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**DENR**

**IN THE NEWS**

**Strategic Communication and Initiative Service**



# Covid-19 spread 'wake-up call' on illicit wildlife trade—Cimatu

**T**HE coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19), which was recently declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO), should serve as a wake-up call to unscrupulous individuals who continue to engage in the illegal wildlife trade.

"The ongoing Covid-19 global outbreak should serve as a stark reminder of the dire consequence for humans of the illegal-wildlife trade, which has been pushing endangered and vulnerable wildlife species toward extinction," Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu said in a news statement.

The DENR recently led the local celebration of World Wildlife Day (WWD) with a renewed call to end illegal wildlife crime amid the spread of Covid-19.

The virus is believed to have originated from wild animals sold at a wet market in Wuhan City, China.

The first cases of infection were traced to the Wuhan market that was reportedly selling meat from a wide range of exotic wild animals, including snakes, bats and pangolins.

Since the outbreak, the Chinese government has banned the trade of wildlife, suspecting that exotic animals infected humans, a move welcomed by wildlife conservation advocates.

Just recently, Chinese researchers claimed they had found a coronavirus in smuggled pangolins that have a 99-percent genetic match to the virus circulating in people.

Environment Undersecretary Ernesto D. Adobo Jr. expressed hope that the findings pointing to pangolin as a "potential" intermediate host for Covid-19 virus would sound the death knell for the commercial trade of the insect-eating mammal and all other wild animals.

"Such findings are very important and the public must be aware of these," Adobo said. "We should stop patronizing and buying wildlife species," he said.

Pangolins, also called scaly anteaters because of their preferred diet, are the most trafficked mammal in the world prized for their meat and scales. There is a total of eight species of pangolins in the world and four of them are found in Asia—Chinese, Sudan, Indian and the country's very

own Philippine pangolins (*Manis culionensis*), which are endemic in Palawan province.

All these pangolin species are listed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, or IUCN, as critically endangered. Other than pangolins, bats are also being suspected as the potential "culprit."

China's reported declaration to impose an immediate and comprehensive ban on the trade and consumption of wild animals will drastically cut the demand for exotic animal meat and other animal by-products.

Environment Assistant Secretary Ricardo Calderon, the concurrent Director of the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) said in an earlier interview that the move will have a big positive impact on the effort to curb illegal-wildlife trade, not only in the Philippines but in the Asean region.

Asean Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) Executive Director Theresa Mundita S. Lim agrees with his observation.

A former DENR-BMB Director herself, Lim said China's move is commendable.

"We commend China for issuing such a policy. The closer interaction between wildlife and humans through unabated wildlife collection, consumption, and trade is already believed to be linked to the increasing occurrence of new and emerging diseases," she said.

The move by China will not only help prevent future global health issues but, in the long run, also allow the populations of endangered species that are in demand for food, medicine, pets and trophy, such as pangolins and elephants, to recover, and continue to deliver the ecosystem services they are meant to provide, she said.

For his part, Calderon said: "It's a good development if they will enforce it because of the study, allegedly, that coronavirus is caused by consumption of exotic animals," he said.

According to Calderon, exotic food, more often than not, are illegally traded.

Both a source and consumer of wild-caught animals, whether they are for food, medicine, or the pet trade, the Philippines continue to struggle to curb the illegal-wildlife

trade, especially of its critically endangered species like the Philippine tamaraw or the Mindoro dwarf buffalo, the Palawan pangolin, fruit and insect bats, marine turtles, whale shark, locally called *butanding*, sharks and stingrays.

The DENR-BMB has been focusing its information, education and communication effort to combat illegal-wildlife trade because many Filipinos still hunt exotic animals, either for food, including their consumption, and medicine, and pet trade.

"We discourage eating wild animals because they are not safe to eat. They are not domesticated animals. They are hosts to many bacteria which can be transferred to humans if not cooked properly," said Calderon.

While he said the Philippines allow trading of wild animals to a certain extent, these are guided by international treaties and agreement, such as CITES, or Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, of which the Philippines is a signatory.

"We allow trading being member of CITES. But others are circumventing the law. No quarantine procedure, no sanitary permit. No meat inspection. No phytosanitary.... This is really unregulated," Calderon lamented.

Worse, he said, it causes the extinction of species and added that illegal hunting also causes habitat destruction. "Instead of increasing number, illegal hunting cause our threatened species to go extinct, and it also destroys habitats," he added.

The Philippine celebration of the World Wildlife Day on March 3 highlighted the government's effort to curb illegal-wildlife trade.

WWD marks the day the landmark Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora was adopted in 1973. This year's theme is "Sustaining all life on Earth."

The annual celebration, which started in 2014 following the declaration by the United Nations General Assembly on December 20, 2013, aims to raise awareness on endangered animal and plant species, and ways to fight wildlife crime. *Jonathan L. Mayuga*



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## DENR padlocks 4 resto, autoshop over wastewater

**FIVE commercial establishments in Pasay City were ordered padlocked after they were found to be discharging untreated wastewater into Manila Bay.**

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and its attached agency Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) effected the closure through a cease and desist order against Zhi-Brothers Restaurant, Ocean Bay Restaurant, Da Rae Jung Korean Restaurant, Song do Won Restaurant and the BHPI Autoworks all located at HK Sun Plaza on Macapagal Boulevard.

DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said the establishments violated Republic Act (RA) 9275 or the Philippine Act of 2004. RA 9275 prohibits discharging or depositing any pollutant to water bodies. It also requires businesses to either put up their own sewage treatment plant (STP) or connect to a wastewater treatment facility authorized by the DENR or LLDA.

They found that the sewer lines of the five establishments were not connected to the STP of HK Sun Plaza. HK Sun Plaza, which is owned by Social Security System Investment Property Department, has built its own STP worth P10 million in compliance with the CDO issued by the LLDA last year for its illegal wastewater discharge.

**Joel dela Torre**



# DENR implements reshuffle, names Cuna new undersecretary for mining

By MADELAINE B. MIRAFLOR

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has appointed a new undersecretary for mining, which came weeks after the major reshuffle among officials of the agency that Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu ordered shortly before 2019 ended.

In a text exchange, Environment Undersecretary Analiza Rebueta-Teh confirmed that she is no longer the DENR's undersecretary for mining concerns and that the job has already been transferred to Environment Undersecretary Juan Miguel Cuna.

Cuna now serves as the DENR's undersecretary for policy, planning and international affairs as well as the supervising undersecretary for Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) and Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB).

Teh, on the other hand, gets keep her old position as the DENR's undersecretary for climate change.

This development came weeks after Cimatu announced a major reshuffle among key executives of the DENR. The decision covered undersecretaries, assistant secretaries, and directors.

However in the special orders issued by Cimatu, Teh supposedly retained her assignment as the

undersecretary for climate change and mining concerns as well as the supervising officer for MGB and EMB, while Cuna would be the undersecretary for field operations for Luzon. He was likewise in charge of keeping an eye on the agency's priority programs.

Cuna's appointment as the supervising officer for MGB came as the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) filed graft charges against him and other DENR personnel for allegedly committing a series of acts leading to the illegal importation of solid wastes from Canada.

As the DENR undersecretary in charge of the mining sector, Cuna has a lot on his plate, from overseeing the on-going mining audit to ensuring that the highly controversial mining sector is being monitored closely and properly.

MGB, the agency tasked to regulate the country's mining sector, is now planning to intensify its monitoring of existing mining permits or contracts to make sure the Philippine government is getting the appropriate, if not higher, revenue share from the extractive industry.

Under its Mineral Resources Enforcement and Regulatory Program, MGB is aiming to increase what the government is getting from mineral resources development.

At the same time, the agency

wants to strengthen the monitoring of mining permits/contracts on the mining companies' compliance with prevailing mining laws, rules and regulations.

This complements MGB Director Wilfredo G. Moncano's "policy direction" for the mining sector for 2020, which called for "strong monitoring and enforcement, people-oriented by providing jobs and benefits to communities, completion of environmental rehabilitation of abandoned mines and mined-out areas, increase in contribution to national income, transformation into a world-class and competitive mining industry and wider implementation of risk resiliency program to support the climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction programs of the government".

In line with this direction of strict monitoring and enforcement, MGB said continuous cleansing of non-moving mining rights and use of modern technology in monitoring mining companies will be pushed.

The only way for MGB now to make sure that the government will get higher revenue share from the mining sector is through effective monitoring and to see to it that all mining companies are paying the right taxes.

This since the government's proposal for higher mining tax is still pending in Congress.

## SteelAsia helps green M. Oriental

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and SteelAsia Foundation Inc. (SAFI) are jointly pursuing a five-year greening program for 23 hectares of forest land in Villanueva, Misamis Oriental.

SAFI is the corporate social responsibility (CSR) arm of SteelAsia Manufacturing Corp., the country's leading steel firm.

With one of its steel mills located in Misamis Oriental, SteelAsia hopes to mitigate the manufacturing plant's impact on the environment through carbon dioxide sequestration by planting and nurturing trees.

"We have always been mindful of our role as stewards of the environment in the communities where we operate. Thus, we employ the latest technologies to ensure the most sustainable ways in operating our manufacturing plants," said SteelAsia chairman and chief executive officer Benjamin Yao.

DENR and SAFI signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) recently to formalize the collaboration for the greening of Villanueva, Misamis Oriental.

During the signing ceremony, DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu urged more private sector participation in the Enhanced National Greening Program (ENGP) which is the flagship reforestation initiative of the government aimed at increasing the country's forest cover. Implemented in 2015, the ENGP seeks to cover the remaining 7.1 million hectares of open, degraded and denuded forests in the country by 2028.

SAFI trustee Leena Go said the ENGP is very much aligned with the company's commitment to environmental sustainability.

"We hope that this new partnership with the DENR will further invigorate our efforts and strengthen



(From left) Forester Aldrich Resma, provincial environment and natural resources officer of Region 10, DENR undersecretary Juan Miguel Cuna, Go, Cimatu, and other SAFI trustees, Tina Yu and Adrian Cristobal Jr.

our commitment to nourish our environment and enhance the communities where we operate," she said.

Established in 2018, SAFI supports the new global agenda on sustainable development of the United Nations Environment Program through the promotion of environmental sustain-

ability as a crucial enabling factor in implementing the UN's sustainability development goals.

Pursuing a holistic approach to its CSR programs, SAFI is focused on four advocacy pillars – environment, education, health, and livelihood for its host communities.



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# Manila Standard

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**GREENING PROGRAM.** The Department of Environment and Natural Resources and SteelAsia Foundation Inc. are jointly pursuing a five-year greening program for 23 hectares of forest land in Villanueva, Misamis Oriental. Signing the memorandum of agreement are (from left) Misamis Oriental provincial environment and natural resources officer Aldrich Resma, Environment Undersecretary Juan Miguel Cuna, SAFI trustee Leena Go, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu and SAFI trustees Tina Yu and Adrian Cristobal Jr.



## Save Masungi, save our wild lands

**O**UR trees are bleeding yet again as metal chains and barbed wires have pierced through the bark and branches of the forests in the southern region of the Sierra Madre. Photographs and videos have spread online about a quarrying firm that unjustly tied these barbed wires and chains around the strict nature reserve and wildlife sanctuary of the Masungi Georeserve, a locally established and globally distinguished nature park in the heart of the longest mountain range in the Philippines.

Despite its teeming biodiversity, life and resources, the Masungi Georeserve has already been forced to the brink of its natural capacity to recover after being extensively mined and logged over the past decades. But conservation efforts have allowed the reforestation of the area within the last 20 years. The once gray barren landscapes are now transformed into lush verdant ridges, where calls of hornbills can be heard again, and sights of colorful kingfishers and playful Philippine macaques surround the dense canopy of trees. Standing within only an hour's drive from the bustling congested center of Metro Manila, this natural georeserve serves as an immersive nature experience for the youth and city dwellers to explore and



### INTO THE WILD

**GAB MEJIA**

be wild again. But it is not just the great trees that grow from the soil or the birds that take shelter within the shade of this georeserve, but the looming threats hidden beneath the shadows of the canopies where greater conflicts rise.

Propaganda and misinformation have risen to taint the names and threaten those who protect this geological and natural frontier of our country — misleading words and judgments against environmentalists and conservation organizations, piercing deeper than the barbed wires and chains in a country already considered deadly for those who fight for nature. And these even though Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu has made such a commendable initiative of forcefully taking down the barbed wires himself and, with the help of the army, strictly enforce environmental laws and convey that such atrocities are not to be taken lightly. The fight to protect Masungi and our last remaining wild lands has just begun. This is just the

first step in the effort to resolve such environmental issues in our nation. It is the lasting commitment and consistent enforcement that must be carried out by those in authority for our trees and forests to fully heal. To have dignity and integrity within themselves from the temptations of powerful and wealthy companies, a disconcerting reality that our leaders must face.

I've already grown disillusioned with our government, growing up with news of corruption and impunity pervading the headlines, more so the companies and industries that have bribed and allowed such exploitative acts to even happen in the first place. It is worse to know and see that the very leaders, the local officials, whom we should have higher expectations of to protect and resolve such environmental and political conflicts in their managed lands and protected areas, are ironically the ones that instigate destruction and exploitation of their own natural resources despite better options already being laid out.

Ecotourism in the Masungi Georeserve has already provided livelihood to local communities by involving indigenous communities of the Dumagat tribe. An inclusive and sustainable enterprise that generates economic value to support peo-

ple, conserve wildlife, protect ancestral domains and boost tourism. A win-win situation in the long run for the different stakeholders, not just those at the winning and privileged end.

And despite promises from the highest environmental officials to close down the quarrying practices in natural reserves like Masungi, there exists an insidious movement from mining companies lobbying for the renewal of their permits to continue to turn our lands into ruin without any concrete efforts and proof that the local community and people would benefit in the long term. For today, in the face of such pervasive environmental warfare within our mountains, only a petition stands asking our President to rally and support the spirit of camaraderie and collaboration to protect Masungi — to hopefully conserve our other natural reserves and strictly enforce environmental laws within our protected areas.

For those wires are not just a physical manifestation of the threat to the people who protect these trees and parks that give us life and refuge, they are a blatant symbol of disrespect and contempt of our laws and our land.

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TITLE:

**STATE OF PUBLIC EMERGENCY**

**NWRB BRINGS BACK  
TO NORMAL RAW WATER  
SUPPLY TO MWC, MAYNILAD**

The flow of raw water from Angat Dam to the treatment plants of Manila Water Co. Inc. (MWC) and Maynilad Water Services Inc. will be back to normal at 46 cubic meters per second (cms) until March 31 in consideration of Metro Manila's supply needs during the coronavirus emergency, according to the National Water Resources Board (NWRB).

Until March 11, the NWRB has maintained allocation of Angat stock for domestic use at 42 cms in an effort to save supply until the hot summer months when water consumption increases.

That will have to be given a lower priority following Malacañang's declaration of a state of emergency as the number of confirmed cases of the disease exploded to 49 in the past few days from just three cases as of February.

"This [normalized water supply allocation] is to ensure the steady water supply for Metro Manila considering the declaration of the state of public health emergency and the importance of water in undertaking the preventive measures against the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)," the agency said

in an advisory.

"The NWRB is assuring the public that water will be sustainably available throughout the whole year," it added. "The public is similarly asked to avoid wastage and to use water responsibly."

NWRB executive director Sevillo David Jr. told the Inquirer the allocation for irrigation purposes remains at 20 cms.

In a separate statement, the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) said it had kick-started cloud seeding operations over the Angat watershed, as part of efforts to replenish supply at the dam.

As of 6 a.m. of Thursday, water level at Angat was pegged at 200.58 meters above sea level (masl), still more than 20 meters above the minimal operating level of 180 masl.

This was 120 centimeters less than the 200.7 masl recorded on the same day of 2019.

The MWSS said it was co-funding with Maynilad Water Services Inc. a total of 26 cloud seeding flights out of the 66 such sorties planned for the Angat watershed during this year's summer months.

—RONNEL W. DOMINGO INQ





# Metro assured of enough water this summer

By RHODINA VILLANUEVA

The National Water Resources Board (NWRB) increased the water allocation from Angat Dam to Metro Manila effective yesterday amid the threat of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

From 42 cubic meters per second, water allocation to concessionaires is now 46 CMS.

"This is to ensure a steady supply for Metro Manila, considering the declaration of the state of public health emergency and the importance of water in undertaking the preventive measures against COVID-19," said NWRB executive director Seville David Jr.

Metro Manila gets 96 percent of its water from Angat Dam in Bulacan.

Since January, the NWRB has maintained water allocation to water concessionaires at 42 CMS despite lower levels recorded in Angat Dam.

As of Thursday morning, water level in Angat stood at 200.58 meters, down by 0.14 meters from what was recorded Wednesday, data from the weather bureau's dam monitoring showed.

Angat dam has a normal high water level of 210 meters.

The NWRB said that though there is enough water supply for the summer months, they reviewed the water allocation and saw the need to increase it as they expect increased water usage due to frequent handwashing and bathing by the public because of the threat of COVID-19.

"We are in full support of the government's campaign of preventing the coronavirus disease from spreading," David said.

"We've been coordinating with our partners like the MWSS (Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System) on the said matter," David added.

The water official said it was a good thing that starting January, they were already able to manage water supply for Metro Manila so that there would be enough for the sum-

mer months until the rainy season sets in.

The NWRB is assuring the public that water will be sustainably available throughout the year. The public is similarly asked to avoid wastage and to use water responsibly.

Sen. Risa Hontiveros had earlier warned the government that the ongoing water service rotation in Metro Manila is putting entire communities at grave risk, denying many Filipinos the ability to protect themselves against the COVID-19 outbreak.

"How can we wash our hands if there is no water?" asked Hontiveros as the number of individuals infected by COVID-19 breached 50 last night.

Hontiveros raised her warning following announcements by water concessionaires Manila Water and Maynilad that they will continue the rotational water service interruptions this month.

Hontiveros said the supply interruptions would have a severely disastrous effect on efforts to contain the fast spread of COVID-19 in the metropolis.

"There is only one thing more important than face masks or alcohol in our fight to prevent the virus and that is running water," Hontiveros said.

"Proper hand washing with soap and running water is the most effective way to kill viruses and avoid getting infected," she said.

Meanwhile, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said the spread of COVID-19 should serve as a wake-up call on the need to stop illegal wildlife trade.

Citing claims by experts on the connection of illegal wildlife trade and its consumption to the disease outbreak, Cimatu said, "The spread of COVID-19 should serve as a stark reminder of the dire consequence for humans of the illegal wildlife trade, which has been pushing endangered and vulnerable wildlife species toward extinction." — **With Louise Maureen Simeon**



# NWRB hikes water allocation for NCR

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA [@jonmayuga](#)

**T**HE National Water Resources Board (NWRB) will increase the water allocation for the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS)—from the current 42 cubic meters per second to 46 cms beginning today, Friday, to ensure a steady supply of water for Metro Manila residents.

Sevillo David, executive director of the NWRB, in a text message, said the move is in light of the declaration of the state of public health emergency and the importance of water in undertaking the preventive measures against the coronavirus disease

2019, or Covid-19.

He also assured the public that there will be adequate water that would last throughout the year.

“The NWRB is assuring that water will be sustainably available throughout the whole year. The pub-

lic is similarly asked to avoid wastage and to use water responsibly,” David said in a text message.

In an earlier interview, David said the water level at Angat as of January failed to reach the 212 meters above sea level mark, which will compel the NWRB to further adjust water allocation if the dry season continues to deprive Angat Dam the much-needed replenishment.

NWRB is working closely with the country’s water bureau, which he said gave an encouraging forecast for rain in the next few months.

Asked if there will be sufficient water considering the increased demand for water during the dry season, he said: “as per our scenarios and Pagasa’s [Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration] climate projection, there’s sufficient supply to address water need for the next months.”

# Raw water allocation from Angat raised

BY JORDEENE B. LAGARE

**R**AW water allocation from Angat Dam, Metro Manila's primary source of water, was increased to 46 cubic meters per second, the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) announced on Thursday.

"NWRB will increase the allocation of MWSS from 42 cms to 46 cms from Angat Dam effective today, March 12," NWRB Executive Director Sevilla David Jr. said in a text message.

"This is to ensure steady water supply for Metro Manila, considering the declaration of the state of public health emergency and the importance of water in undertaking the preventive measures against the coronavirus disease

2019 or Covid-19," he added.

The NWRB is assuring the public that water would be sustainably available throughout the year.

The raw water from Angat Dam is allotted to the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) for domestic water consumption in Metro Manila and adjacent areas, which is then split between Manila Water Co. Inc. and Maynilad Water Services Inc.

In a separate statement, the

MWSS said the agency and Maynilad have started its cloud-seeding operations to arrest the decline in water levels of the Angat, Ipo and La Mesa dams.

The first cloud seeding operations (CSO) were funded by MWSS and Maynilad, in coordination with the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Soils and Water Management (DA-BSWM); Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa); and Philippine Air Force (PAF) as part of the 26 sorties/flights committed by both entities out of the 66 CSO sorties targeted to be deployed at the Angat watershed this summer.

"Early cloud seeding is part of the MWSS and the concessionaires'

summer mitigation program to prevent the water level in Angat from further receding aside from other pressure management, supply augmentation, and network improvement measures currently being implemented," the agency said.

Pagasa has deployed its weather forecasters and installed a mobile weather radar including an all-weather station at Angat Dam to provide optimized cloud observation data in the Bulacan watershed area.

As of Thursday, Angat's water level dropped to 200.58 meters from 200.72 meters but Ipo Dam's water level was slightly up at 100.19 meters from 100.16 meters, based on data from Pagasa.

Both the MWSS and NWRB are appealing to the public to conserve water and avoid wastage.

## Water allocation for MM hiked, rate movements loom

BY VICTOR REYES

THE National Water Resources Board is increasing its water allocation for the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, citing the importance of water in the containing the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

This developed as water concessionaires are implementing mixed rate movements for next month.

In a statement, NWRB said the decision to increase water allocation to MWSS was reached after a consultation with the Technical

Working Group on the Angat Dam operations.

It said the water allocation for MWSS was increased from 42 to 46 cubic meters per second starting yesterday. The allocation will be maintained until March 31.

"This is to ensure the steady water supply for Metro Manila considering the declaration of the state of public health emergency and the importance of water in undertaking the preventive measures against COVID-19," the NWRB said.

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## WATER

The NWRB assured there is enough water supply for Metro Manila for the entire year, though it appealed for responsible use of water.

Meanwhile, Maynilad Water Services Inc. and Manila Water Company Inc. are set to implement mixed water rate adjustments next month due to changes on the foreign currency differential adjustments (FCDA) and other charges.

FCDA is the tariff mechanism granted to utility companies to al-

low it to recover losses or give back gains arising from the fluctuating movements of the peso against other currencies as the concessionaires pays foreign-dominated fees as well as loans to fund projects that will improve service for its customers.

Maynilad will effect an FCDA of -0.21 percent of its 2020 average basic charge of P36.24 per cubic meter (cu. m.) or -P0.08 per cu. m. which will result in an upward adjustment of P0.05 per cu. m. compared to the first quarter

FCDA of -P0.15 per cu. m.

For its customers consuming an average of 10 cu.m. per month or less, the adjustment will translate to an increase of P0.18 in their monthly water bill. Those consuming 20 cu. m. per month will see an upward adjustment of P0.69, while those consuming 30 cu.m. per month will have P1.40 more charge in their monthly bill.

Manila Water customers consuming an average of 10 cu.m. per month or less will see an adjustment that will translate

to a decrease of P1.11 in their monthly water bill. Those consuming 20 cu. m. per month's monthly bill will go down by P2.46, while those consuming 30 cu.m. per month will have P5.02 lower charge in their monthly bill.

The company will implement an FCDA of 1.69 percent of its average basic charge of P28.52 per cu. m. or P0.48 per cu. m. It is a downward adjustment of P0.21 per cu. m. compared to the first quarter FCDA of P0.69 per cu. m. - *With J. Macapagal*



# Manila Water rates down, Maynilad rates up

By LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON

Customers of Manila Water Co. Inc. will get lower bills while consumers of Maynilad Water Services Inc. should brace for additional charges starting next month.

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System-Regulatory Office said the MWSS Board of Trustees has approved the foreign currency differential adjustment (FCDA) for both concessionaires.

MWSS approved Maynilad's increase for the second quarter equivalent to P0.05 per cubic meter, while that of Manila Water's is a decrease of P0.21 per cu.m. of its basic charge.

This means that Manila Water customers who consume up to 10 cu.m. per month will have a decrease of P1.11 while those consuming an average of 20 cu.m. would have a rate cut of P2.46.

Customers using 30 cu.m. would be affected by the downward adjustment of as much as P5.02 per month.

Meanwhile, Maynilad residential customers consuming an average of 10 cu.m. or less every month would have to pay an additional P0.18 per month while those consuming 20 cu.m. would have a P0.69 increase in their water bills.

Those using more than 30 cu.m. would experience an increase of P1.40 per month.

Adjusted rates for both Maynilad and Manila Water will be effective starting April 1.

During the first quarter, the MWSS-RO asked both concessionaires to defer the FCDA implementation at the height of President Duterte's tongue lashing against the water providers.

FCDA is the tariff mechanism granted to utility companies to allow them to recover losses or give back gains arising from the fluctuating movements of the peso against other currencies as the concessionaires pay foreign-dominated fees as well as loans to fund projects that will improve service for their customers.

Gains and losses can arise from the payment of concession loans and foreign currency-denominated debt whose proceeds are used to improve services.

Maynilad is the largest private water concessionaire in the country in terms of customer base. It serves the areas of Caloocan, Pasay, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa, Valenzuela, Navotas, Malabon and certain portions of Manila, Quezon City, Makati and Cavite.

Manila Water, on the other hand, caters to the East Zone that encompasses parts of Makati, Mandaluyong, Pasig, Pateros, San Juan, Taguig, Marikina, most parts of Quezon City, portions of Manila, as well as several towns in Rizal.



TITLE:

# NESTLÉ'S MAY BALIK SA PLASTIK, WELLNESS CAMPUS PROGRAMS WIN ANVIL AWARDS

Two corporate programs of Nestlé Philippines aimed at creating shared value in society won a silver award each during the recent 55th Anvil Awards of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP) which recognizes excellence in public relations.

The winners were *May Balik Sa Plastik* (MBSP), a joint program with the Valenzuela City government to address residual plastic waste in the entire city, and Nestlé Wellness Campus (NWC), a multi-regional nutrition and physical education program for schoolchildren, in partnership with various school divisions of the Department of Education (DepEd).

### **May Balik Sa Plastik**

In January 2019, Nestlé globally laid out its broader vision to achieve a waste-free future.

Within five months, Nestlé Philippines had launched a partnership with Valenzuela City called *May Balik Sa Plastik* to collect and co-process soft plastic wastes, specifically sachets, beverage cartons, and sando bags.

The initiative is the country's first city-wide plastic waste collection program. Communication focused on increasing awareness and encouraging residents' participation. Preparations included meetings with the local government, Public Sanitation and Cleanliness Office, schools, junk shops, and garbage collectors.

Three months after launch, the LGU reported the diversion of a significant portion of the city's residual plastic wastes because of process and behavior change in communities. The

program was a catalyst for the submission of an ordinance mandating residual plastic waste segregation at source.

Through this program, Nestlé Philippines and Valenzuela City demonstrated the value of collaboration and commitment in working

toward a waste-free future. Given the results of MBSP and the lessons learned, Nestlé intends to expand this program to other parts of the country this year.

### **Nestlé Wellness Campus**

Nestlé Wellness Campus is a banner program under the larger global "Nestlé for Healthier Kids" (N4HK) initiative which aims to help 50 million children across the world lead healthier, happier lives by 2030.

From addressing the gap of nutrition knowledge, to integrating and implementing healthier food choices in school cafeterias, the program has successfully brought together teachers, parents and pupils in addressing malnutrition in public elementary schools in the country.

Launched in 2013, the program now covers 71 school divisions within the National Capital Region (NCR), CALABARZON, Bicol, Central Visayas, and Negros.

NWC monitoring prior to its school year 2019-2020 implementation showed that although malnutrition cases in the covered public elementary schools had consistently gone down year-on-year, the numbers fluctuated slightly with some cases returning after the initial drop.

Therefore in 2019-2020, the NWC core team is focusing on ensuring that the malnutrition

cases reversed through the program do not recur. Accordingly, the program has been expanded to target students' parents and enhance their partnership with teachers to curb malnutrition rates and encourage a more holistic and lasting impact.

Meanwhile, after its school year 2018-2019 implementation, there was a 15 percent increase in nutrition knowledge among students in 13,000 schools, with the program having reached over 200,000 teachers, 7.8 million students, and 4.7 million parents in the country.

The Nestlé Wellness Campus results for the school year 2018-19 are a big win for Nestlé Philippines, and a major step in its journey as the leading nutrition, health and wellness company to not only provide consumers with healthier options for meals, but also to ensure their health and wellness through strategic partnerships and programs.

"Creating shared value with our different stakeholders is fundamental to how we do business at Nestlé. Whether it is *May Balik Sa Plastik* or Nestlé Wellness Campus, we believe that our initiatives and our products should make a positive difference to society, consistent with the Nestlé purpose of enhancing quality of life and contributing to a healthier future," said Nestlé Philippines Chairman and CEO Kais Marzouki.



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FILE: Nestlé's may balik sa plastik, wellness- - - PAGE 1/ 2/2



May Balik Sa Plastik: Nestlé Philippines and Valenzuela City LGU representatives with residual soft plastic wastes at a collection run.



Nestlé Philippines Chairman and CEO Kais Marzouki with schoolchildren of Pinagbuhatan Elementary School in Pasig City during a Nestlé Wellness Campus activity.



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## Nestlé signs European Plastics Pact

NESTLÉ has signed the European Plastics Pact which will help the company achieve 100 percent recyclable or reusable packaging and reduce the use of virgin plastics by one third by 2025.

The European Plastics Pact, initiated by France and the Netherlands, has a single goal: to accelerate the transition towards a circular plastics economy. It will stop the sole dependence on virgin plastics – plastics made from non-renewable fossil fuel.

The Pact brings together leading companies, as well as NGOs and governments, who are together committing to realize common goals by 2025 and go beyond current legislation. These European targets include: reducing virgin plastic products and packaging by at least 20 percent; raising collection and recycling capacity in Europe for plastic packaging by at least 25 percent and; boosting the use of recycled plastics in packaging to an average of at least 30 percent.

“One of our joint objectives is to create a circular economy by improving collection, sorting and recycling schemes across Europe. Already today a new Vittel plastic bottle is manufactured out of used ones. Tomorrow, we want to make sure that also other packaging, such as our wrappers and pouches, can be recycled into new food packaging,” said

Marco Settembri, Nestlé chief executive officer for Europe, Middle East and North Africa.

Nestlé said its top priority is the safety of its products. Any plastics used for food packaging must be “food grade,” which means it cannot contain any substances harmful to humans. In order to achieve food grade recycled plastics, recycling processes will have to evolve.

The challenge for Nestlé, and the food industry at large, is that it is currently cheaper to produce packaging from virgin plastics than to use recycled food grade plastics.

To overcome this, Nestlé recently announced an investment of more than 1.5 trillion Swiss francs in recycled food grade plastics. This aims at giving a clear signal to recycling companies to focus on recycled food grade material and help create a new market.

To further reduce the use of virgin plastics, Nestlé is reinventing the ways it delivers its products. It is currently trialling a packaging-free system for dispensing Purina PetCare pet food and NESCAFÉ soluble coffee. Nestlé has also partnered with LOOP, a home-delivery service providing reusable packaging. First products will soon become available in France.

To further accelerate this process of innovation, Nestlé has launched a 250-million Swiss franc sustainable packaging fund focusing on start-ups developing packaging innovation, including new materials, as well as refill systems and recycling solutions.





# Clark landfill eyes serving more LGU

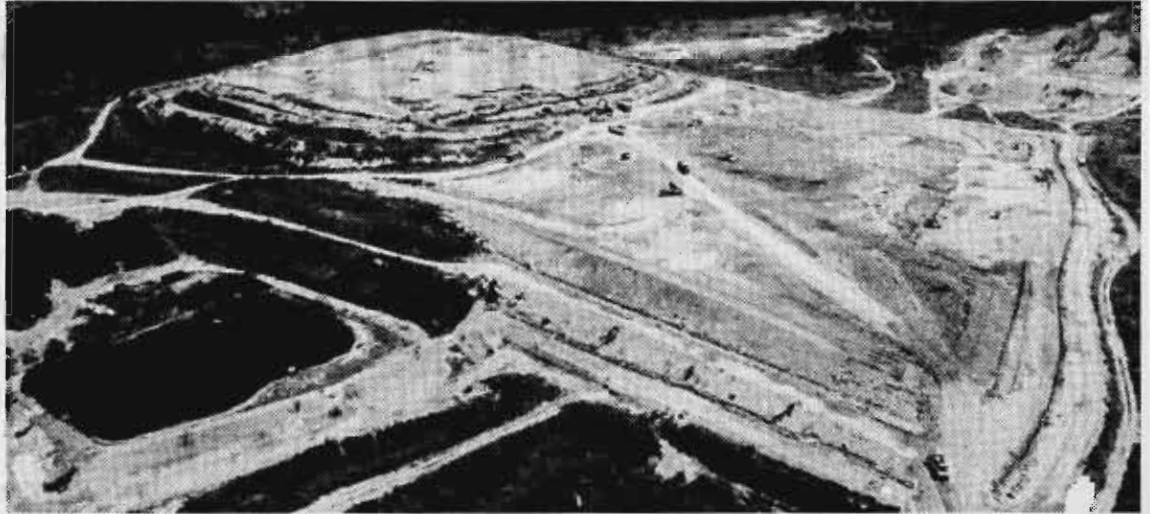
BY JED MACAPAGAL

CAPAS, Tarlac. Sanitary landfill operator, Metro Clark Waste Management Corp. (MCWMC) targets to service more local government units (LGUs) in Northern Luzon as well as in Metro Manila to further utilize its state-of-the-art facility here.

“Our main thrust now is we go to LGUs of regions 1 and 3 (Ilocos and Central Luzon) to offer our services. Before, we cater to less than 90 LGUs but we already serve more than 110 now... If we want to, we can also cater Metro Manila because we have the space and technology,” Victoria Gaetos, company executive vice president told reporters in a briefing here over the weekend.

At present, the sanitary landfill operator’s main source of income is the fixed P650 per ton tipping fee and the hauling fee that varies per location.

MCWMC operates a 100-hectare sanitary landfill which is the only waste facility in the country equipped with advanced engineering from German waste management and sewage system that currently serves over 100 cities and municipalities from Pangasinan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Tarlac, Bulacan, Bataan and Zambales aside from 120 industrial clients and 1,000 locators in the freeports of Clark, Subic and Bataan.



The 100-hectare sanitary landfill serves over 100 cities and municipalities in Central Luzon.

About 70 percent of the are is allotted for the landfill, 15 percent for environmental buffer, 10 percent for recycling facility and the remaining 5 percent for infrastructure.

The facility was designed to cater a maximum capacity of 20 million tons and a daily maximum operational capacity of 4,000 tons which is still currently at 2,800 tons a day to date.

Michael Siebeneiger, MCWMC vice president for operations, noted that their facility here is also unique as it is equipped with a multi-barrier system,

a leachate (garbage juice) collection and treatment system as well as a gas recovery system to assure that the landfill will have a stable foundation and safe from combustible gas leaks and water pollution.

The company is awaiting the approval by that the Bases Conversion and Development Authority of its unsolicited proposal to develop a waste-to-energy (WTE) facility here.

MCWMC said the facility can improve the carrying capacity of the landfill apart from the prospect of

producing electricity.

“If we have a WTE facility, only 25 to 30 percent of the waste will end up in the landfill. Our proposal already include investors and it is really in the bag, the only thing we’re missing is the approval,” Gaetos said.

Siebeneiger also said the WTE can grant them more time to reach the landfill’s maximum capacity as without it, the area can already be filled in 50 years compared to as much as 150 years if such facility is allowed to be constructed.



## Clark Waste Mgm't ready to help NCR

**By Rio N. Araja**

AMID a worsening garbage crisis in the country, the Metro Clark Waste Management is geared to face the challenge to help the government address the problem.

At a media briefing, Victoria Gaetos, executive vice president, said "we will not reject it" should the National Capital Region and the other regions ask their help.

"Our 20-hectare [engineered] landfill can accommodate 4,000 metric tons of trash a day. Right now, we are only getting just 2,800 metric tons a day," she said.

"We can cater to Metro Manila. We have the technology. We know how to expand and how to put it. We are Department of Environment and Natural Resources-compliant. We are also Department of Labor

and Employment-compliant. We pay taxes correctly. Aside from these, we have three ISO certifications," she added.

She said they are confident of handling all kinds of wastes.

She stressed that "when wastes are delivered here, we assure you that they are very safe here."

MCWM is a 100-hectare facility in Capas, Tarlac with 70 hectares allocated as landfill and 30 percent for buffer zone, material recovery facility, orchard and office spaces.

Gaetos assured the public and the people of Capas that they were driven by commitment and guided by principles in pursuit of excellence using a German technology.

"Our surge now is Zambales. Since the second quarter of 2019, we have been servicing the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, aside from Clark," she said.



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## No better time for Boracay

BY TRINA IBARLE ORQUIZA  
@tribunephil\_3na

BORACAY ISLAND, Aklan — A saleslady from a boutique at the D'Mall D'Boracay shopping complex was profuse with thanks after we

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# No better time for Boracay

From page A1

purchased a pair of sandals Thursday, actually her first sale of the day. And that was already at around 4:30 p.m.

Her excitement for the late sale is borne by the fact that sales are hard to come by in this island paradise now suffering from a dearth of visitors.

"It is hard to get good sales now, specially without the tourists coming over because of the lockdown," she sighed.

The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has definitely made its impact felt early in the year, affecting tourist arrivals in the country especially in this top tourist destination which usually teems with foreign and local travelers all year round.

The scarcity of travelers is very apparent upon arrival in the island as the usual throng of people that greets you on the sand path has dwindled. Even during the usual crowd-drawing sunset, the number of *paraws* sailing towards the sun could not even cover the horizon the way it did before.

Tricycles traveling to and from different points of the island are not even filled to the brim while drivers cannot meet at least their usual daily boundary. Agents offering beach activities such as parasailing and helmet-diving sounded more desperate than usual as they complained of not having enough for take home as their clients have been sparse.

Various local airlines have already done their part, dropping fares to promo rates despite it being peak season, while the island' premiere hotels have been offering 70 percent discount in accommodations.

Department of Tourism (DoT) Undersecretary Arturo Boncato Jr. underscored the drop in tourist arrivals per day based on the one port-one entry count to the island as they registered only about 1,000 in March from a usual large

number of 5,600 tourist arrivals per day last year.

But with the decline in the entry of foreign tourists, especially among the island's frequent visitors from South Korea and China following imposed travel bans to prevent the spread of the virus, it then became imperative for the DoT to find ways to keep tourism industry afloat through enticing local tourists to visit Boracay.

Along with the support of the private sector, the call to action of the DoT is about the island paradise being a safe haven for tourists despite the COVID-19 scare plus the boost of ensuring a safe and clean environment which will not enable further spread of the virus.

"We all know that the tourism industry is the one that took a hit because of this situation. So we encourage local tourists especially (to visit Boracay). The virus doesn't really thrive with the sun so please don't be scared of going to the beaches," Marge Barro, executive director of Makati Medical Center Foundation Inc., said yesterday after the Tulong Kapatid, a consortium of various companies' corporate social responsibility arms, donated several hand sanitizer dispensers, satellite phones and mobile data pocket WiFi units to make Boracay a disaster-prepared location.

The turnover was witnessed by Boncato and Esther Santos, president of the PLDT-Smart Foundation Inc. which is part of the consortium that signed a memorandum of agreement with the DoT to help support the tourism industry at this time specially in making tourists feel that their destinations are safe and sanitary.

"We just want to help the tourism sector become resilient as it is supposed to boom during the summertime. Safe, healthy, resilient and virus-free. That's the message we want to send (about Boracay) to our local and foreign tourists as well," Santos said.



## Boracay tourist arrivals plunge 80%

BORACAY's average daily tourist arrivals fell by more than 80% year-on-year to around 1,000 people in early March the wake of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, Tourism Undersecretary Arturo P. Boncato, Jr. said.

"Last year, average arrival per day 5,600, but almost the same number leave so we (did) not really breach carrying capacity. This time, start of March, that is really down to almost 1,000," he told reporters on Thursday.

The Department of Tourism (DoT) monitors Boracay tourism numbers via the single port open to visitors.

The DoT strategy, Mr. Boncato said, is to improve destinations experiencing slowdowns pending the return of visitors.

"What we're doing today is... making sure that when everything has been resolved, when you come back to Boracay, we have systems in place from the destination itself, to the medical services. Everything will be so much better than it used to."

The department is working with the Makati Medical Center Foundation and the PLDT Smart Foundation to supply the island with satellite phones, pocket WiFi, and medical devices such as stethoscopes, oxygen regulators, and automatic sanitizer dispensers.

President Rodrigo R. Duterte's plans to visit the island and speak with tourism stakeholders on Thursday were put on hold as the outbreak widened.

The DoT, in a statement Thursday, said it will announce a new schedule for the president's visit as soon as the information is available.

"The safety and well-being of tourists, tourism frontliners and citizens remain the utmost priority of the DoT."

Mr. Boncato said that the department is working with national government to form contingency plans in case the outbreak reaches the island.

"It's not going to be exclusive to Boracay — it's going to be a national contingency plan," he said.

"When it comes to tourism, our primary task is to make sure to protect the welfare of our tourists. If they're already here, we have a regional office, we have a Boracay office. We are in touch with the tourism enterprises. And one good thing about Boracay is that all those doing business for tourism are accredited by the department... in effect they follow the standard, they're under our regulation, and they always support what the national government is doing."

Meanwhile, the task force working on the rehabilitation of Boracay is currently on track, he said, with two more major projects not yet completed.

Mr. Boncato said the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority, the infrastructure arm of the department, is investing in a drainage system.

"It's done in parallel with the road network of DPWH (Department of Public Works and Highways)."

The inter-agency task force on the rehabilitation of Boracay will be working until April. —  
**Jenina P. Ibañez**



# Boracay rehabilitation on track

BY TRINA ORQUIZA  
*@tribunephil\_3na*

BORACAY ISLAND, Aklan — While tourism in the island is being beefed up in the wake of the novel coronavirus scare in the country, Department of Tourism (DoT) Undersecretary Arturo Boncato Jr. said that efforts to complete the island's rehabilitation program is on schedule this year.

Boncato, who met with members of the Boracay Inter Agency Task Force yesterday for status updates on the rehabilitation, said that the second phase of road works from Sea Wind Resort to Barangay Yapak will be completed by June, as well as the improvements on the drainage system.

**That is exactly the vision of the task force, to offer the best kind of experience to the tourists and the locals as well**

"The commitment of our Inter-Agency Task Force is to finish certain milestones within a two-year period. When it comes to road infrastructure, based from our partners from the DPWH (Department of Publicworks and Highways), we are on track," Boncato said.

He added that the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority, which is in charge of the investments for the drainage works, have also expressed that they will finish these within schedule.

"I think the road experience now in Boacay is much better and much appreciated. When we were starting the road works, a lot of people were complaining but if you see the result, it almost erases everything," Boncato said.

"That is exactly the vision of the task orce, to offer the best kind of experience to the tourists and the locals as well," he added.



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## DOT says govt rehab efforts on Boracay Island 'on track'

By MA. STELLA F. ARNALDO

✉ @akosistellaBM

Special to the BUSINESSMIRROR

**B**ORACAY ISLAND, Aklan—Government's rehabilitation efforts for this key Philippine destination, known as among the best beaches in the world, is on track.

That was the statement of Undersecretary for Tourism Regulation, Coordination and Resource Generation Arturo P. Boncato Jr. at a news briefing during the turnover of emergency equipment and medical supplies to the island on Thursday at the Movenpick Resort & Spa.

"The Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force has a life of two years given the executive order," he said. "...[And] our inter-agency task has committed to accomplish certain milestones within that two-year period. Phase 2 of the road network construction, coming from Seawind (in Station 1) to Barangay Yapak to where we are (Movenpick) it's supposed to be completed by the end of the validity of the task force (April 26, 2020). And based on the report of our partner, the DPWH (Department of Public Works And Highways), we are on track."

Boracay was closed for six months in 2018 for the rehabilitation efforts.

He added, "The infrastructure of the Department of Tourism [DOT] [through] Tieza [Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority] is...investing in the drainage system, but it's done in parallel with the road network of the DPWH. Based on the plan of commitment, that too will be finished before the validity of the task force," Boncato said.



...The road network in Boracay is so much better and much appreciated. When the road construction was just being started, people were complaining about the roads and ditches, the water, the flooding, but when you see the result, it erases everything. This is exactly the vision of the task force, to offer the best kind of experience to the tourists and locals." — Boncato

He noted that "the road network in Boracay is so much better and much appreciated. When the road construction was just being started, people were complaining about the roads and ditches, the water, the flooding, but when you see the result, it erases everything. This is exactly the vision of the task force, to offer the best kind of experience to the tourists and locals," Boncato remarked.

But interviews by the BUSINESSMIRROR with several island residents indicated the rehabilitation and improvements have been sluggish, and that the construction of the road network, lighting of Bula-bog beach, closure of ditches were only fast-tracked in the last few weeks, because President Duterte was supposed to visit on Thursday. (See, "Govt agencies rush projects for Duterte arrival," in the BUSINESSMIRROR, March 11, 2020.)

Boncato also disclosed that arrivals in Boracay Island have dropped to about 1,000 a day starting March, from an average of 5,600 last year, due to the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) outbreak. "That is a decrease that is real, that is why we are responding to it. But this is

not exclusive to Boracay. You know this is happening globally. And the other strategy we are looking at, is improving the product itself... And what we are doing today, is just that [turnover of medical supplies and emergency equipment], making sure that when everything has been solved, when you come back to Boracay, we have all the systems in place. From the destination's medical services will be much better than it used to be."

Meanwhile, foundations under the Manuel V. Pangilinan Group of Cos. donated hospital equipment, medical supplies and satellite phones to the island, through a memorandum of agreement with the DOT.

Marge M. Barro, executive director of the Makati Medical Center Foundation, said her institution is "working to strengthen hospitals via skills upgrade." She said they are working to help Ciriaco Tirol Hospital, currently at infirmary level, to receive any patient such as trauma cases, and make it a tertiary level 1 hospital.

Also, automated hand sanitizers stations will be installed around the jetty port for tourists. The PLDT Smart Foundation will also donate about 60 satellite phones to help the DOT in disaster preparedness and recovery.

Foundation President Esther O. Santos said these satellite phones would be pre-loaded, with three phones initially turned over to Boracay. The DOT will identify the other destinations that will receive the phones.

Barro emphasized, "The virus really doesn't thrive under the sun. So please don't be scared to go to the beaches, but of course, always take safety precautions."



# Carpio questions Kaliwa Dam bidding

FORMER Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonio Carpio has called on the government to include the alleged "anomalous bidding" of the construction of the Kaliwa Dam in Quezon province in its review of so-called "onerous" contracts between the government and private companies.

Carpio, citing a Commission on Audit (CoA) memorandum, said the construction of the Kaliwa Dam in Infanta, Quezon might be called the "mother of onerous contracts."

"The CoA saw the 'reality' — that the bidding was a sham. The Communist Party of China, which controls the three bidders, already chose from the very start CEEC (China Energy Engineering Corp. Ltd.) as the winning bidder and instructed the other two bidders to simply disqualify themselves. The bidding was *Lutong Makaw*," he added.

In an Audit Observation Memorandum dated June 10, 2019,

the Audit commission said the technical working group (TWG) of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) failed to observe proper bidding and vetting procedures before it awarded the project to the CEEC in December 2018.

"We recommend that [the MWSS] management demand explanation from the members of the TWG for acceptance of the two bidders/contractors in spite of non-compliance with vetting/pre-qualification requirements," the memo read.

"In summary, it can be deduced that the two bidders/contractors were included merely to comply with the 'at least three bidders' requirement, as stated under the Procurement Law. Likewise, the procurement of the project is with the semblance of a competitive bidding when, in reality, it is a negotiated contract from the inception of the bidding process," it added.

China submitted three Chinese contractors — the Consortium of Guangdong Foreign Construction Co. and Yuantian Engineering Co. (Consortium), the Power Construction Corp. of China (Power China) and the CEEC.

The MWSS, which conducted the bidding, limited the auction to the three Chinese contractors.

The CoA also found that one of the shortlisted candidates did not have the required permits, while another did not submit a bid within the project budget.

"However, during the opening of bids and in the evaluation of minimum eligibility requirements of the contractors, [the] Consortium of Guangdong Foreign Construction Co. Ltd. was found to be non-complying," it said.

The first bidder, the Consortium, was disqualified because it did not submit the required documents. Meanwhile, Power China submitted a bid of P13.04 billion, which is higher than the approved budget

for the contract by P842 million.

"As a result, only China Energy Engineering Corp. Ltd qualified, which is questionable. consid-

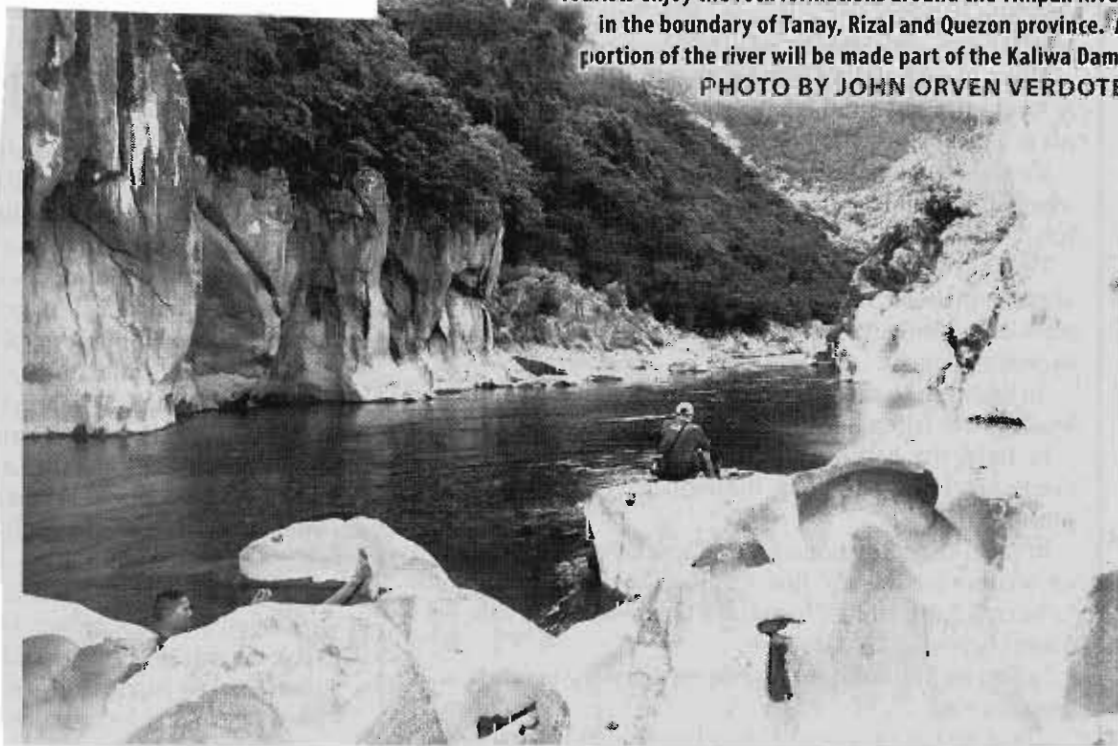
ering that the two bidders were disqualified in the first and second stages of the process due to the seemingly intentional purpose of

the bidders not to comply with the TWG requirements," the state audit body said.

JAN ARCILLA

## PICTURE PERFECT

Tourists enjoy the rock formations around the Tinipak River in the boundary of Tanay, Rizal and Quezon province. A portion of the river will be made part of the Kaliwa Dam. PHOTO BY JOHN ORVEN VERDOTE





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## Isama sa 'onerous' contracts – Carpio

# ANOMALOUS BIDDING NG KALIWA DAM

**N**ANAWAGAN si dating Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonio Carpio sa pamahalaan na isama ang umano'y maanomalyang bidding ng P12.2-B Kaliwa Dam project sa Infanta, Quezon sa pagrebisa nito sa tinatawag na 'onerous' contracts sa pagitan ng gobyerno at ng mga pribadong kompanya.

Ayon kay Carpio, ang konstruksiyon ng Kaliwa Dam ay mailalarawan bilang 'mother of onerous contracts', batay na rin, aniya, sa Commission on Audit (COA) memorandum sa bidding.

Aniya, natuklasan ng COA na moro-moro lamang ang isinagawang bidding.

"The Communist Party of China, which controls the three bidders, already chose from the very start CEEC as the winning bidder and instructed the other two bidders to simply disqualify themselves. The bidding was 'lutong macau,'" dagdag ni Carpio.

Sa audit observation memorandum na may petsang June 10, 2019, sinabi ng COA na nabigo ang technical working group (TWG) ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) na makapagsagawa ng nararapat na bidding at vetting procedures bago nito iginawad ang proyekto sa China Energy Engineering Corp. (CEEC) noong December 2018.

"We recommend that (MWSS) Management demand explanation from the members of the TWG for acceptance of the two bidders/contractors in spite of non-compliance with vetting/pre-qualification requirements," nakasaad sa memo na ginawa nina officer-in-charge audit team leader Rency Meryl Marquez at officer-in-charge supervising

auditor Ma. Nancy Uy at naka-address kay MWSS administrator Reynaldo Velasco.

"In summary, it can be deduced that the two bidders/contractors were included merely to comply with the 'at least three bidders' requirement as stated under the Procurement Law. Likewise, the procurement of the project is with the semblance of a competitive bidding when in reality, it is a negotiated contract from the inception of the bidding process," ayon pa sa memo ng COA.

Sa imbestigasyon ng audit team ay lumabas na nagsagawa ng shortlist ang TWG ng MWSS at kalaunan ay tinanggap ang bid applications ng tatlong Chinese firms – CEEC, Consortium of Guangdong Foreign Construction at Power China Ltd. – bagama't dalawa sa mga ito ay hindi nakatugon sa pre-qualification requirements na naunang itinakda ng MWSS para sa proyekto.

Ayon sa COA, nabigo ang CEEC at ang Consortium of Guangdong na ipakita na nakasunod sila sa years of experience sa design at engineering works, gayundin sa construction works tulad ng itinatakda para sa proyekto.

Sa ilalim ng panuntunan ng MWSS, ang mga kompanya lamang na matagumpay na nakakumpleto sa nakalipas na 20 taon ng design, engineering at construction works para sa isang dam at conveyance structure na katulad ang complexity ng panukalang Kaliwa Dam project ang maaaring nagkuwalipika sa bidding.

Sinabi ng state audit body na ang bid documents na isinumite ng CEEC at Consortium of Guangdong ay hindi nagsasaad ng petsa ng completion ng ipinalalagay na

hydro stations at dam projects na sinasabi nilang isinagawa.

"The TWG should have been more circumspect to verify whether the reported projects were actually completed to establish the validity and existence thereof and to attain the purpose of vetting which is to evaluate whether the nominated Chinese contractors meet the minimum technical qualifications," nakasaad pa sa audit memorandum.

Anang audit body, ang Consortium of Guangdong ay na-disqualify sa first stage ng bidding procedure dahil sa kawalan ng kinakailangang mga dokumento tulad ng business permit, Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) license, Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) certificate at valid Single Largest Completed Contract o SLCC.

Na-disqualify naman ang Power China Ltd. sa second stage ng bidding nang magalok ito ng mas mataas ng 6.91 percent sa Approved Budget for Contract (ABC).

Nagtataka ang COA kung bakit nag-bid ang Power China ng mataas gayong ang lahat ng nominated bidders ay nauna nang inabisuhan na ang anumang bid na mas mataas sa ABC ay awtomatikong mababasura sa bid opening.

"As a result, only the China Energy Engineering Corp. Ltd. qualified, which is questionable considering that the two bidders were disqualified in the 1st and 2nd stages of the procurement process due to seemingly intentional purpose of the bidders not to comply with the TWG requirements and qualify as among those responsive bidders," dagdag ng COA.





# KALIWA DAM BIDDING SILIP NI JUSTICE CARPIO

**DAPAT isama ng pamahalaan sa pagrebisa nito sa tinatawag na 'onerous' contracts sa pagitan ng gobyerno at ng mga pribadong kompanya ang maanomalyang bidding ng P12.2-B Kaliwa Dam project sa Infanta, Quezon, ayon kay dating Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonio Carpio.**

Tinawag ni Carpio ang konstruksiyon ng Kaliwa Dam bilang 'mother of onerous contracts', batay na rin, aniya, sa Commission on Audit (COA) memorandum sa bidding.

Ayon sa dating SC Associate Justice, nakita ng COA ang katotohanan na ang bidding ay moro-moro lamang.

"The Communist Party of China, which controls the three bidders, already chose from the very start CEEC as the winning bidder and instructed the other two bidders to simply disqualify themselves. The bidding was 'lutong macau,' dagdag ni Carpio.

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Sa ilalim ng panuntunan ng MWSS, ang mga kompanya lamang na matagumpay na nakakumpleto sa nakalipas na 20 taon ng design, engineering at construction works para sa isang dam at conveyance structure na katulad ang complexity ng panukalang Kaliwa Dam project ang maaaring magkawalipika sa bidding.

Sinabi ng state audit body na ang bid documents na isinumite ng CEEC at Consortium of Guangdong ay hindi nagsasaad ng petsa ng completion ng ipinalalagay na hydro stations at dam projects na sinasabi nilang isinagawa.

Anang audit body, ang Consortium of Guangdong ay na-disqualify sa first stage ng bidding procedure dahil sa kawalan ng kinakailangang mga dokumento tulad ng business permit, Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) license,

Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) certificate at valid Single Largest Completed Contract o SLCC.

Na-disqualify naman ang Power China Ltd. sa second stage ng bidding nang mag-alok ito ng mas mataas ng 6.91 percent sa Approved Budget for Contract (ABC).

Nagtataka ang COA kung bakit nag-bid ang Power China ng mataas gayong ang lahat ng nominated bidders ay nauna nang inabisuhan na ang anumang bid na mas mataas sa ABC ay awtomatikong mababasura sa bid opening.

"As a result, only the China Energy Engineering Corp. Ltd. qualified, which is questionable considering that the two bidders were disqualified in the 1st and 2nd stages of the procurement process due to seemingly intentional purpose of the bidders not to comply with the TWG requirements and qualify as among those responsive bidders," dagdag ng COA.



## Isama sa 'onerous' contracts KALIWA DAM BIDDING LUTONG MACAU-CARPIO

DAPAT isama ng pamahalaan ang maanomalyang bidding ng P12.2-B Kaliwa Dam project sa Infanta, Quezon sa pagrebla nito sa tinatawag na 'onerous' contracts sa pagitan ng gobyerno at ng mga pribadong kompanya, ayon kay dating Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonio Carpio,

Tinatawag ni Carpio ang konstruksyon ng Kaliwa Dam bilang 'mother of onerous contracts', batay na rin, aniya, sa Commission on Audit memorandum sa bidding.

Ayon sa dating SC Associate Justice, nakita ng COA ang katotohanan na ang bidding ay moro-moro lamang.

Sa audit observation memorandum na may petsang June 10, 2019, sinabi ng COA na nabigo ang technical working group ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System na makapagsagawa ng nararapat na bidding at vetting procedures bago nito iginawad ang proyekto sa China Energy Engineering Corp. noong December 2018.

"We recommend that MWSS Management demand explanation from the members of the TWG for acceptance of the two bidders/contractors in spite of non-compliance with vetting/pre-qualification requirements," nakasaad sa memo na ginawa nina officer-in-charge audit team leader Rency Meryl Marquez at officer-in-charge supervising auditor Ma. Nancy Uy at naka-address kay MWSS administrator Reynaldo Velasco.

Sa imbestigasyon ng audit team ay lumabas na nagsagawa ng shortlist ang TWG ng MWSS at kalaunan ay tinanggap ang bid applications ng tatlong Chinese firms - CEEC, Consortium of Guangdong Foreign Construction at Power China Ltd. - bagama't dalawa sa mga ito ay hindi nakatugon sa pre-qualification requirements na naunang itinakda ng MWSS para sa proyekto.

Ayon sa COA, nabigo ang CEEC at ang Consortium of Guangdong na ipakita na nakasunud sila sa years of experience sa design at engineering works, gayundin sa construction works tulad ng itinakda para sa proyekto.

Sa itatim ng panuntunan ng MWSS, ang mga kompanya lamang na matagumpay na nakakumpleto sa nakalipas na 20 taon ng design, engineering at construction works para sa isang dam at conveyance structure na katulad ang complexity ng panukalang Kaliwa Dam project ang maaaring magkuwalipika sa bidding.

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RNT



## Mistulang COVID-19 ang epekto sa kalusugan - LGU officials

# COAL FIRED POWER PLANT SA MASBATE PINASASARA

**MASBATE City** - Nanawagan ang lokal na pamahalaan at mga residente ng karatig na bayan ng Masbate kay Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na pigliin ang operasyon ng coal fired power plant sa Brgy. Tugbo sa bayan ng Mobo dahil sa masamang epekto nito sa kalusugan na inaasahang baka malala pa sa nakamamatay na sakit ngayon sa buong mundo na COVID-19.

Maging ang marginalized na mangingisda sa buong kalakhan ng lalawigan ay nakiisa na rin sa panawagang ipasara ang plantang ito na pag-aari ng David Mendoza Consunji Incorporated (DMCI) dahil

sa idudulot nitong malawakang pagkamatay ng isda at iba pang laman dagat na kanilang ikinabubuhay.

"Alam nating lahat na hindi sapat ang supply ng kuryente sa mainland Masbate ngunit hindi coal fired power plant ang sagot sa problemang ito dahil marami naman tayong alternative sources of energy na hindi nakasisira sa ating kalikasan" ani Mayor Rowena Tuason na isang environmentalist na opisyal ng lalawigan.

Naniniwala naman ang ilang health workers dito na direktang tatamaan ang baga ng sinumang makalanghap ng usok mula sa plantang ito ng DMCI at posibleng ikamatay agad ng mga naninirahan dito dahil sa iba't ibang uri ng

kemikal na napapaloob sa coal.

Ang naturang planta ng coal na itinayo ng isang Chinese Contractor noong 2019 ay may 20 metro lamang ang layo mula sa mga kabahayan ng Tugbo, Mobo at 800 metro naman ang distansya sa pamosong Buntod Reef Marine Sanctuary and Sandbar na nagkamit na ng maraming awards sa bansa sa larangan ng environmental preservation at itinuturing na "no structure zone" sa anumang uri ng planta sa vicinity nito batay na rin sa ating batas pangkalikasan.

Matatandaang nag-viral sa social media ang isang kilos protesta noong nakaraang taon matapos pumirma sa isang manifesto ang grupo ng emple-

yado ng lokal at nasyonal na ahensya ng gobyerno, negosyante, mag-aaral, simbahang katoliko at civil society kung saan hayagang kinondena ng mga ito ang noo'y napipintong operasyon ng planta.

Bagaman nag-testing na noong Disyembre 2019 dito ang kauna-unahang 15 Megawatt coal fired power plant ng DMCI sa bansa, naniniwala ang mga residente rito na kung hindi ipatigil ang decommissioning nito sa lalawigan, tuluyan nang magiging miserable ang buhay ng mamamayan na apektado rito na inaasahang fully operational na sa mga susunod na buwan.

**NORMAN LAURIO/  
DADO NG BRIONES**

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*Hugging a coastal road of some 224 kilometers, Sarangani Bay is host to the Gen. Santos City Fish Port Complex, fisherfolk villages, beach resorts, a coal energy power plant, shipyards, marine parks and sanctuaries, and aquaculture farms.*

## Mindanao's scuba diving haven

**S**ARANGANI Bay, one of the county's richest body of water and home to the tuna industry, recently marked another milestone as it celebrated its 24th year as a protected seascape.

To mark the occasion, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Region 12 in collaboration with the Protected Area Management Board launched the first-ever Sarangani Bay Protected Seascape (SBPS) Week to highlight the efforts to protect and conserve its coastal and marine resources.

The bay was declared a Protected Seascape by former president Fidel Ramos under Proclamation No. 756 in 1996, covering an area of 215,950 hectares.

Held in Gen. Santos City and various parts of Sarangani province, the weeklong observance consisted of mall exhibits of marine species and simultaneous bay-wide cleanups participated in by the 68 barangays, business and tourism establishments along the bay's coast.

A dive safari and underwater photography contest held at Maunum, Kiamba and Maasim towns showcased Sarangani's emerging scuba diving sites. Topping the 3-day photo tilt were Bretch Garcinez of General Santos City and East Padillo of Davao City who won the wide and macro categories, respectively.

Fringe activities included a 3-day environmental forum and enforcement summit, trash to art, mass dance and logo making competitions,

and the search for the Ambassador of SBPS.

Declared by the Department of Tourism as a scuba diving haven in southern Mindanao in 2017, the bay was also listed by the DENR as a Key Marine Biodiversity Areas with coral resources covering 2,293 hectares, 60 important live hard coral genera, 411 reef species, and 11 species of seagrass.

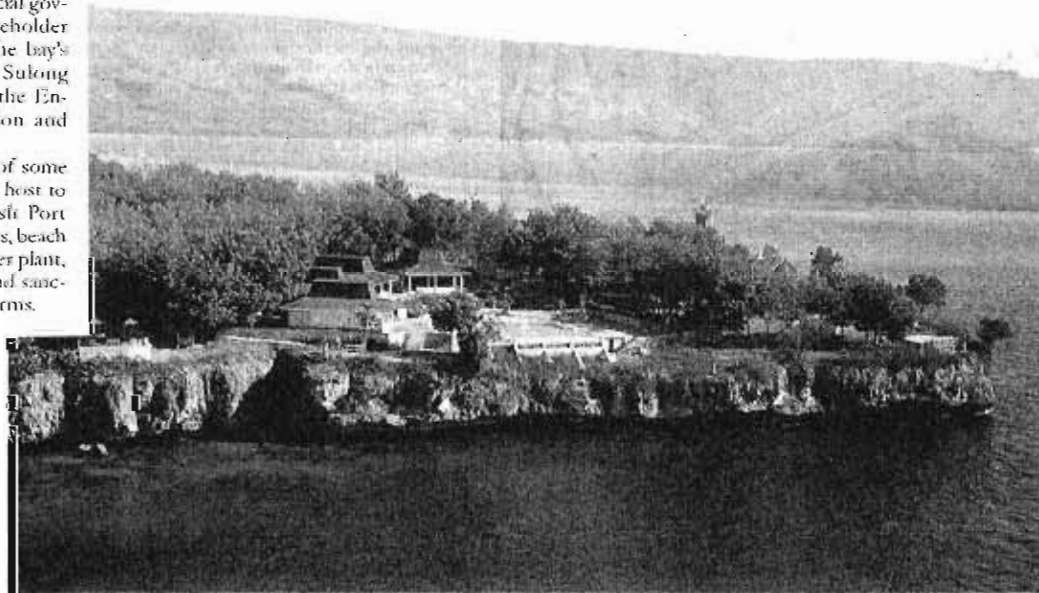
The DENR has also monitored various dolphin species, killer whales, dwarf and pygmy sperm whales in the bay, attesting to its rich biodiversity.

Because of the event's success, the SBPS Protected Area Management Board passed a resolution declaring March 5 as the annual SBPS Day, and directing local government units, major stakeholders, and partner organizations to take part in the observance.

Sarangani governor and PAMB vice chair Steve Solon lauded the maiden celebration, saying it symbolizes a broader commitment in preserving the bay as a shelter, and source of living and life to the areas around it.

He said that the provincial government is a major stakeholder in the preservation of the bay's ecosystem through its Sulong Kalikasan program and the Environmental Conservation and Protection Center.

Hugging a coastal road of some 224 kilometers, the bay is host to the Gen. Santos City Fish Port Complex, fisherfolk villages, beach resorts, a coal energy power plant, shipyards, marine parks and sanctuaries, and aquaculture farms.



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# The air we breathe

*First of two parts*

**L**ATELY, a dense cloud of pollution hangs almost stationary during the early morning commute, apparent in Metro Manila. Do you notice this? In this edition, we will identify the dangers of air pollution and what it brings on a medical and lay perspective.

## Air pollution defined

Air pollution is a mixture of natural and human-induced substances in the air. It has two categories: outdoor air pollution and indoor air pollution. These are products of human-led activities, such as fuel combustion from vehicles, heat and power generation, smoke from factories that litter developing and industrialized countries, mines, waste incineration, and from simple sources such as households cooking food.

Toxic pollutants present in the air could come in various forms. The largest among others is called particulate matter (PM) which include sulfates, nitrates, ammonia, sodium chloride, black carbon, mineral dust, and even water. PM is measured in microns or a millionth of a meter.

PM can be classified according to its sizes, such as PM10 (less than 10 microns in diameter), or PM2.5 (less than 2.5 microns in diameter). These particles can remain suspended in air and eventually be inhaled into one's body, and if this happens, they pass through the airway and enter the bloodstream, where they can create damage inside a healthy person's body.

## Dangerous haze and weather

There is another type of pollutant which is common in large cities. It is called the ground-level ozone, a major product of photochemical smog. Large cities like Metro Manila and Beijing and Shanghai in China are seen blanketed with thick smoke consisting of PM, carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen oxides (NOx), and other volatile organic compounds (VOCs). These react with each other's molecular structure while

suspended in the air, and once the sunlight hits these components, ozone is produced. This kind of situation has become more apparent during weak wind circulation, or when airflow is hampered by colliding air masses from opposing directions.

The World Health Organization's (WHO) standard is set at a maximum of 25 micrograms per cubic meter of air pollution. The air quality monitoring site, Airtoday, recorded "poor" air quality in the afternoon of March 5, with the level of air pollutants reaching 63 to 65 micrograms per cubic meter by 1 p.m., local time.

## Air pollution is a runaway killer

The WHO, in its recent publication, said due to air pollution, 9 out of 10 people breathe air containing high levels of pollutants.

From smog hanging over cities to smoke inside our homes, air pollution poses a major threat to health and climate. The combined effects of ambient (outdoor) and household air pollution cause about seven million premature deaths every year, largely as a result of increased mortality from stroke, heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, lung cancer and acute respiratory infections.

The agency added about 4.2 million deaths every year is a result of exposure to ambient air pollution, and about 3.8 million is because of exposure to smoke from dirty stoves and fuels. WHO also said that about 91 percent of the world's total population lives in places where air quality exceeds WHO guideline limits. *(To be continued)*





# Price freeze in effect; hoarders face arrest

As Filipinos stocked up on necessities following reports that the new coronavirus contagion had reached Metro Manila, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) on Thursday announced a nationwide price freeze on basic goods and Malacañang warned that hoarders would "be dealt with accordingly."

The DTI said the price freeze on basic goods—from rice and tinned fish to essential drugs—would be in effect for 60 days, unless lifted sooner by President Duterte.

Mr. Duterte's declaration of a state of public health emergency on Monday sparked the price freeze, which took effect on Tuesday

but was announced only on Thursday.

"The DTI is closely coordinating with other government agencies, manufacturers and retailers of basic goods to ensure availability and continuous supply of basic goods in the market," Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez said in a statement.

#### No price movement

"Retailers are reminded that there should be no price movement on these goods while the price freeze is in effect," he added.

Basic goods under the jurisdiction of the DTI include tinned fish and other marine products, locally manufac-

tured instant noodles, bottled water, bread, processed milk, coffee, candles, laundry soap, detergent and salt.

Under the jurisdiction of the Department of Agriculture are rice, corn, cooking oil; fresh, dried and other marine products; fresh eggs, fresh pork, beef and poultry meat, fresh milk, fresh vegetables, root crops, sugar and fresh fruits.

Essential drugs are controlled by the Department of Health, while firewood and charcoal are under the jurisdiction of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Household LPG and kerosene are under the Department of Energy. **AG**



# PRICE FREEZE IN EFFECT; HOARDERS FACE ARREST

## FROM A2

The price freeze on LPG and kerosene is good for only 15 days, as provided for in Republic Act No. 10623 or the Amended Price Act.

Violation of the price freeze carries a fine of P5,000 to P1 million, or a prison term of one to 10 years or both.

The DTI also proposed an executive order that would authorize the police to inspect stores and arrest hoarders and profiteers.

No details were available as of press time on Thursday.

### They will be arrested

Malacañang warned that "those who unscrupulously take advantage" of the crisis would be arrested.

"The Office of the President hereby gives warning to those hoarding vital commodities, which create a hike in the prices, as well as selling them beyond their regular prices, that their actions will be dealt with accordingly in pursuance of public safety and order," presidential spokesperson Salvador Panelo said in a statement.

Most supermarkets in the metropolis were out of alcohol and other disinfectants on Thursday. They reported that tinned goods were also "best-sellers."

The run on disinfectants followed advice from the DOH and private health experts to wash hands and use disinfectants often to keep off the virus.

On Thursday, the DTI said manufacturers of disinfectants and other basic goods assured it during a recent meeting that they had enough stocks to meet the surge in demand.

Green Cross Inc. and Philusa Corp. said their stocks were good for months and they committed not to raise their prices, the DTI said.

Representatives of supermarkets SM, Robinsons and Puregold were also at the

meeting and assured the DTI that their stocks of basic goods were good for two months, the agency said.

### Alcohol: 2 bottles only

It said the groups agreed with Lopez that alcohol purchases should be limited to "two bottles" per shopper.

Mercury Drug reported that it maintains a month's stock of medicines, the DTI said. The National Food Authority gave assurance that the country had sufficient stocks of rice, it added.

"Consumers need not worry as we have enough stocks of basic goods in the market. The DTI is working closely with the manufacturers and retailers to ensure continued flow of supply in the market and reasonableness of prices of basic goods, including disinfectants," Lopez said.

The DTI urged the public to report hoarding, profiteering, and other forms of price manipulation at One-DTI (1-384) Hotline or Consumer-Care@dti.gov.ph.

### Food action plan

The run on basic goods has prompted the Department of Agriculture to develop an action plan on food availability.

On Wednesday night, Agriculture Secretary William Dar instructed his department's officials to draw up a plan "on how to sustain the food supply for Metro Manila initially, and the whole country eventually."

The agency is also intensifying its urban gardening program to cushion the impact on food by such emergencies as the coronavirus pandemic.

Glenn Panganiban, assistant director at the Bureau of Plant Industry, said his group had been distributing seeds and providing training to people in Metro Manila to encourage residents to grow their own produce. —REPORTS FROM ROY STEPHEN C. CANIVEL, JULIE M. AURELIO AND KARL R. OCAMPO INQ

# Climate of fear

## Metro placed under 'community quarantine'

BY JOCELYN MONTEMAYOR

PRESIDENT Duterte on Thursday night placed Metro Manila under "community quarantine" for 30 days after raising the public health alert level to Code Red Sub-Level 2 as a result of the continued rise in the localized transmission and the spike in the number of confirmed cases of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in the country.

In a televised address nationwide, Duterte said land, air and sea travel in and out of Metro Manila would be suspended from March 15 to April 14. He added that under the Code Red Level 2, local govern-

ment units surrounding Metro Manila are advised to implement localized community quarantine when necessary.

Duterte also said the suspension of classes has been extended to April 12.

Duterte issued these directives as a climate of fear descended on Metro Manila in the wake of the death of a 67-year-old female patient at the Manila Doctors Hospital, the first local fatality of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 that was declared as a pandemic by the World Health Organization on Wednesday night.

Duterte addressed the nation after a three-hour meeting with officials of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging

Infectious Disease behind closed doors at Malacanang.

His directives were contained in a resolution prepared by the Inter-Agency Task Force that made the rounds of social media earlier in the day.

In his opening statement, Duterte called on the public not to panic despite serious conditions facing the country caused by the virus that has claimed the lives of more than 4,600, infected more than 126,000 people across the world, restricted travel worldwide and caused massive economic breakdown.

Metro Manila residents, however, con-

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### • FROM PAGE B1 •

## METRO

continued to resort to panic buying Thursday, with long queues observed in supermarkets and groceries, while the flow of traffic was considerably faster as motorists opted to stay indoors.

"Community quarantine is hereby imposed in the entirety of Metro Manila," the President said as he read through the resolution recommended by the Inter-Agency Task Force.

Duterte likened the community quarantine into a lockdown but said that he refused to use the word as it scares people. He said the community quarantine is only intended to deter the spread of the COVID-19.

He advised the public not to be scared or nervous, adding they should follow and cooperate with government authorities.

He also said that the military and the police will be there to ensure the effective and orderly implementation and compliance with the community quarantine.

"Hindi ito martial law. It is not a martial law. It is not even something extraordinary. What is sought to be solved here is, again,

walang iba except to fight the virus and to exact compliance, Mas mabuti talaga, maniwala kayo (This is not martial law. It is not a martial law. It is not even something extraordinary. What is sought to be solved here is the again, nothing more except to fight the virus and to exact compliance. It would be better of you just believe)," the President said.

Duterte said that under the community quarantine, mass gatherings, especially events that would hamper the planning and response of the community, would be prohibited in the affected areas.

Classes in all levels in public and private schools in Metro Manila will remain suspended until April 12, but students are advised to stay at home while completing their educational requirement during the period. The schools are expected to make some arrangements as it how it would be done.

The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) has been directed to ensure that the students would remain in their homes during the period.

Outside Metro Manila, local

government units are advised to exercise discretion in deciding if they too would suspend the classes in their jurisdiction.

The President said the mass public transports like the Light Rail Transit, Metro Rail Transit and Philippine National Railways shall continue to operate during the period but the Department of Transportation shall impose the necessary guidelines to promote social distancing even in the lass transport set up.

He said a barangay-wide quarantine will be done if there are two positive COVID-19 cases in different households located in the same barangay; a municipal or city wide quarantine if there are two positive COVID-19 cases from in different barangays located in the same municipality or city; and a province-wide quarantine if there are two positive cases from two different municipalities or cities from the same province.

The declaration of localized community quarantines would enable the local government units concerned, after declaring a state of calamity, to tap their quick response fund (QRF).

While the community quaran-

quarantine is in effect in Metro Manila, work in the executive branch of government would also be suspended. A skeletal workforce would be maintained to oversee the unimpeded delivery of basic services while health and emergency frontline services shall continue to be in full operation. The legislative and judicial branches are encouraged to adopt the said policy.

In the private sector, the government encouraged the adoption of flexible working arrangements as it encouraged all manufacturing, retail and service establishments to continue their operations even as they are advised to observe social distancing in the workplace.

As this developed, the government is partially lifting its travel ban to China allowing Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) who have employment arrangements in the said country. Filipinos, however, are still barred from travelling to Hubei province, the reported epicenter of the virus.

Entry of foreigners, from countries with confirmed local transmission of COVID-19 cases would still be restricted.





TITLE:

**DUMARAMI** ang nag-popositibo sa Corona Virus Disease-19 sa mahal kong Pinas.

Bagama't sinasabi ng Department of Health at World Health Organization na 81 porsyento ang mild o hindi nakamamatay, 14% ang malubha at 5% ang kritikal o nasa bingit o tiyak na kamatayan, hindi maikakaila na appektado ang lahat.

'Yun bang — dahil nasa ilalim na tayo ng State of Public Health, marami na ang pupwedeng mangyari na pupwedeng ikahihirap at ikamamatay ng marami hindi lang sa COVID-19 kundi sa iba pang masasamang kalagayan.

Dapat tingnan natin ang kondisyong nasa likod ng pagdedeklara ni Pangulong Rodrigo 'Digong' Duterte ng State of Public Health Emergency.

Lumalabas na hindi na lang usaping pangkalusugan ang problema kundi pambansang seguridad kaya ang Pangulo mismo ang nagdeklara ng nasabing uri ng emergency at hindi ang kalihim ng DOH.

### PAMBANSANG SEGURIDAD

Pinakamahalaga na sangkap ng pambansang seguridad ang buhay ng mga mamamayan na nasa panganib.

Palatandaan dito ang pagkamatay kamakalawa ng gabi ng Patient 35 na nakahawa rin ng kanyang mister at miyembro ng pamilya nito.

At mabilis na dumarami ang kinakapitan ng nasabing sakit.

Mula lang sa tatlo nitong nakaraang linggo, ngayon ay mahigit 50 na at isa na nga ang namatay.

Metro Manila ang pinakamarami ang biktima bagama't may paisesa-isa sa mga lalawigan gaya ng Cavite at Bulacan.

'Yung kaso sa Cainta, Rizal, buong pamilya.

**KONGRESO, MALAKANYANG YARI RIN**  
Isa pang napakahalaga na nagaganap ang posibleng pagkaparalisa ng gobyerno kung matatamaan ang mga matataas na opisyal ng pamahalaan.

Kahapon lang nagself-quarantine ang 11 senador, ilang kongresman at ilang miyembro ng gabinete ni Pangulong Digong.

Kabilang sa mga nagself-quarantine sina Senador Ping Lacson, Win Gatchalian, Nancy



## ULTIMATUM NI BENNY ANTIPORDA

### GUTOM, KAMATAYAN DAPAT PAGHANDAAN

Binay, Francis Tolentino, Imee Marcos at Edgardo Angara.

Kasama halos lahat ng staff ng mga ito ang pinag-self quarantine na rin.

Nauna nang nag-self quarantine si Cong. Isidro Ungab at John Rey Tiangco at maaaring may susunod pa kahit sinabi ng Kamara na COVID-19 free ang buong Kamara.

Nag-self quarantine rin sina Education Sec. Leonor Briones, Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea, Finance Secretary Sonny Dominguez, Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade, Transportation Asec. Goddes Hope Libiran, DPWH Secretary Mark Villar, BCDA President Vince Dizon, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Gov. Ben Diokno at Build, Build, Build Chair Anna Mae Lamentillo

### MAHIHIRAP PAANO?

Kung matamaan ang mga mamamayan at pati ang gobyerno, nasa panganib na ang pambansang seguridad.

Masasabing walang problema ang mga kongresman, senador at miyembro ng gabinete dahil pawang mga milyonaryo at bilyonaryo ang mga ito.

Magtagal man ang COVID-19 ng gaya ng nangyari sa Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome na siyam na buwan, wala silang problema.

Pero paano ang mga mahihirap?

Mga obrero, vendor, mangingisda, magsasaka at iba pa na wala silang pampahaba ng buhay nila kundi pang-araw-araw lang mula sa kanilang sahod, konting kita at iba pa?

### GUTOM

Tiyak na gutom ang aabutin ng milyon-milyong mamamayan, lalo na sa Metro Manila.

May 15 milyong residente ang Metro Manila.

Swerte na lang kung may 1-2 milyon na makatatagal ng mahigit isang buwan nang hindi makararanas ng gutom

Paano ang higit na nakararami?

Ang gutom, mga Bro, ay nakamamatay.

At ang nakababahala, nakalilikha ito ng kahindik-hindik na mga krimen.

Paano, natin mapagtu-

long-tulungan na pahu-pain ang gutom ng mga ito?

### KAMATAYAN

Kulang na kulang ang mga rapid testing kit natin laban sa COVID-19.

Hindi naman yata tumutugon ang mga health official ukol sa paggamit ng CT scan na napakabilis at napakaprecise o napakasakto umano ang diagnosis sa nasabing sakit.

Laganap kasi ang CT Scan at meron ito ang mga regional hospital at mga private na hospital

At ang masama pa, mga Bro, lumalabas na ang Research Institute for Tropical Medicine, San Lazaro Hospital at Lung Center of the Philippines lang ang may kakayahang lumaban sa COVID-19 at ang iba ay pupwede lang sa mga mild na kaso.

Paano kung saan-saan na lang susulpot ang COVID-19, dadagosa ang magpa-testing o magpa-diagnosis at marami ang maging severe at kritikal na kamatayan ang ending?

### PINAKAMASAMANG SENARYO

Ang punto natin ay ipinapila lang natin sa kaisipan ni Pangulong Digong na sa usaping ito, punta ka na sa worst case scenario.

May malawakang gutom, marami ang mamamatay, magkaroon ng hirap ang gobyerno na kumilos ang larawan ng worst case scenario.

Ang target kung ganoon ng State of Public Health Emergency ay ang pagtutulungan, hindi lang ng lahat ng ahensya ng pamahalaan kundi ang mahigpit na pagtutulungan na rin ng mga mamamayan at buong pamahalaan.

Kasama sa mga maaaring gawin ang lockdown upang mapigilan ang pagkalat nang mabilis ang sakit at kamatayan.

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