999.

"With the Philippine Clean Air Act and the standards contained therein being more than 20 years old, reports such as that of Air Visual should instead bolster the urgent need to improve our air quality monitoring systems, update our air quality standards, and ensure that these are properly implemented," said Gia Ibay, climate and energy program head of WWF Philippines.

Other measures that will help address the issue, according to the environmental groups, include making air pollution monitoring devices mandatory in all cities, particularly in heavy pollution industries; allocating more funds and manpower to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources; and implementing a transition plan away from the use of coal energy and fossil fuels in the transport sector; among others.



**POLLUTION IN THE AIR.** Environmental, science, and health groups cite the need for efficient air monitoring system in the Philippines to determine the real status of the air quality in the country.



The groups assert the government should monitor places close to main sources of air pollution such as coal-fired power plants and high traffic areas.



# Debunking the myth that natural gas is clean

**A**n avid fan of the Discovery Channel show Mythbusters, I also personally take it upon myself to challenge certain preconceived notions, especially when it comes to matters of science.

Because I am also a fan of Sherlock Holmes, I always do my own sleuthing work when it comes to business, replicating much of what the Old London detective did.

In terms of industry, I am particularly fascinated with the energy sector and the power industry, because they are a key in driving the country's economy and infrastructure.

Just before the end of last week, the public statement of Alyansa ng mga Grupong Haligi ng Agham at Teknolohiya para sa Mamayan (AGHAM) debunking the myth of natural gas as clean caught my attention. It was quite an eye-opener for me and offered a new perspective on gas.

At first I was curious, but after I checked on their facts, and did my own research, I could attest to their claims.

AGHAM President Angelo B. Palmones reacted to a Fitch Solutions Macro Research study flagging the country's lack of focus on clean energy development in its long-term energy plan, particularly in the development of liquefied natural gas (LNG). Agham went on to say that LNG is not clean, and not a bridge to cleaner energy.

I found this especially interesting because of the recent strategies of energy companies such as First Gen and First Gas to sustain and even add to the gas portfolio of the Philippine energy mix. With Agham debunking the myth that natural gas is clean, these gas-centric generation companies must rethink and reevaluate their strategy.

It is evident that the Philippines should not invest too much in natural gas because, unknown to many, this is also harmful to the environment.

I was amused by Agham's simple analogy describing natural gas, or methane gas as 'CO2 on steroids'. Catchy, but it makes perfect sense. Likening the two was a metaphorical jackpot.

Studies show that natural gas, or methane gas, is a fossil fuel like coal and oil and may produce the same amount or even higher Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions than other fossil fuels.

All methane-based gas emits carbon dioxide (CO2) when it is combusted. Methane leakage throughout the entire gas supply chain creates additional climate impacts.

AGHAM said that "contrary to popular belief, natural or methane gas is not as clean as it has been made out to be. The Philippines' power industry has underestimated methane emissions and it is absolutely vital that we should look at the full-life cycle of natural gas and not just at the point of combustion."

"From drilling, fracking, transportation, storage all the way to the point that the energy reaches the consumers, there is already a lot of methane leakage occurring, both unintentional or fugitive, and intentional, referred to as venting. These leaks are hazardous to the environment," the group added.

Personally, I do believe that the Philippines should work on pursuing cleaner energy sources, but it is the responsible thing to do and very much crucial task to look in the right directions.

There is no escaping due diligence and hard work. More research

must be done because the science behind it all is showing that LNG or methane gas may not be the best option.

There may be a better, greener, more efficient and more sustainable answer to the challenges of transitioning to a genuinely clean energy future.

Palmones is spot on in suggesting that it is crucial to conduct a deeper analysis of the data at hand. Studies show that an in-depth examination on the full impact of natural gas, it can be concluded that it is not substantially better for the climate than coal. In fact, under some circumstances, it may even be worse.

LNG is just as harmful to the environment as other fossil fuels. Obviously, it is not a better alternative for renewable energy.

Here's another issue that must be given closer study: All contracts with LNG power plants practice the take-or-pay provision, which means that even if the power plant does not produce electricity, consumers are forced to pay for the gas supply. We come out as the losers in this equation.

That is bad news for consumers. In the past, it has unfortunately led to billions of pesos in payment for undelivered power which is in turn passed on to consumers as additional cost. This is another reason Agham is hesitant to fully endorse natural gas, as this may lead to higher power costs.

There is a need for the country to always keep the Paris Agreement



## OPINION AND OPTION

ELINANDO B. CINCO

in mind. It is our best guide to ensure we stay the course. If we remain stubborn and continue to push for gas, we will be breaking the carbon budget, and this will be inconsistent with the climate goals set before us.

In conclusion, before more gas power

plants are built in the Philippines, chaining us to emissions for years ahead, more in-depth studies must be conducted by the government to assess the scientific impact of LNG on Mother Earth. Then maybe we can achieve true sustainability.



## Manila backs Clean Air Asia 'Blue Skies' tack

THE Manila City Government has expressed support to an environment organization's plan for clean air in the city of Manila.

Representatives who attended the activity last Feb. 27 at the Division of City Schools, Manila were from the city's Department of Public Services, Department of Engineering and Public Works, Manila Disaster Risk and Reduction Management Office, Manila Public Information Office and representatives from the City Council.

During the seminar, several concerns relating to the city's air quality and the effects of air pollution were discussed. Activities were also held to further analyze the capital's current air quality situation and draft a Clean Air Action Plan.

The city government partnered with Clean Air Asia to utilize cost-effective strategies to control and reduce emissions in a specified area thus protecting human health and the environment, said a statement from the Manila Public Information Office.

Clean Air Asia is an international non-governmental organization that leads the regional mission for better air quality and healthier, more livable cities in Asia.

"We aim to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in 1000+ cities in Asia through policies and programs that cover air quality, transport and industrial emissions and energy use," said Clean Air Asia in a statement.

**Willie Casas**



## Semirara's profit declined by 20% to ₱9.6b in 2019

By Alena Mae S. Flores

SEMI RARA Mining and Power Corp. said Monday consolidated total comprehensive income declined 20 percent to ₱9.6 billion in 2019 from ₱12.1 billion in 2018.

SMPC disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange unit Sem-Calaca Power Corp. posted a loss last year while the coal business suffered a decline in income.

SMPC's coal business reported a 23-percent decline in core profit to ₱7.4 billion last year from ₱9.7 billion in 2018.

SCPC registered a loss of ₱758 million from a profit of ₱1.2 billion in 2018.

Meanwhile, Southwest Luzon Power Generation Corp. recorded a core profit of ₱2.8 billion, up 182 percent from ₱1 billion in 2018.

"Net of eliminations, coal, SCPC and SLPGC contributed ₱6.2 billion, ₱58.9 million and ₱3.5 billion, respectively, in 2019," SMPC said.

SMPC's coal production reached 15.2 million metric tons last year, 17 percent up against 12.9 million MT from the previous year.

"The record high production is a combination of higher capacities and good weather condition in the current year," the company said.

SMPC's coal sales reached 15.6 million MT, up 35 percent from 11.6 million MT a year ago.

The company sold 34 percent of the coal volume in the domestic market and 66 percent to the foreign markets.

"The decline in domestic sales was primarily triggered by the low off-take of own power units (Unit 1 and 2 of Sem-Calaca Power Corporation) because of the life extension program," SMPC said.

SMPC added depressed coal prices brought down the average selling price per MT by 22 percent but the negative impact of the decline in coal prices was mitigated by the record high shipment.

Gross coal revenue increased five percent to ₱32.3 billion from ₱30.7 billion a year ago.

SMPC's coal segment reported a 23-percent decline in core profits at ₱7.4 billion last year from ₱9.7 billion in 2018.



## Semirara Mining nets P9.6B

SEMIRARA Mining and Power Corp. (SMPC) posted a 20 percent decline in its consolidated net income last year to P9.6 billion, from P12.1 billion the prior year, due to lower contribution from one of its power generation projects and low coal prices.

Its SEM-Calaca Power Corp.'s (SCPC) gross generation was down by 54 percent to 1,519 gigawatt hours (GWH) last year from 3,281 GWH in 2018.

SMPC said the lower power generation was caused by the life extension program that was implemented for units 1 and 2 of SCPC. Unit 1 was shut down on December 2018 and was back online on September 2019, while unit 2 was shut down on October 2019 to give way for its life extension program.

Southwest Luzon Power Generation Corp., the company's other power generation segment, recorded a 51 percent increase in gross generation to 2,070 GWH in 2019 from 1,368 GWH

the year before.

The power plant, which sold most of its generation to the spot market, also benefitted from higher spot prices last year.

SMPC's income drop was cushioned by the record high production and shipments in the coal mining segment.

Coal production was up by 17 percent at 15.2 million metric tons (MT) from 12.9 million MT in 2018, due to a combination of higher capacities and good weather condition. Sales also posted a record high shipment of 15.6 million MT, surging 35 percent from the previous 11.6 million MT.

However, SMPC's coal segment posted a 23 percent decline in core profits to P7.4 billion from P9.7 billion because of the 22 percent slump in average coal prices.

SMPC is the only vertically-integrated power producer in the country that mines its own fuel source, allowing it to generate affordable baseload power.



STRATEGIC  
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## UNTV CUP FINALS

# DENR dominates AFP in Game 1 rout

Department of Environment and Natural Resources found an opportunity to strike early and wasted no time clobbering injury-hit defending champion Armed Forces of the Philippines 90-73 in Game 1 of their best-of-three title series in the 8th UNTV Cup over the weekend at Paco Arena, Manila.

Without top players Wilfredo Casulla and Jeffrey Quiambao and veteran playmaker Eugene Tan playing in pain, the AFP Cavaliers proved to be easy prey as the DENR Warriors used

the occasion to score almost at will in getting back at their elimination round tormentor.

The Warriors moved on the cusp of winning the title on their first try in the event organized by UNTV President and CEO Dr. Daniel Razon where the charity of the winning team gets a tax-free P4 million prize.

DENR defended tightly and rotated the ball well in posting 50 percent shooting from the field, making 31 of 62 tries with five players finishing in double digits.



## DENR Warriors clobber injury-hit Cavs in UNTV Cup finals' Game 1

DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources struck early and clobbered injury-hit defending champion Armed Forces of the Philippines, 90-73, in Game 1 of their best-of-three title series in the 8th UNTV Cup held over the weekend at Paco Arena, Manila.

Without top players Wilfredo Casulla and Jeffrey Quiambao and veteran playmaker Eugene Tan playing in pain, the AFP Cavaliers proved to be an easy prey as the DENR Warriors used the occasion to score almost at will in getting back at their elimination-round encounter.

More than that, the Warriors moved on the cusp of winning the title on their first try in the event organized by UNTV President and CEO Dr. Daniel Razon for public servants where the charity of the winning team gets a tax-free P4 million prize.

The Warriors can make their chosen charity very happy if they can complete a series sweep on Monday where the matches, including the newly-introduced 3x3, will be played at the Smart Araneta Coliseum.

The Cavaliers, however, can't use the injuries to key players as an excuse for their defeat—only their second in 12 games.

DENR defended tightly and rotated the ball so well that it posted an impressive 50 percent shooting from the field, making 31 of 62 tries with five players finishing in double digits.

Meantime, National Housing Authority, getting big game from Alvin Vitug, clinched third place by beating Judiciary, 74-67, a victory that made its own charity P1 million richer.

Advancing to the semis in the 3x3 event are

PhilHealth, SSS Kabalikat, Ombudsman and PITC.

Ralph Lansang once again led DENR's well balanced attack with 20 points apart from grabbing 9 boards while Ryan Abanes was a big revelation with 14 points.

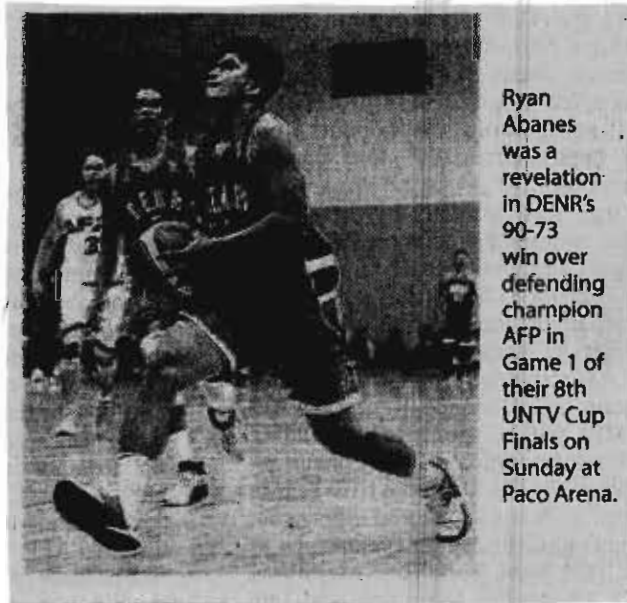
Ed Rivera, a hot candidate for the MVP plum, added 15 points aside from providing the intangibles while Desederio Ayson and Melvin Bangal contributed 14 and 13 points, respectively.

The scores:

DENR 90 – Lansang 20, Rivera 15, Abanes 14, Ayson 14, Bangal 13, Atablanca 4, Gamboa 4, Parreño 3, Garcia 3, Mamac 0, Calungcagin 0.

AFP 73 – Almerol 19, Lumongsod 10, Cordero 13, Rosopa 9, Tan 8, Bautista 7, Sergio 5, Pascual 4, Zuniga 0, Araneta 0.

Quarters: 28-17, 43-34, 65-54, 90-73.



Ryan Abanes was a revelation in DENR's 90-73 win over defending champion AFP in Game 1 of their 8th UNTV Cup Finals on Sunday at Paco Arena.





## DENR rips AFP in Game 1

DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources struck early and went on to whip injury-hit defending champion Armed Forces of the Philippines, scoring a rousing 90-73 victory in Game 1 of their best-of-three title series in the 8th UNTV Cup over the weekend at Paco Arena, Manila.

Without top players Wilfredo Casulla and Jeffrey Quiambao and veteran playmaker Eugene Tan playing in pain, the AFP Cavaliers proved to be an easy prey against the DENR Warriors, who scored almost at will to get back at their

elimination round tormentor.

More than that, the Warriors moved on the cusp of winning the title on their first try in the event organized by UNTV President and CEO Dr. Daniel Razon for public servants where the chosen charity of the winning team gets a tax-free P4 million prize.

The Warriors can make their chosen charity very happy if they can complete a series sweep next Monday as the finals and the newly-introduced 3x3 tournament shift to the Smart Araneta Coliseum.



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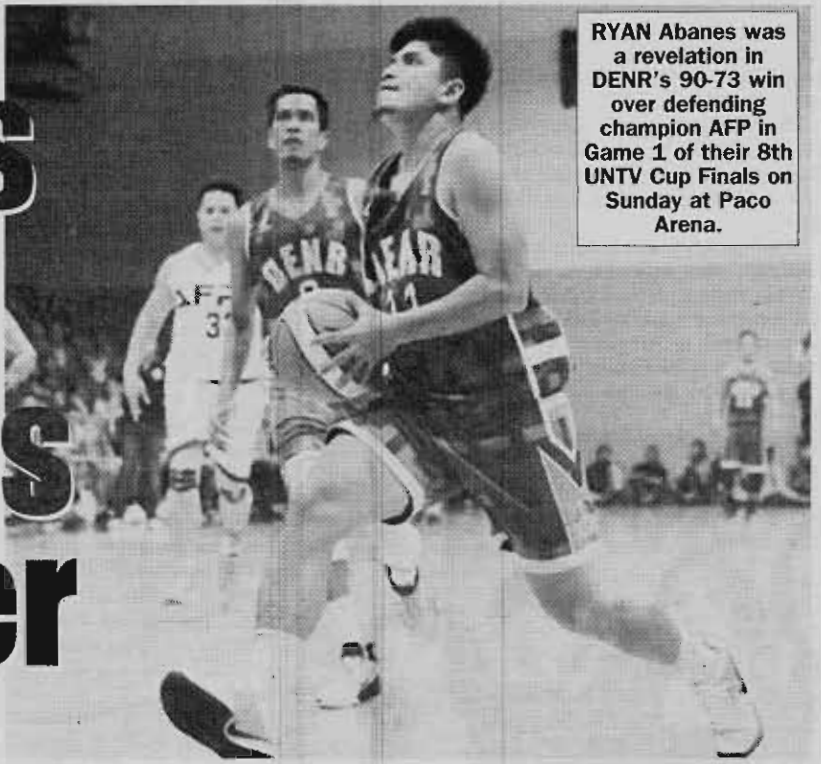
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UNTV title duel

# Warriors pound Cavaliers in opener



**RYAN Abanes** was a revelation in DENR's 90-73 win over defending champion AFP in Game 1 of their 8th UNTV Cup Finals on Sunday at Paco Arena.

DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) found an opportunity to strike early and wasted no time to clobber the injury-hit defending champion Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), 90-73, in Game 1 of their best-of-three title series in the 8th UNTV Cup held over the weekend at Paco Arena, Manila.

Without top players Wilfredo Casulla and Jeffrey Quiambao and veteran playmaker Eugene Tan playing in pain, the AFP Cavaliers proved to be an easy prey as the DENR Warriors used the occa-

sion to score almost at will in getting back at their elimination encounter.

More than that, the Warriors moved on the cusp of winning the title on their first try in the event organized by UNTV President and CEO Dr. Daniel Razon for public servants where the charity of the winning team gets a tax-free P4 million prize.

The Warriors can make their chosen charity very happy if they can complete a series sweep on Monday where the matches, including the newly-introduced 3x3, will be played at the Smart Araneta Col-

iseum.

The Cavaliers, however, can't use the injuries to key players as an excuse for their defeat - only their second in 12 games.

DENR defended tightly and rotated the ball so well that it posted an impressive 50 percent shooting from the field, making 31 of 62 tries with five players finishing in double digits.

Meantime, National Housing Authority, getting big game from Alvin Vitug, clinched third place by beating Judiciary, 74-

67, a victory that made its own charity P1 million richer.

Advancing to the semis in the 3x3 event are PhilHealth, SSS Kabalikat, Ombudsman and PITC.

Ralph Lansang once again led DENR's well-balanced attack with 20 points apart from grabbing 9 boards while Ryan Abanes was a big revelation with 14 points.

Ed Rivera, a hot candidate for the MVP plum, added 15 points aside from providing the intangibles

while Desederio Ayson and Melvin Bangal contributed 14 and 13 points, respectively.

The scores:

DENR (90) - Lansang 20, Rivera 15, Abanes 14, Ayson 14, Bangal 13, Atablanc 4, Gamboa 4, Parreño 3, Garcia 3, Mamac 0, Calungcagin 0.

AFP (73) - Almerol 19, Lumongsod 10, Cordero 13, Rosopa 9, Ian 8, Bautista 7, Sergio 5, Pascual 4, Zuniga 0, Araneta 0.

Quarterscores: 28-17, 43-34, 65-54, 90-73.



# Warriors close in on UNTV crown

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in the event organized by UNTV President and CEO Dr. Daniel Razon for public servants where the charity of the winning team gets a tax-free P4 million prize.

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## Lansang, DENR binulaga ang AFP

Tumabas si Ralph Lansang ng game-high 20 points para bisigin ang bagong saltang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na gulatin ang defending champion Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), 90-73, at makauna sa 8th UNTV Cup 2019-2020 best-of-three finals nitong Linggo sa Paco Arena sa Maynila.

Sinamantala ng DENR Warriors ang pagliban sa AFP Cavaliers nina Wilfredo Casulla, Jeffrey Quiambao at veteran playmaker Eugene Tan upang makalapit sa kampeonato.

Kinumpleto ni Lansang ang makinang niyang araw sa sahog

pang nine boards habang sumukli ng 15 pts. si MVP candidate Ed Rivera, tig-14 markers sina Ryan Abanes at Desederio Ayson, at naka-13 puntos si Melvin Bangal.

Magandang opensiba ang hinalukay ng DENR nang bumutas ng 50 percent shooting sa 31-of-62 shooting from the field para ibigay sa Cavs ang pangalawa pa lang na talo sa buong salang nila sa ligang inorganisa ni UNTV President at CEO Dr. Daniel Razon at may papremyong tax-free P4 milyon sa magkakampeon.

Sinakalan naman ng National Housing Authority ang galing ni Alvin Vitug para ma-

kopo ang third place sa pagpukpok sa Judiciary, 74-67, at makuha ang P1 milyon na ibibigay nila sa charity institution.

Mga umabante naman sa 3x3 event semifinals ang PhilHealth, SSS Kabalikat, Ombudsman at PITC.

### Ang iskor:

**DENR 90** - Lansang 20, Rivera 15, Abanes 14, Ayson 14, Bangal 13, Atablanca 4, Gamboa 4, Parreño 3, Garcia 3, Mamac 0, Calungcagin 0.

**AFP 73** - Almerol 19, Lumongsod 10, Cordero 13, Rosopa 9, Tan 8, Bautista 7, Sergio 5, Pascual 4, Zuniga 0, Araneta 0.

**Quarters:** 28-17, 43-34, 65-54, 90-73. (**Alvan Episcopo**)



TITLE:

KUNG may mga binabantayan mang ahensya ng gobyerno ukol sa katiwalian, dapat kasama rito ang Bureau of Fire Management.

Ito'y sa kabila ng pagkakaroon ng bagong pamunuan ng BFP sa ilalim ni Fire Chief Supt. Jose Embang Jr. na pumalit kay Fire Director Leonard Bañago nitong unang linggo ng Enero 2020.

Hindi tayo nagdududa sa mga pamunuan ng BFP na laging nangangako ng magandang bagay para sa mamamayan.

Alam nating hindi sila perpekto at marami pa ngang mas makapangyarihan sa kanila na kung minsan, dito sila nadidiskaril sa kabila ng kanilang good intentions.

### 332 LGUs WALANG FIRE TRUCK

Inaamin mismo ng BFP na may 332 local government units na walang fire truck.

Ulat ito ni Dir. Bañago nitong nakaraang taon na maaaring dinatnan ni Dir. Embang.

Karamihan umano sa mga walang fire truck ang 96 bayan at lungsod na sakop ng Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

May 26 LGUs naman sa Eastern Visayas, 24 sa Western Visayas, 23 sa Northern Mindanao at 22 sa Zamboanga Peninsula at Ilocos.

Lahat naman ng 16 lungsod at isang bayan sa Metro Manila ay may mga fire truck.

Kailangan umano ng 2,781 fire truck pero kulang umano ito ng 825 para maabot ang 3,606 unit para sa kada 28,000 mamamayan.

Para naman sa Commission on Audit, nakabili na ang BFP ng 621 bagong truck pero kulang pa rin ito ng 436 mula sa dapat na bilang na 1,057 unit.

Kulang na nga ng fire truck, anak ng tokwa, 165 pa ang talagang sira na samantalang nire-repair ang 97.

### OVERPRICING NG FIRE TRUCK

Sa gitna ng kakulangan ng fire truck, heto ang malaking problema: overpricing ng mga fire truck.

Sa paglalahad ng COA, magkaiba ang canvass ng BFP at Department of Interior and Local Government sa presyo.

Para sa BFP, nagkakahalaga ng P12.44 milyon ang 1,500-gallon fire truck at P11.98M ang 1,000 galloner.



## ULTIMATUM

Ni BENNY ANTIPORDA

### BFP FIRE TRUCK OVERPRICED; 332 LGUs NAWALAN

Pero para sa DILG, P7.51M ang 1,500 gallone samantalang P7.24M ang 1,000 galloner.

Presyo ito noong 2011 pero lumalabas na ganito ang kalakaran sa pagpepresyo lalo't inilabas ng COA ang report nitong Enero 2019.

Ang isang dahilan nito ay hindi makabuo umano ang BFP ng sarili nitong matinong Bids and Awards Committee.

Pero malaking dahilan ang labis na kakulangan ng pondo para rito dahil P13.17 bilyon lang ang badyet para sa truck at paggawa ng fire station.

Dapat daw P60.29B ang kabuuang pondo pero dahil maliit ang badyet, 597 fire truck lang ang nabili mula sa kailangang 1,057.

Ang isang tanong ng ating UZI, paano makabili ng maraming fire truck ang BFP kung halos doble ang pagpresyo ng BFP sa fire trucks?

Siguro, isa ito sa dapat na asikasuhin ng bagong BFP chief: ang pagpapatino sa procurement ng fire truck.

### IBA PANG MGA PROBLEMA

Ayon pa rin sa COA, pinairal na ang modernization program ng BFP at kasama rito ang pagpapatayo ng mga fire station at pagkakaroon ng sapat na fire host at iba pa.

Lumalabas na 308 bayan ang walang fire station at kung may fire station naman, wala namang fire truck gaya ng 59 fire stations.

Sa itinayo namang fire stations na 945, 263 lang ang nabuo habang ginagawa pa ang ibang 44 unit.

May ulat ding kulang na kulang ng mga fire hose ang mga bumbero kaya hindi makaabot sa lugar ng sunog ang iba na rumeresponde.

Kalahati naman ng kabuuang pwersa ng BFP ang walang personal protective equipment tulad ng mga helmet and boots, respirator, gas mask, glove at blanket.

Parang kantang koboy na may baril pero walang bala at kawawa ang ating mga bumbero.

### MASAMANG BUNGA

Aminin man o hindi ng mga awtoridad, hindi kaya ng BFP na tugunan ang

mga pangangailangan ng mga mamamayan laban sa sunog dahil sa mga pagkukulang nito sa pondo, kagamitan at tauhan at korapsyon.

Kaya naman, sa nakalipas na taon na may 18,000 sunog sa buong bansa, marami rito ang hindi natugunan mismo ng BFP.

Kung natugunan man, hindi naging sapat ang pwersa nito para apulahin ang sunog.

Nakatugon man din, tapos na ang sunog baggo makarating ang mga bumbero.

Resulta: katakot-takot na pagkitil ng buhay at pagkasira ng ari-arian.

Mabuti na lang, may mga pribadong fire volunteer ang madalas na mas mabilis rumesponde kaysa mga bumbero.

### PARTE NG MAMAMAYAN

Hindi naman mapapasubalian na maraming sunog ang nagaganap mula mismo sa mga mamamayan batay sa rekord ng karamihan sa mga nasusunog ay residential area.

Karaniwang sanhi ng sunog ang overloading sa electrical wires sanhi ng paggamit dito ng sobra-sobrang gamit nang sabay-sabay na hindi kaya ng mga wire gaya sa octopus connection.

Nakalilikha rin ng sunog ang mga itinatapong na buhay na upos ng sigarilyo at bukas na siga sa kusina na ikinasusunog ng mga sinaing.

Dapat na maging maalam naman ang mga mamamayan sa mga sanhi ng sunog at iwasang Inguso na lumala ang sunog dahil sa kainutilan at korapsyon ng mga bumbero.

Sa kabuuan, puno ang kamay ni Dir. Embang at sana maging matagumpay siyang patinuin at palaguin ang BFP upang matugunan nila ang pangangailangan ng mga mamamayan.

oOo

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