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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



DENR welcomes leadership role for Pasig River rehab

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) welcomes the directive of President Duterte transferring the chairmanship of the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) to the agency.

"Of course, we welcome the decision of President Duterte transferring the chairmanship of the PRRC to the DENR. It only shows how serious the President is in addressing the pollution of our water bodies all over the country," Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said.

Duterte has signed Executive Order 90 on August 28 transferring the chairmanship of the PRRC from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) to the DENR.

Formed by virtue of an EO signed by former President Joseph Ejercito Estrada on January 6, 1999, the PRRC is primarily tasked to implement programs and projects aimed at reviving the polluted Pasig River.

The river connects the Laguna de Bay, the country's largest freshwater lake and the Manila Bay, which is currently undergoing massive rehabilitation by a special task force headed by the DENR.

"As you all know, the Pasig River connects the Laguna de Bay and Manila Bay. To effectively rehabilitate Manila Bay, all rivers that drains to Manila Bay must be cleaned and Pasig River is one of them," Antiporda, Cimatu's deputy spokesman and the DENR's undersecretary for solid waste management and local government units concerns said.

According to Antiporda, he expects the DENR chief to discuss the added task within the week.

"I've already forwarded a copy of Malacañang's order. By now, I think he has already read it," Antiporda said.

Antiporda said taking the lead in rehabilitating the Pasig River will be a big boost to the ongoing rehabilitation of Manila Bay. *Jonathan L. Mayuga*



DENR offers free legal services to 'estero' cleaners

By Rio N. Araja

LAWYERS belonging to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources are offering free legal counseling to volunteers who have helped in a clean-up activity along esteros in Barangay Sipac Almacen, Navotas City.

To encourage more people to join the cleanup, the agency's Legal Affairs Service, headed by director Norlito Eneran, said they have established a legal clinic wherein participating residents could avail of free legal service.

The activity has a theme of: "Payo pang-legal ang alay ko, 'pag basura mo linisin mo."

"Participants were given a coupon for every sack of garbage collected, which entitled them to free legal counseling," Eneran said.

He said the legal team is composed of lawyers from the DENR Lawyers Guild Inc., Integrated Bar of the Philippines' Malabon-Navotas chapter and the Public Attorney's Office in Quezon City.

The agency's Legal Affairs Service led the cleanup drive as part of the overall effort to clean up the Manila Bay.

Barangay Sipac Almacen is known as the seat of power of Navotas, and is bounded in the west by Manila Bay and in the east by the "highly polluted" Malabon-Navotas River.

"Our agency will take the lead role in the Battle for Manila Bay which, Secretary Roy Cimatu assessed, has to be with the battle for the rivers and esteros that drain into Manila Bay," said Undersecretary Ernesto Adobo for Administration, Finance, Human

"I commend director Eneran for initiating this [legal] activity. I had availed the services of lawyers for legal problems but I never imagined engaging lawyers to clean the garbage of Manila Bay," Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Benny Antiporda, said.



Dirty hands Lawyers from the Legal Affairs Service of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources get busy as they clean the coastline of Barangay Sipac Almacen in Navotas City as part of the rehabilitation of Manila Bay.

DENR PHOTO

Free legal advice for sack of trash

The legal team of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) provided free legal assistance to residents of Barangay Sipac Almacen in Navotas City during their recent clean-up activity.

The DENR Legal Affairs Service (LAS) gave counseling to the estero cleanup volunteers in exchange for their participation in the effort held in the barangay's esteros and coastline that contribute to the pollution in Manila Bay.

Known as the seat of power of the City Government of Navotas, Sipac Almacen is bounded in the west by Manila Bay and in the east by the highly polluted Malabon-Navotas River. The rehabilitation of the said river system was assigned to the cluster headed by

DENR Undersecretaries Ernesto Adobo Jr. and Benny Antiporda, and Assistant Secretary Jesus Moises Enrico Salazar.

To encourage more people to join the cleanup, LAS director Norlito Eneran said they established a legal clinic where participating residents could avail of free legal advice.

The activity carried the theme: "*Payo pang-legal ang alay ko, 'pag basura mo linisin mo.*"

"Participants were given a coupon for every sack of garbage collected, which entitled them to free legal counseling," Eneran explained.

The LAS staff members were joined by lawyers from the DENR Lawyers Guild Inc., the Malabon-Navotas Chapter of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, and the Public Attorney's

Office in Quezon City in providing free consultation to the participants.

The LAS-led cleanup drive formed part of the overall effort dubbed as "Battle for Manila Bay," which is being supervised by the inter-agency task force led by DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu.

Every division under the LAS is assigned to one barangay along the Malabon-Navotas river system. A focal person from each division is designated to coordinate with their counterparts in the community.

Each group submitted a proposed plan of activities, which include a clean-up drive; information and education campaign; enforcement of environmental laws; and monitoring and evaluation.

JC



Free legal counseling handog ng DENR lawyers

UPANG magkaroon ng kaalaman sa paglilinis ng kapaligiran nagbigay ng free legal counseling ang legal team ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources sa mga nakilisa sa clean-up drive ng mga estero at coastline sa Barangay Sipac Almacen sa Navotas City.

Sa ginanap na kick-off clean-up activity kamakailan, nagbigay ng free legal counseling ang mga abogado ng DENR Legal Affairs Service sa mga residente ng barangay kapalit ng pakikibahagi ng mga ito sa ginawang paglilinis.

Ang Sipac Almacen ay napaliligiran ng Manila Bay sa kanluran at ng highly polluted na Malabon-Navotas River sa silangan. Ang paglilinis ng ilog ay nakatalaga sa undersecretaries ng DENR na sina Ernesto D. Adobo, Jr. at Benny D. Antiporda at Assistant Secretary Jesus Moises Enrico B. Salazar.

Ayon kay LAS Director Norlito Eneran, upang makahikayat ng mga residenteng

makikibahagi sa clean-up activity, nagbigay sila ng free legal advice na may temang "Payo pang-legal ang alay ko, 'pag basura mo linisin mo."

"Ang mga nakilahok ay binigyan ng tig-isang kupon (coupon) sa bawat sako ng basura na naipon nila. Ang kupon ay may kapalit na libreng legal counseling," paliwanag ni Eneran.

Bukod sa staff ng LAS, katuwang din ang Lawyers Guild Inc. ng DENR, Malabon-Navotas Chapter ng Integrated Bar of the Philippines at Public Attorneys' Office ng Quezon City sa pagbibigay ng free legal consultation.

Ang naturang clean-up drive ay binuo bilang bahagi ng "Battle for Manila Bay," na pinangunahan ng inter-agency task force na pinamumunuan ni DENR Sec. Roy A. Cimatu.

Pinuri naman ni DENR Usec. Benny Antiporda, Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns ang hakbang ni Eneran at ng mga tauhan nito sa

LAS na nagbigay ng free legal counseling sa mga nakibahagi ng clean-up drive.

"I had availed the services of lawyers for legal problems, but I never imagined engaging lawyers to clean the garbage of Manila Bay," ani Antiporda.

Nanawagan naman si Salazar sa mga residenteng naninirahan sa paligid ng Malabon-Navotas river na makibahagi sa isinasagawang clean-up activity dahil sila rin ang makikinabang dito at ang iba pang stakeholders ng Manila Bay.

Bawat division ng LAS ay nakatalaga sa isang barangay sa Malabon-Navotas river system. Mayroon ding kintawan ang bawat division na siyang makikipag-ugnayan sa kanilang counterpart sa komunidad.

Nagsumite ang mga ito ng kani-kanilang plano, tulad ng clean-up drive; information and education campaign; enforcement of environmental laws at monitoring and evaluation.

SANTI CELARIO



DENR offers free legal help for river cleanup drive

FREE legal assistance have been provided to residents of Barangay Sipac Almacen in Navotas City in exchange for their participation in the cleanup activity held at the barangay's esteros and coastline that contribute to the pollution in Manila Bay.

Director Norlito Eneran of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Legal Affairs Service said the free legal assistance dubbed "Payo pang-legal

ang alay ko, 'pag basura mo linisin mo", was given during the clean up activity held recently in Navotas City.

Known as the seat of power of Navotas, Sipac Almacen is bounded in the west by Manila Bay and in the east by the highly polluted Malabon-Navotas River.

The rehabilitation of the river system was assigned to the cluster headed by DENR Undersecretaries Ernesto D. Adobo Jr., and Benny D. Anti-

porda, and Assistant Secretary Jesus Moises Enrico B. Salazar.

Eneran said to encourage more people to join the cleanup, they established a legal clinic where participating residents could avail of free legal advice.

The LAS-led cleanup drive formed part of the overall effort dubbed as "Battle for Manila Bay," which is being supervised by the inter-agency task force led by DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu.

Cory Martinez



Libreng legal aid sa estero cleanup

NI EDD REYES

NAGBIGAY ng free counseling ang legal team ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa mga nakiisa sa cleanup drive ng mga estero at coastline sa Barangay Sipac Almacen sa Navotas City.

Sa ginanap na kick-off cleanup activity kama-kailan, nagbigay ng free legal counseling ang mga abugado ng DENR Legal Affairs Service (LAS) sa mga residente ng barangay kapalit ng pakikibahagi ng mga ito sa ginawang paglilinis.

Ang Sipac Almacen, na siyang seat of government ng lungsod ng Navotas, ay napapaligiran ng Manila Bay sa kanluran at ng

highly polluted na Malabon-Navotas River sa silangan. Ang paglilinis ng ilog ay nakatalaga sa mga Undersecretaries ng DENR na sina Ernesto D. Adobo, Jr. at Benny D. Antiporda at Assistant Secretary Jesus Moises Enrico B. Salazar.

Ayon kay LAS Director Norlito Eneran, upang makahikayat ng mga residenteng makikibahagi sa cleanup activity ay nagbigay sila ng free legal advice na may temang "Payo pang-legal ang alay ko, pag basura mo linisin mo."

"Ang mga nakilahok ay binigyan ng tig-isang kupon (coupon) sa bawat sako ng basura na naipon nila. Ang kupon ay may kapalit na libreng legal counseling," paliwanag ni Eneran.



SC junks fisherfolk petition for kalikasan writ over WPS

By EVELYN MACAIRAN

Forty-seven days after the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) withdrew its petition for a writ of *kalikasan*, the Supreme Court

(SC) yesterday dismissed the petition urging the Duterte administration to protect parts of the West Philippine Sea (WPS).

Voting 15-0, the SC issued a resolution dismissing the case

filed by 40 fishermen from Palawan and Zambales against the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The petitioners had sought the issuance of a writ of *kalikasan* and a writ of continuing mandamus over the Ayungin Shoal, Panganiban Reef and Panatag Shoal.

In the resolution, the SC pointed out the "unusual proceedings" that occurred during the oral arguments last July 9 when the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG), as counsel for respondents, presented sworn statements from some of the petitioners saying they had no idea of the petition.

The IBP was given time to

confer with their other fisherfolk-clients and only ended up with more fishermen expressing their interest to withdraw as complainant in the writ of *kalikasan* petition.

In the SC resolution, the magistrates reminded the parties of the procedural and substantive requirements in petitions for the issuance of a writ of *kalikasan* and writ of continuing mandamus that must be complied with upon their filing.

The counsels, led by Jose Manuel Diokno, were cautioned that they should be ready with their evidence before they seek the issuance of extraordinary writs.

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"Due to the unusual procedural developments of the case, the SC... emphasized that counsels should establish and maintain a form of communication with their clients at all times. Mere difficulty in contacting clients should not be used by counsels as an excuse to renege on their

duties and to disengage from their commitments," the SC said in a statement.

The SC also warned the lawyers of the petitioners that a similar infraction in the future would be dealt with more severely.

The SC no longer tackled any of the substantive issues raised in the petition.

SC junks writ of kalikasan plea for West Philippine Sea

BY ASHZEL HACHERO

THE Supreme Court (SC) en banc has dismissed the petition requesting for a writ of kalikasan to protect the environment in the West Philippine Sea, particularly over the Ayungin Shoal, Panganiban Reef and Panatag Shoal.

Atty. Brian Hosaka, chief of the SC Public Information Office, said the high court's decision was

prompted by the decision of the fishermen-petitioners to withdraw their signatures from the petition.

Hosaka said the ruling likewise gave due course to the motion filed by the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) seeking to withdraw as a petitioner, and subsequently to withdraw the petition.

"The Supreme Court did not touch on the substantive issue of the case," Hosaka said.

The petition seeking a writ of kalikasan to compel the government to ensure the protection of the environment surrounding the West Philippines Sea was originally filed by the IBP and some 41 fisherfolks from Zambales and Palawan.

The petitioners have accused the Duterte administration of neglect and failure to preserve and protect the West Philippine Sea from harmful activities, including poaching and

illegal fishing by foreign fishermen.

During oral arguments on the petition, however, Solicitor General Jose Calida told the SC that 19 of the 41 petitioners they did not know of the petition. This was followed by the withdrawal of 18 more fishermen-signatories.

Lawyer Jose Manuel Diokno, who represented the petitioners, denied Calida's claim as he accused the government of secretly talking

to the petitioners to withdraw their signatures and support to the petition, thereby violating legal ethics.

The IBP last July 10 withdrew from the petition.

"With due regard to the plight and position of the fishermen-petitioners, the views and recommendations of the handling lawyers and the IBP Chapters involved, and the matters raised and guidance by the Honorable Supreme Court, a motion has been

filed for the withdrawal or discharge of the counsels for the fishermen and for the withdrawal of the petition," the IBP said then in a statement signed by the group's national president Domingo Egon Cayosa.

In its ruling, the SC en banc reminded the parties of the procedural and substantive requirements in petitions for writ of kalikasan and writ of continuing mandamus which must be complied with upon their filing.



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Writ of Kalikasan on WPS dismissed

THE Supreme Court yesterday dismissed the petition for writ of kalikasan filed by the Integrated Bar of the Philippines and fishermen seeking to compel the government to secure and protect the West Philippine Sea specifically Ayungin Shoal, Panganiban Reef, and Panatag Shoal.

SC PIO chief, Brian Hosaka disclosed the high court dismissed the petition after the fishermen-petitioners from Palawan and Zambales withdrew their signatures from the plea.

Also, the SC reminded the parties of the procedural and substantive requirements in petitions for writ of kalikasan and writ of continuing mandamus that it added must be complied with upon their filing.

Hector Lawas



Bare details on oil search with China, Palace asked

SEN. Francis Pangilinan asked the Executive department to bare the details of its agreements with China, particularly on oil exploration in the South China (West Philippine) Sea.

He maintained that the country has the right to explore resources in its exclusive economic zone with or without China.

"Teritoryo natin ito at likas-yaman natin ito. Karapatan nating mga Pilipino na malaman ang mga detalye nito (It's our territory and it's our natural resources. Filipinos have all the right to be informed and know the details)," the senator said.

He said the Executive department should submit a report on the agreement on the oil exploration to the Senate.

"Kailangan alam ng taumbayan ang laman ng kasunduan. Sila ang maghuhusga kung makakabuti sa atin o madedehado tayo rito (The people should know the contents of the agreement. They will say whether this is good for us or disadvantageous to us)," he added.

While the memorandum of understanding on the oil deal has been signed with China late last year, Pangilinan said the Duterte administration should be very cautious in drafting the final agreement and should disclose the details to the public.

He called on the Executive department not to sign any agreement that would diminish the Philippines' exclusive right to explore, develop and use its natural resources.

During President Rodrigo Duterte's recent visit to China, Beijing and Manila agreed to form working groups to explore commercial oil and gas agreements in the West Philippine Sea.

Chinese President Xi Jinping said the "steering committee should prepare a substantive program on the matter" when Duterte raised the possible joint gas exploration in the West Philippine Sea during their bilateral meeting on Thursday.

Earlier, Duterte said he was amenable to a 60-40 sharing deal.

Pangilinan acknowledged that talking business with China over disputed territories in the South China Sea was better than fighting.

He, however, urged the people to remain vigilant to ensure that the Duterte administration would not get into any lopsided deal with China.

JAVIER JOE ISMAEL


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Cimatu warns against exploration in watershed areas

By **MIKE U. CRISMUNDO**

BUTUAN CITY – Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy A. Cimatu warned yesterday that exploration on watershed areas in Northeastern Mindanao is strictly prohibited and ordered DENR officials in the region not to process any application within the watershed areas.

“Let the watershed stay as it is. There should be no exploration and no application should be approved in Caraga region,” Cimatu said.

The watersheds of Surigao del Sur are crucial not only as water resources, but also as habitats of biodiversity and homelands of indigenous

peoples, he said.

The watersheds in Surigao del Sur are among the 140 watersheds nationwide that have been identified by the national convergence initiative for sustainable rural development as convergence sites, Cimatu said.

“A lot of groups wanted to explore within the watershed area but I won't allow it,” he stressed.

Cimatu and Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Eduardo Año were in Caraga region recently to witness the signing of the commitment for the Convergence of Sustainable Watershed Statement (CSWS) in Cantilan, Surigao del Sur province.

Carrascal Mayor Vicente H. Pimentel, Cantilan Mayor Carla Lopez-Pichay, Madrid Mayor Mary Grace Sulatra – Kimura, Carmen Mayor Jane Valeroso – Plaza, and Lanuza Mayor Salvacion Saloma-Azarcon signed their commitment to undertake nine courses of actions on four core river basins and waterfalls in their respective domain (watersheds).

The CSW is aimed towards creating a convergence that will declare all critical watersheds as “no go zones for extractive industries such as mineral production, mining, and illegal timber harvesting.”

Cimatu and Año stated that they would look into the report of the mining operation right within the watershed and that action will be taken if indeed the mining operation has violated any laws.

Unconfirmed reports reaching the two Cabinet members claim that a mining operation has been ongoing in the watershed of Cantilan above one of the largest river in Surigao del Sur.

DENR 13 Regional Executive Director Atty. Felix S. Alicer assured that they will look into the “no go zones.”

He ordered Cantilan Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer Ruel E. Efen to look into the alleged operation of a mining firm in a portion of the watershed area in Cantilan as claimed by some environmental groups.



Government sets steel standard review

BY ELIJAH FELICE E. ROSALES [@alyasjah](#)

THE Departments of Trade and Industry (DTI) and Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) will jointly review existing environmental standards used in steel making to address industry concerns about the proliferation of induction furnaces in the Philippines.

Trade Secretary Ramon M. Lopez and Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, in a meeting last Monday, agreed to tighten environmental standards on steelmaking to ensure the industry produces quality and safe steel products. As such, they decided to review the standards adhered to and production technologies used by manufacturers in their operations.

"What we need in the country are modern, environmentally friendly technologies that will consistently produce quality products," Lopez said in a news statement.

The DTI and the DENR are particularly concerned with the reported prevalence of induction furnaces in the industry. In 2017 China, one of the world's largest steelmakers, phased out and banned the use of induction furnaces, as they pollute the environment and produce low-grade steel products.

"We do not want those pollutive induction furnaces to transfer to our country," Lopez added.

"This collaboration with DENR will help us in promoting industrial capacity building with the use of advance technology in steel-making, while protecting our government. This is also a testament that as we drive economic growth, we encourage responsible businesses in the country," he said.

Steel manufacturers, led by the Philippine Iron and Steel Institute, have been insisting the government to implement a ban on the use of induction furnaces.

According to Lopez, the DTI and the DENR are reviewing proposed regulations on the

use of secondhand equipment and machineries in steelmaking. Moreover, the agencies are studying the possibility of raising to the national government the approval of environmental compliance certificates (ECC) of heavy industries, such as steel and cement.

The move, Lopez argued, will ensure ECC applications are reviewed comprehensively and quickly, as well as tighten the government's monitoring of steelmakers with their compliance to environmental standards.

The DTI and the DENR will put up technical working group tasked to align their policies and strategies in keeping steelmaking facilities compliant with environmental standards and product quality. Further, the TWG will evaluate the compliance of steel manufacturers utilizing online monitoring system linked to the environment department.

The TWG will also review the proposed hike in penalties imposed on steel manufacturers violating environmental laws and regulations or the terms and conditions in the ECC.

The trade chief, for his part, committed the DTI's Bureau of Philippine Standards will keep its product standards competitive. He said the agency will review its Philippine Standard license certification scheme procedures for steel products and implement a more stringent monitoring at the retail level.

According to the Global Steel Trade Monitor, the Philippines imported 9.1 million metric tons of steel last year, an 11-percent jump from 8.1 million MT in 2017.

It imports huge volumes of steel from China, Russia and Japan. Overall, the country purchases steel from over 50 countries and territories.

The country's steel requirement jumped to 9.1 million MT in 2016 and to 9.5 million MT in 2017, from 4.2 million MT in 2015, as a result of the Duterte administration's implementation of its multitrillion peso infrastructure program, which seeks to address the country's lack of roads, bridges and connectivity facilities.



DTI, DENR to review regulation of steelmakers

THE Trade and Environment departments said they will seek to harmonize environmental rules to ensure the steel industry is adequately regulated with the introduction of new production methods.

In a statement, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said they will review environmental standards particularly in the context of new steel production technology using induction furnaces, which are thought to be more harmful to the environment.

“What we need in the country are modern, environmentally friendly technologies that will consistently produce quality products,” Trade Secretary Ramon M. Lopez said.

“This collaboration with DENR will help us in promoting industrial capacity building with the use of advanced technology in steelmaking while protecting our environment. This is also a testament that as we drive economic growth, we encourage responsible businesses in the country,” he added.

China a leading steel producer, phased out inductive furnaces in 2017.

The technical working group (TWG) will harmonize policy to ensure that steel production is compliant.

The TWG will look into possibly regulating the use of secondhand equipment, as well as make adjustments to the environmental compliance certificate process for industries like steelmaking and cement. It will also review a possible increase in penalties imposed on violators. — **Vincent Mariel P. Galang**



BOI rejects steel mfg project over environmental concerns

By LOUELLA DESIDERIO

The Board of Investments (BOI) has denied the application of Philippine Sanjia - Steel Corp. for its P800-million steel manufacturing project due to environmental concerns.

In a letter dated Aug. 20 to Philippine Iron and Steel Institute (PISI) president Roberto Cola, Elyjean DC Portoza, officer-in-charge director for the legal and compliance service at the BOI, said the agency has decided to reject Philippine Sanjia-Steel's application.

"The Board, in its July 18, 2019 meeting, resolved to deny Philippine Sanjia-Steel Corp.'s application, taking into consideration the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' policy against induction furnaces with defec-

tive or substandard air pollution control technology, and the points raised in PISI's letter of objection, dated July 11, 2019, and PISI's letter of concern, dated Jan. 30, 2019," the letter said.

In its letter to the BOI dated July 11, PISI said it opposes the grant of incentives to Philippine Sanjia-Steel's project of producing reinforcing steel bar using coreless electric furnace smelting technology.

The project involves processing of raw materials into steel products including construction steel, industrial steel, angle iron and beam channel.

It is projected to provide employment to an initial 150 individuals, and to a total of 300 after three years.

PISI said induction furnace facilities do not have the capability to remove harmful elements of phosphorus and sulfur from

liquid steel.

These harmful elements are present in varying amounts in the scrap iron and steel raw material, and pose danger to the environment due to the "hit or miss" operation for every heat or batch of steel produced.

PISI also said the use of induction furnace facilities for producing construction grade steel has been banned by the Chinese government since January 2017.

During the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Senior Economic Officials Meeting in January last year, the ASEAN Iron and Steel Council has also raised concern over the moving of obsolete induction furnace facilities from China to Southeast Asian countries.



TITLE:

editorial

Harnessing the potential of the versatile bamboo

NEXT to rice, the bamboo is regarded as the staff of life in many parts of Asia, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). This is because the giant grass species is staple food in Asian countries. Bamboo sprouts, for instance, are a popular food item in Southeast Asian and East Asian countries. The bamboo's versatility is on a par with that of coconut, which is widely regarded as the tree of life.

FAO said the bamboo can also be used in the construction of houses, bridges, furniture, fishing poles, water pipes, weapons, bags, baskets and cloth. Unlike other grass species, cultivating the bamboo does not require much in terms of resources and time. Citing studies, the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARD) said the bamboo requires little attention during its growing/production cycle and can occupy the same ecological niche as that of trees.

Despite its versatility, the bamboo is not cultivated as extensively as other crops. Millions of hectares are devoted to rice and corn—the staple food of Filipinos—and even coconuts. Compared to these crops, the PCAARD said there are only around 39,200 to 52,700 hectares of bamboo plantations in the Philippines. The attached agency of the Department of Science and Technology said, however, that only 7 percent of these are in private plantations.

Sen. Cynthia A. Villar noted that Filipinos have yet to recognize the economic importance of the bamboo. The senator, who attended the Global Bamboo and Rattan Congress in China last year, noted that Chinese farmers who have a 1-hectare plantation could earn P1.5 million a year. This is because they were taught to process bamboo into other products.

The cultivation of bamboo requires only a modest capital investment to generate a steady income, but the private sector is not too keen on it due to the lack of a comprehensive policy. Also, the requirement of a certificate of verification for harvested bamboo dampens private-sector investment in bamboo cultivation (*See, "Study: PHL bamboo industry lacks comprehensive policy," in the BUSINESSMIRROR, August 26, 2018*). PCAARD said the COV is a legal document used by traders and shippers for the movement of bamboo from point of origin to destination and serves as proof of the legality of source.

If the government is looking for other crops that farmers can plant, the bamboo is a viable alternative. The government can encourage its cultivation by repealing the order that requires the COV and by investing in the construction of processing plants. Congress should also consider giving the Department of Environment and Natural Resources the budget it has requested to expand bamboo plantations next year (*See, "DENR needs funds to expand bamboo plantations," in the BUSINESSMIRROR, August 26, 2019*). The P5 billion being requested by the DENR is small change compared to the numerous benefits that can be derived from planting bamboo.

The government could help farmers and companies find other uses for the sturdy bamboo by investing in research and development. Incentives will go a long way in encouraging the private sector to go into the cultivation and processing of bamboo. Aside from their role in fighting climate change, bamboo plantations will increase the country's wood supply and even the availability of jobs, particularly for those in the countryside.



What's the plan for Palawan?

When Congress passed House Bill No. 8055 dividing Palawan into three provinces, not a few of my “kasiman-wa” (provincemates) were surprised. In a blitzkrieg operation marked by hush and speed, the bill was approved overwhelmingly, sponsored nonetheless by our three congressmen. Then, it was promptly endorsed to the Senate, where it was embellished with three articles and nonchalantly approved. Now, it is law (Republic Act No. 11259), and as the saying goes, “You can’t fight City Hall.”

However, as one born and rooted in the dismembered province, I invoke my sovereign right as a citizen to say my piece—with due respect, of course, to the proponents of the bill and others who aspire to become governors, vice governors, board members of the new provinces. Since we were not born yesterday, there was a strong sense that issues larger and more compelling than complaints about difficulties in governance were behind the bill’s passage. Resuscitating an idea that never took off in the past for lack of palpable popular clamor would require concerted moves and a powerful force in command.

Recent events are unraveling and revealing that force: the controversy over the West Philippine Sea and the country’s hunger for investments. The drawing-board partitioning of Palawan was just a convenient side issue because of its proximity to the disputed West Philippine Sea. Kalayaan (Pag-asa Island) is a municipality of Palawan.

The Americans made good use of its strategic location during World War II by building the Palawan Air Base in Canigaran (the precursor of today’s airport) and the vast Naval Seaplane Base that extended from the pier area to Calero. The two facilities served as war depots and replenishing

COMMENTARY

EVA MAGGAY-INCIONG

bases for military hardware and troops, a vital role that helped the Allied forces win the homestretch battles in the Pacific.

Such function, however, is not in our wish list for the province. Palawan must never be a magnet for aggression or a playground for international bullies.

Foremost of our concerns are: (1) what the government envisions for Palawan vis-a-vis the West Philippine Sea; and (2) what kind of investments (foreign and local) will be allowed in its internal waters. Daily reports are alarming and worrisome. For instance, will Pogos (Philippine offshore gaming operators) be allowed to occupy the 1,800 islands? What if drug traffickers, smuggling syndicates and seaborne criminals masquerading as “investors” make the islands their refuge and base of operations? What if miners and loggers bring in their weapons of environmental destruction—bulldozers, backhoes, chainsaws, etc.—to shave our forests, screw over mountains and pollute our beaches and waterways? Can the local police, with their vintage weaponry, cope with and match the firepower of these groups?

Lest I be accused as a prophet of doom, one can just look at what’s happening now in Cavite, Cagayan and Zambales—provinces closer to the center of defense establishments. Opening Palawan to free-wheeling commerce and unbridled urbanization is a double-edged venture that needs further study.

Palawan is environmentally fragile. All

it needs today is enhancement of its natural assets and a different kind of (infrastructure) development module, one that respects its existing endowments, and not disrupt the peaceful and sustainable life of its people. In the urban areas, the basic needs are: a stable power and water supply, improved municipal ports and strategic road networks. If Congress wills it, here is where funding should be prioritized. The private sector can do the rest. For instance, island-hopping does not require cemented roads. Let our skilled boatmen and ferry operators make money.

Despite being treated like a distant cousin (literally) by past administrations, even depriving it of its just share of the Malampaya gas royalties, Palawan has thrived and evolved into a tourism jewel. Given its tremendous wealth above and below the sea, it can take off economically if properly administered, because 1) it is earthquake-free; 2) killer typhoons shy away from it; and 3) there is no social unrest or costly pocket wars. Best of all, it has been declared as “the world’s most beautiful island” by Condé Nast, a travel-rating authority.

To the world of science, Palawan’s rich and rare biodiversity and iconic geographical wonders offer a wealth of material for scientific study and research.

In its pristine state, Palawan is already a national treasure. If it cannot be properly developed and protected, then it should be left alone for the enjoyment of succeeding generations of Filipinos.

Eva Maggay-Inciong used to serve as private sector representative for Neda Region IV (Mimaropa) and later co-chair for Calabarzon in tandem with Gov. Hermilando Mandanas of Batangas.



Six practical strategies for going green at the workplace

THE call to go green these days is strong. With controversial violations of environmental laws in Boracay and Manila Bay, there is a growing awareness among entrepreneurs for the need to look for cost-effective and sustainable solutions for their businesses.

Legislation is also keeping up with this green movement. From the Philippine Green Building Code to the recent signing of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act, the Philippines is setting the stage for environmentally-responsible and resource-efficient practices that can help curb the threat of climate change.

"The problem is," said BPI Sustainable Energy Finance Head Jo Ann Eala, "some companies find going green daunting. They think of the high cost of technology, complex solutions, and radical culture change. They ask, 'Where do we start?'"

Fortunately, for building construction projects, according to Eala, the Philippine Green Building Code has six practical, easy-to-remember guidelines:

1. ENERGY EFFICIENCY. Reduce energy consumption by simply switching to LED lights, inverter air-conditioners or chillers, operable windows for natural ventilation, light-colored paints and roof insulation to reflect heat, and soft-starting escalators with motion sensors. Savings of around 30 percent to 90 percent can easily be achieved with these innovations.

2. WATER EFFICIENCY AND WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT. Conserve water for cleaning by simply using dual-flush, low-flow faucets and showers. Learn to harvest rainwater. You'll not only lower your operating cost but also help solve the water shortage problem.

3. INDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY. Maintain good air quality within your building by using air filters, ventilating fans and restricting smoking to specified areas. You'll protect building occupants from health disorders, such as sick building syndrome and respiratory illnesses. Maintaining a healthy environment within the building is a growing trend in more developed communities, and there is a strong clamor among building occupants as well.

4. SITE SUSTAINABILITY. Using gravel bed, collecting rainwater, filtering sediment, and keeping existing endemic foliage can help prevent soil erosion and water pollution during site clearing, grading (or adjusting the slope and elevation of the soil) and excavation. Blend landscaped areas with indigenous or adaptable species of grass, shrubs, and trees to allow recharging of the natural ground water reservoir, cool the building surroundings and provide indoor to outdoor connectivity for the building occupants.

5. SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT. Use eco-friendly recyclable materials, less plastic and paper, and provide a fully enclosed and easily accessible garbage facility called the materials recovery facility for the collection and segregation of solid waste materials. These help reduce both the volume of waste going to landfills and conserve resources used to produce new materials.

6. MATERIALS SUSTAINABILITY. Ask your suppliers if they use nontoxic materials, such as composite wood that does not contain urea formaldehyde. Find out if their paints, coatings, adhesives and sealants, used indoors or in non-ventilated areas, are free from or has tolerable levels of volatile organic compounds. "Some business owners deprioritize incorporating eco-friendly solutions and innovations in their businesses because they don't immediately see the advantages that this shift to sustainability brings to their businesses.

But wide-ranging benefits—from financial, operational, reputational, environmental, to health and social gains—extend not only to the organization but to the whole community," said BPI's Eala.

Through programs that provide the necessary tools and the means to go green, such as the Sustainable Energy Finance (SEF) program of BPI, companies will find green initiatives easier to implement.

"SEF programs, such as what we have in BPI, can package a corporate or business loan with free technical assessments, and sound advice to both the SME sector and mid-sized to large corporations. Our sweet spot is the SME sector. They do not have their own engineering departments and they need advice in studying project proposals and projections, choosing the right technology and innovations, and deciding which provider to partner with. This is all part of our commitment to sustainability, financial inclusion, and making lives easier for clients and their own customers," said Eala.



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ALL HANDS ON DECK
- AllHome employees participate in a clean-up drive at the Las Pinas-Paranaque critical habitat and eco-tourism area as part of their contribution to prevent disasters caused by flood in the area, and educating others about the importance of protecting the environment. (Ali Vicoy)



1,421 kilos of garbage collected at wetland park

By **JOSEPH ALMER B. PEDRAJAS**

A total of 1,421 kilograms of garbage, including plastic and rubber items, were collected in a clean-up drive conducted at Las Piñas - Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area (LPPCHEA) by AllHome Corporation, on Tuesday morning.

LPPCHEA is a 175-hectare wetland park and a protected area with mangroves, ponds and lagoons, mudflats, salt marshes and mixed beach forests. It is located at the coastline of Las Piñas and Parañaque cities. It provides habitat for many migratory bird species, including the egrets.

More than 150 employees of AllHome Corporation from different parts of the country participated in the clean-up activity as part of the company's aim to address "relevant social and environmental issues" and reduce

"the carbon footprint not just of its stores, but the communities it operates in."

"This is just the first activity that we have," said Mary Lee Sadosa, AllHome chief operating officer. "We have various activities that are lined up, including those that will address the needs of other sectors."

The 155 sacks of trash collected around 300-meter beach forest of LPPCHEA's Freedom Island included 69 sacks of plastic, 22 sacks of rubber, 19 sacks of styrofoam, 9 sacks of glass, 21 sacks of plastic bottles and

15 sacks of other forms of garbage.

Joey Petras, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) employee, said that most of the trash collected had drifted from Parañaque and Las Piñas rivers, and from the waters of Cavite and Bataan provinces.

He said that the plastic bottles will be recycled under Senator Cynthia Villar's program. Most of them will be formed into recycled chairs, he said.

Most of the other forms of garbage will be stored for other purposes.



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CLEANUP Employees of AllHome organized a cleanup drive at the Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat & Eco-Tourism Area on Tuesday in a bid to prevent disasters caused by floods in the area. By educating employees on the importance of looking after the environment, AllHome said it hopes they will make choices that conserve the environment. **NONIE REYES**



Slave to sachets: How poverty worsens PH plastics crisis

Plastic sachets give the poor access to everyday household essentials, allowing manufacturers to increase sales by targeting those who cannot afford bigger quantities. But there's a downside. Some 60 billion sachets are used yearly in the Philippines. Many of these clog drains and waterways, and pollute bodies of water like Manila Bay. The country is ranked third in the world for failing to deal with its plastics. —STORY BY REUTERS

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Armed with gloves, rubber boots and a rake, "Mangrove Warrior" Willer Gualva, 68, comes to Freedom Island on Manila Bay almost every day to stop it from being engulfed by trash.

No one lives on the island, yet each morning its shores are covered in garbage, much of it single-use sachets of shampoo, toothpaste, detergent and coffee that are carried out to sea by the rivers of overcrowded Manila.

"We collect mostly plastics here and the No. 1 type are sachets," said Gualva, one of 17 people employed by the environment department to help preserve the island and its forest.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) calls them "Mangrove Warriors," and pays them slightly above \$8 (more than P416) per day.

Five days of coastal cleanup on the island last month yielded a total of 16,000 kilos of trash, DENR data showed, the bulk of it plastics, including the sachets made of aluminum and blends of plastics.

60B sachets a year

These packets give some of the poorest people in Asia access to everyday household essentials. For the multinationals that manufacture them, it's a way to increase sales by targeting customers who cannot afford bigger quantities.

Such sachets are sold in most

developing countries but the number consumed in the Philippines is staggering—163 million pieces a day, according to a recent study by environment group Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA).

That's almost 60 billion sachets a year, or enough to cover 130,000 soccer fields.

In Manila's slum areas that are inaccessible to garbage trucks, sachets and other waste are thrown in estuaries or dumped on the street, and end up clogging drains and waterways.

"Money is hard to come by, so I only buy sachets," said Lisa Jorillo, 42, a mother of four who lives in a slum in Manila's Tondo area, behind a beach blanketed by trash.

Poorly enforced law

The Philippines' law on solid waste is poorly enforced and the country doesn't regulate packaging manufacturing. The country is ranked third in the world for failing to deal with its plastics, according to a 2015 study by the University of Georgia, which said 81 percent of plastics waste in the country was mismanaged.

About 14 million people live in Metro Manila, one of Asia's teeming megacities. Overall, the Philippines has a population of 107 million people, and one-fifth of them live below the national poverty line, described by the statistics agency as monthly



RICHARD A. REYES

163M PIECES DAILY The volume of sachets sold by manufacturers in the country per day is enough to cover 130,000 soccer fields.

consumption of less than \$241 (P12,532) per person.

Jorillo's family earns about P2,500 (\$48) a week from the construction work that her husband does, and she and her family buy about 80 sachets of coffee, toothpaste and shampoo each month.

The Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and China account for 60 percent of the world's marine plastic, or 8 million tons annually, according to the Ocean Conservancy non-profit.

Environmentalists say the main culprits aren't govern-



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Slave to sachets: How poverty worsens PH plastics crisis

ments or consumers, but the multinationals that churn out plastic packaging.

"They have money to do research that will remove the problematic packaging," said Sonia Mendoza, head of Mother Earth Foundation, which promotes waste reduction. She said refilling stations could be one way to reduce the use of single-use sachets.

The environmental group GAIA studied nonrecyclable waste collected in Philippine cleanups and found that 60 percent of it came from just 10 companies, led by Nestlé, Unilever and Procter & Gamble (P&G).

Nestlé declined to disclose the volume of sachets it produced or sold in the Philippines.

Fighting malnutrition

Nestlé said it was committed to finding ways to keep plastics out of oceans through plastic collection and recycling programs, but added that sachets prevented leakage of micro-nutrients essential to addressing malnutrition, especially among children.

Unilever did not say how many sachets it produces in the Philippines, but said its global plastic packaging production is 610,000 tons annually.

The figure, according to Unilever, includes "flexible packaging formats" used by 1 million micro-businesses in the Philippines. Nestlé and Unilever's target is for 100 percent of their

packaging to be recyclable or reusable by 2025 worldwide.

Refilling stations

Unilever said it had a community-based sachet recovery program in the Philippines where collected sachets were converted to school chairs and cement pavers. It also pilot ran shampoo and conditioner refilling stations this year, which it plans to scale up.

P&G referred questions to the industry group Philippine Alliance for Recycling and Materials Sustainability or the government's National Solid Waste Management Commission.

The Philippine government does not have a clear strategy to tackle its plastics crisis. In an email response to Reuters, the DENR said it was in discussions with all manufacturers to identify ways to manage waste. It provided no details.

Elsewhere in the region, Indonesia has a law requiring producers to manage non-biodegradable packaging and the tourist island of Bali bans single-use plastics.

Thailand is between now and 2025 introducing bans on seven types of plastics most commonly found in the ocean.

Vietnam hopes to raise taxes on plastic bags and its prime minister has urged shops to stop using nonrecyclable plastics in cities by 2021, and countrywide by 2025. —REUTERS



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How poverty worsens the plastics crisis in the PH

By **REUTERS**

Armed with gloves, rubber boots and a rake, "Mangrove Warrior" Willer Gualva, 68, comes to Freedom Island in the Philippines almost every day to stop it from being engulfed by trash.

No one lives on the island, yet each morning its shores are covered in garbage, much of it sachets of shampoo, toothpaste, detergent and coffee that are carried out to sea by the rivers of overcrowded Manila.

"We collect mostly plastics here and the number one type are sachets," said Gualva, one of 17 people employed by the environment agency to help preserve the island and its forest. The Department of Environment and **▶8**

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Five days of coastal cleanup on the Manila Bay island last month yielded a total of 16,000 kg of trash, DENR data showed, the bulk of it plastics, including the sachets made of aluminum and blends of plastics.

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Such sachets are sold in most developing countries but the consumption in the Philippines is staggering - 163 million pieces a day, according to a recent study by environment group The Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA). That's almost 60 billion sachets a year, or enough to

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"Money is hard to come by, so I only buy sachets," said Lisa Jorillo, 42, a mother of four who lives in a slum in Manila's Tondo area, behind a beach blanketed by trash.

"It's likely the garbage will still be there when my son grows up," Jorillo said, referring to her four-year-old.

The Philippines' law on solid waste is poorly enforced and the country doesn't regulate packaging manufacturing. The country is ranked third in the world for failing to deal with its plastics, according to a 2015 study by the University of Georgia, which said 81 percent of plastics waste in the country is mismanaged.



Plastic woes tied to poverty

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about 80 sachets of coffee, toothpaste and shampoo each month.

In sea-facing Manila, much of the trash ends up in the sea. The Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and China account for 60 percent of the world's marine plastic, or 8 million tonnes annually, according to the Ocean Conservancy non-profit.

Environmentalists say the main culprits aren't governments or consumers, but the multinationals that churn out plastic packaging.

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Vietnam hopes to raise taxes on plastic bags and its prime minister has urged shops to stop using non-recyclable plastics in cities by 2021, and countrywide by 2025.

The Philippines industry group PARMS, which includes Unilever, P&G, and Nestle among its members, is building a 25 million pesos (\$475,000) facility that aims to turn sachets into plastic blocks and eco-bricks.

But Von Hernandez, global coordinator for the Break Free From Plastic movement, calls that "greenwashing" – or only trying to appear more environmentally friendly.

"They are not really changing the true nature of their business," Hernandez said of the multinationals. "The plastics industry is slated to grow exponentially, especially by 2030. The bulk of that is going to packaging and you can bet this is going to end up in sachets."

Crispian Lao, president of PARMS, said every effort, even those which "may be perceived as small and insignificant", helps address the problem.

Lao said sachets were a necessity for lower income groups, but added the industry is exploring other delivery formats and packaging alternatives. (Reuters)



Cagayan River delta work halted

By Brenda Jocson

APARRI, Cagayan—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Environmental Management Bureau in Region 2 has ordered a company to stop dredging the Cagayan River delta.

EMB said Pacific Offshore Exploration, Inc. has no Environmental Compliance Certificate, which is a violation, thus it should stop dredging.

In a Notice of Violation, Engineer Diosdado Doctor, EMB Region 2 officer in charge-director, said the POEI, based on an investigation conducted by EMB technical staff and documents provided by the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office of Cagayan Province, has violated

environmental laws, having no ECC to conduct the dredging among them.

“You are directed immediately to refrain from conducting dredging operation until such time that an ECC shall be issued for your project,” Doctor said in the notice.

In a related memorandum, Ismael Manaligod of PENRO Cagayan has also instructed the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office in

this town to coordinate with the Philippine Coast Guard, the local government unit, and the Bureau of Customs to conduct an inspection to determine POEI’s compliance with the notice.

The CENRO was also instructed to request from the BOC whether the POEI had already stopped transporting dredged materials outside the Philippines.

Earlier, the Cagayan provincial board authorized Governor Manuel Mamba to enter into a memorandum of agreement for the dredging of the Cagayan River delta, which led to a deal with the provincial government and the POEI.

Mamba said the dredging was for the reopening of the Port of Aparri, which would improve economic and trade relations between Cagayan province and

China and other neighboring countries in Asia.

It was in 2018 when Mamba, chairman of the Regional Development Council’s Infrastructure Development Committee, approved a resolution on the reopening of the Port of Aparri.

The resolution said the port was recognized as a catalyst in unlocking the potential of the Cagayan Valley region as a major transshipment facility.

It also recognized the region’s development potential as an agro-industrial and tourism hub.

Mamba said the port would take in agricultural products and other goods to complement other Northern Luzon ports in the town of Claveria in Cagayan and the town of Currimao in Ilocos Norte.



Public consultation sa Kaliwa Dam matagumpay

Matagumpay na idinaos ang public consultation para sa Kaliwa Dam kung saan nanguna ang Environmental Management Bureau ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources at ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS).

Tatlong public hearing ang isinagawa sa General Nakar, Quezon; Teresa, Rizal; at sa Infanta, Quezon.

Ito'y para sa pagpapatupad o paggawa ng Kaliwa Dam Project (KDP).

Ang Infanta at ang General Nakar ang siyang magiging host kung saan itatayo ang dam site, habang ang sa Teresa, Rizal naman ang siyang nasa dalawang kritikal na component ng KDP - ang tunnel outlet at mga water treatment plant.

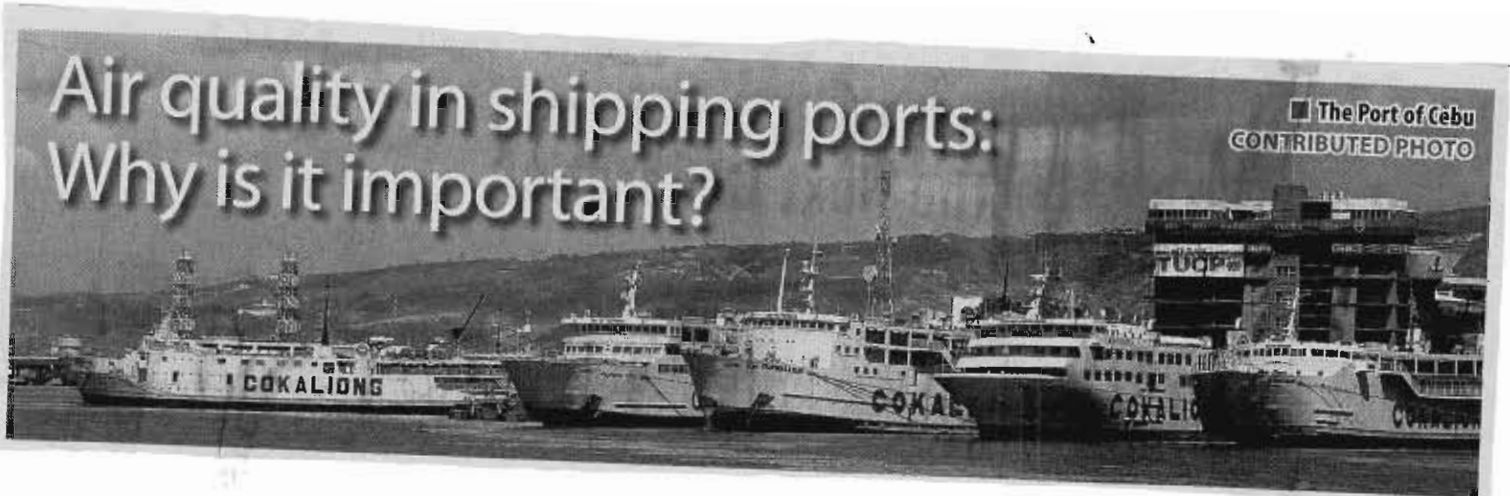
Ang Municipal Council ng Teresa ang una sa LGU na nagbigay ng endorsement para sa implementasyon

ng proyekto.

Bukod sa mga representante mula sa iba't ibang ahensya kabilang ang NEDA, DILG, DPWH, NCIP, NIA, PNP at DepEd, may 200 tao na kinabibilangan ng mga municipal at barangay official at mga residente ng Teresa ay dumalo sa public consultation sa Ynares Covered Court para sabilun ang kanilang mga concern at maghayag ng tiwala sa proyekto.

Ang Provincial Development Council ng Quezon ay nagbigay naman ng clearance sa proyekto na bubuo sa natitirang requirement ng Regional Development Council-Region IV-A.

Ang mga isyu at concern ng mga dumalo ay kaugnay sa land acquisition, livelihood restoration, employment, at mga compensation sa mga maapektuhang pamilya.



SEAPORTS around the world have been asked to reduce their carbon dioxide emissions and contribute to efforts against global warming.

Ports operating in coastal areas are significantly causing air pollution that exposes the public to serious health problems and environmental threats, authorities said.

Around 72 percent of the earth's surface or the equivalent of 363 million square kilometers (140 sqm²) is covered by oceans.

Data show that about 40 percent or almost 2.4 billion people live within 100 kilometers of the nearest coast. In a 2017 report by the United Nations (UN), over a third or 37 percent of the global population live in coastal communities. Nearly 10 percent, or more than 600 million people, live in coastal areas below 10 meters above sea level.

Another UN report found that 70 percent of marine-related emissions occur within 400 kilometers of the coast. Given these statistical data, the proximity to the world's oceans put the human population in areas already affected by marine-related emissions also at risk due to the rise of sea levels caused by global warming.

It is imperative that measures to improve the quality of air in ports be given top priority, according to experts.

Air pollution in coastal areas

Ports around the world expose workers and residents to serious health problems and environmental issues. Emissions in ports come from a variety of sources, regardless of whether these are directly or indirectly connected to port operations.

The presence of several transport modalities such as ships, cargo trucks, cranes, lifters, tractors, other cargo handling equipment, other vehicles used in port, rail locomotives, power plants that generate energy for the area, and other

harbor crafts contribute to maritime-related emissions.

These emissions include greenhouse gases such as sulfur oxides (SO_x), Nitrogen oxides (NO_x), carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane, and particulate matter (PM) at different levels.

Pollution during cargo handling

Cargo handling in ports and harbors also cause emissions. During handling of dry bulk cargoes such as iron ore, grain, and coal, dust particles escape into the atmosphere. Cargo vapor emissions (from liquid bulks) may also cause atmospheric pollution. While dust is generally harmless, its high visibility nature caused by the sheer volume of cargoes that pass from port to port is a main concern to residents in adjacent communities.

Serious health concerns

Particulate matters are known to contribute to the increase in respiratory illnesses including pneumonia, bronchitis, and other chronic lung and cardiovascular diseases. It is also identified as a cause of premature deaths.

The International Agency for Research on Cancer, a World Health Organization's (WHO) agency specializing in cancer cases, published the results of its study indicating that 87,000 cardiopulmonary and lung cancer deaths in 2012 could be attributed to PM emission in shipping.

This is particularly evident in diesel PM that has high toxicity and is considered a carcinogen. The deaths were recorded in coastlines of Asia and Europe where there is both high PM concentration and high population density.

Measures to improve air quality

Various sectors and organizations, in-

cluding the government and regulatory agencies, have introduced several initiatives to improve air quality in port areas. The European Sea Ports Organization (ESPO) published a 2018 environmental report listing its top ten environmental priorities as a result of the annual check of ESPO's port members, which include benchmarks on performance.

It presented the report at the Greenport Congress held in Valencia in October 2017. Consistently topping the ESPO list since 2013 is air quality. Concern for air quality of communities in port cities and urban areas have been increasing, it noted.

ESPO reported that 73 percent of its member ports are certified by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), the EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS), or the Port Environmental Review System (PERS) under various standards.

The report also stated that high voltage shore-side electricity for ships at berth is available in 24 percent of the ports.

About 30 percent have existing refueling points for LNG and another 24 percent is developing infrastructure facilities also for LNG. These are aimed to minimize GHG emissions from other fuel types.

Meanwhile, the United Kingdom (UK) published the Government's Clean Air Strategy, requiring all major English ports to develop their respective air quality plans by next year.

The British Ports Association (BPA) said that while it commends the government for recognizing that the one-size-fits all solution will not work by requiring independent strategies, it should also recognize that ports have no direct control on emissions from nearby sources.

Mark Simmons, Policy Manager at BPA, said that although the deadline set by the government is tight, majority of bigger ports are already taking actions

which include monitoring sources of pollutants and emissions and ultimately crafting action plans.

The IMO pushes the implementation of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), which requires the shipping industry to become more energy efficient.

Annex VI on air emissions is the mandatory measure on global energy efficiency standard adopted by MARPOL VI contracting parties. The measure adds to Marpol VI Chapter 4 entitled "Regulations on Energy Efficiency for Ships." This mandates the Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI) for new ships and the Ship Energy Efficiency Plan (SEEMP) for all ships.

These regulations cover all merchant ships weighing 400 gross tons and above regardless of their ownership or whichever flag they carry. MARPOL Annex VI limits the allowable level of pollutants in ships' fuel such as SO₂ and NO₂. It also bans ozone-depleting substances.

Action taken by the Philippines

The Office of the Overseas Shipping Service (OSS) of Maritime Industry Authority (Marina) reported that in early 2018, the Philippines acceded to the IMO instrument. It brought to 90 the total number of ratifications of MARPOL Annex VI. This already represents nearly 97 percent of the global merchant shipping tonnage.

The OSS expressed hope that with the passage of a bill to implement MARPOL VI, the Philippines would be able to effectively comply with the regulations.

Other initiatives of the agency relative to implementation of Marpol VI include capacity building activities for maritime regulators and establishing a database on maritime fuel consumption and CO₂ emission.



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DESIGN WITH A PURPOSE

Junk Not promotes environmentalism one plastic furniture at a time

By ANGELA CASCO

Much has been written about the problem with plastic waste but one fact remains—it's at an all-time high.

Recent studies show that people around the world are using more plastic than ever, with at least eight million tons of plastic ending up in places where it shouldn't be like the ocean. Worse, the Philippines is at the center of it. According to a 2015 report from Ocean Conservancy and McKinsey Center for Business and Environment, the country is the world's third top producer of plastic waste leaking into the ocean.

Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives' report titled *Plastics Ex-*

posed: How Waste Assessments and Brand Audits are Helping Philippine Cities Fight Plastic Pollution reveals that Filipinos use more than 163 million plastic sachet packets, 48 million shopping bags, and 45 million thin film bags daily.

This is the problem that interior designer Wilhelmina Garcia hopes to help solve through Junk Not.

I design with awareness, with a message to get across.'

A social enterprise established in 2015, Garcia, along with a group of about 80 women and fishermen in Taal, Batangas, produces upcycled home items like furniture and accent pieces. Most of it are made out of plastic waste collected from their community.

It's also where the process of creation in Junk Not starts, with twining of collected plastic. It then goes to

Garcia's shop in Biñan, Laguna, where she designs the products. Teams in charge of carpentry, painting, and weaving bring the designs to life.

Though she admits the daunting challenges in such a business model, it's the kind of work Garcia has always wanted to do, even as an interior design student at the University of Sto. Tomas.

"This is personal to me because I grew up with a family of environmentalists," she tells *Manila Bulletin Lifestyle Home* in an interview. "I, togeth-



IT TAKES A VILLAGE Garcia (second from left) works with a community in Taal, Batangas to bring to life upcycled furniture



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Design With a purpose

er with my dad who once campaigned for the shutdown of a dumpsite and a sister who is a conservationist, lived in a farm in Biñan, but due to industrialization, our water source dried up.”

This is why she is so passionate about upcycling and green design.

Advocacy is what inspires Garcia’s designs at Junk Not. Depending on the materials recovered, the items are either colorful or entirely silver, which is common in most packages of chips and candies.

“I design with awareness, with a message to get across,” she says.

Her chair collection, *Anak ng Tupa*, is based on a personal experience at her family’s farm.

“We raise sheep in our farm but they were all dying because they were ingesting the plastic waste that gets into our property,” she says. “In one accent chair in this collection, we were able to upcycle 16 kilos of plastic.”

She calls another collection *Ikaw at Ako*, because “the only solution to the plastic problem is *ikaw at ako* (you and me).”

Her recent release, *The Coral Collection*, is both an ode to Pantone’s color of the year and the coral reefs.

“Instead of using that color reference, I made a coral collection as a tribute to coral reefs that are affected by plastic pollution in oceans,” she explains. “The look of the pieces take after the actual shapes of corals.”

Before focusing on plastic, Garcia also upcycles bottles to lamps, tin cans to chandeliers, old jeans into upholstery, reclaimed wood into furniture, steel bars for home decor, among others.

The designer, however, insists that Junk Not should not be an excuse to continue the production and use of plastic.

“Doing this doesn’t mean I like plastic,” she says. “My advocacy here is to ultimately reduce and to stop the production of plastic.”

In fact, Garcia requires her plastic waste donors to buy back the items that will be made from their own donation.

“The trash that you give, I’ll bring back to you,” she says. “It also becomes a reminder for you that this is the amount of plastic you’ve consumed and that you should probably cut down on your plastic use if you don’t want your place to be filled with upcycled chairs.”



GREEN DESIGN Plastic waste becomes stylish home items through upcycling



TITLE:

Rename La Mesa dam eco park for Gina Lopez

An alderman in Quezon City battled for the renaming of the La Mesa Dam Eco Park to the Gina Lopez Eco Park in honor of the former Environment Secretary who recently died of brain cancer.

The renaming of the eco park was laid down in a resolution filed by Quezon

City Second District Councilor Winston "Winnie" T. Castelo.

In the resolution, Councilor Castelo cited the late Gina Lopez as being at the forefront of environmental protection.

"She brought to bear veritable ecological programs that sought to protect and uphold the interests of the environment," Castelo

explained.

"Her most notable achievements include the successful reforestation of the La Mesa Watershed," he further said.

The councilor also pointed out the former DENR Secretary's remarkable feat of being the first Filipino to be awarded the prestigious Seacology Prize in October

2017 at Berkeley in California for her "exceptional achievement in preserving island environments and culture."

"Her legacy lives on in the hearts of those who care for the welfare of Mother Nature. It is only fitting that she be memorialized where her legacy continues," Castelo said.

Alvin Murcia



TITLE:

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DATE

MARAMING problema sa kalayaan ang umuusok o umaapoy sa mga araw na ito.

Naririyang ang problema sa kalayaan ng mga lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer at iba pa.

May problema rin sa kalayaan ng mga bilanggo, kasama na ang mga convict o napatunayang nagkasala sa bintang na krimen sa kanila.

PROBLEMA KAY SANCHEZ, ET AL.

Inabutan ng katakot-takot na kontrobersya ang naudlot na pagpapalaya kay ex-Calauan, Laguna Mayor Antonio Sanchez.

Nandiyan ang kautusan ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na hindi pupwedeng palayain si Sanchez dahil sangkot ito sa karumal-dumal na pag-rape at pagpatay kay Eileen Sarmen-ta at pagpatay rin sa boypren nitong si Allan Gomez, 26 taon na ang nakalilipas.

Katwiran ng Pangulo, dapat na pagsilbihan ng sinomang convict ng heinous crime ang taning ng korte na pambibilanggo sa kanya, partikular ang maximum na haba ng panahon ng pagkabilanggo.

Hinatulang nagkasala si Sanchez ng 7 beses na panggagahasana at pagpatay kina Sarmen-ta at Gomez ni Pasig Regional Trial Court Judge Harriet Demetriou noong 1995 at kinatigan ito ng Korte Suprema.

Pinarusahan si Sanchez at anim nitong kasamahan ng reclusion perpetua na 20 taon at 1 araw hanggang 40-anyos na pagkabilanggo.

Dapat uubusin muna ni Sanchez ang 40 taong pagkabilanggo bago ito makonsidera na lumaya, bukod lang kung may iba pa siyang mga kasong iba na magiging balakid sa kanyang paglaya.

Sa huli, kautusan din ng Pangulo na ibalik sa kulungan ang mga pinalayang may heinous crime sa bisa ng Republic Act No. 10592 na nagbabawas ng oras ng pagkabilanggo dahil sa Good Conduct Time Allowance o GCTA.

SISIHAN

Puno ng sisihan ngayon ukol sa GCTA.

May nambibintang ng DCTA for sale raw.

Kung totoo o hindi, hayaan natin ang mga nambibintang na maglabas ng ebidensya.

Pero heto ang isang kontrobersya na ayaw



KALAYAAN SA HEINOUS CRIME, SOGIE BILL

pansinin ng mga kritiko ng administrasyong Duterte.

Ginawa ang batas na RA 10592 noong panahon ni ex-President Noy-noy Aquino at ginawa naman ni ex-Department of Justice Secretary Leila de Lima ang implementing rules and regulations.

Ang sabi ng iba, may mali na nga sa batas, binaboy pa ang paggawa ng IRR nito.

Pagkatapos, ibinibintang lahat kay Faeldon at kay Sen. Ronald 'Bato' dela Rosa ang kaguluhan sa nasabing batas at IRR nito.

Kung tutuusin, mga Bro, mas marami ang pinalayang may heinous crime simula noong 2014 na pagkakaroon ng bisa ng nasabing batas hanggang sa masibak ang mga tao nina Noy-noy sa Bureau of Corrections na dinatnan nina Faeldon at Bato.

Ang nakasusuka, ang administrasyon ni Pang. Duterte ang sinisisi ng mga oposisyon o kritiko at hindi ang kanilang mga sarili na responsable sa paggawa ng depektibong batas at binaboy na IRR nito.

IBANG MAHALAGA

Ang ibang mahalaga ngayon ukol sa kontrobersya ay nabigyan ng pagkakataon ang batas na marebyu o masilip muli kung malinaw o malabo, pati ang IRR nito.

May nagsasabi ngayong sibakin na lang muna ang IRR o bahagi ng batas na gabay sa pagpapatupad ng RA 10592.

Sa IRR kasi umano, magkasamang makikinaabang sa GCTA ang mga nakademanda pa lang at mga convict na hindi naman umano itinatadhana ng nasabing batas.

Taliwas umano ang IRR sa tadhana ng batas na hindi kasali ang mga may heinous crime o karumal-dumal na krimen, recidivist, habitual delinquent at escapee sa mga mabibigyan ng tawad sa pagkabilanggo.

Kung malabo naman ang batas, pagkakataon na itong ayusin nang husto at kund hindi maaayos at makasisira talaga sa diwa ng katarungan, hindi masamang baklasin

na lang ang nasabing batas at palitan ng iba.

SOGIE BILL

Ito namang tinatawag ng Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression Equality Bill o panukalang batas na SOGIE ay tila madidiskaril.

May mga senador na maaaring hindi papasa ito sa panlasa ng nakararaming senador.

Sa Kamara, malaki rin ang pagkontra ng maraming kongresman, lalo na ang mga may lider ng relihiyon.

Kasama sa mga tumututol sina Bro. Eddie Villanueva ng CIBAC partylist at ex-Manila Mayor Jose Atienza Jr. ng Buhay partylist.

Kabilang sa mga problema sa SOGIE bill ang pagpapabilanggo sa mga religious leader na mangangampanya nang lantaran sa same sex marriage na isinusulong ng nasabing panukala.

Itinatadhana rin ng panukala ang pagpaparusa sa anomang institusyon o opisyal ng gobyerno na tatanggi na mag-isyu ng lisensya sa pag-aasawa ng mga miyembro ng LG-BTQ, kasama na ang lisensya sa pag-aasawa ng mga beki at babae sa babae.

Puro pagkabilanggo ang isinusulong ng SOGIE bill sa sinomang hindi kasundo ng mga LGBTQ at banta ito sa kalayaan ng iba na higit na nakararami na hindi miyembro rito.

Kung saan patutungo ang SOGIE bill, bahala na ang mga mambabatas na senador at kongresman.

May nagsasabing dead on arrival ito pero may nagsasabi ring baka magtagumpay ito na batas.

Ang sa atin naman, mga Bro, sana hindi mapipinsala ng karapatang maging malaya ang higit na nakararami kapag naging batas ang nasabing panukala.

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