

DATE : 09 SEP 2019

DAY : Monday

# DENR

## IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service

# DENR enforcement unit pushed amid ranger slay

Cimatu says bureau can 'effectively stop' illegal logging, wildlife smuggling

By Jhesset O. Enano  
and Maricar Cinco  
@Team\_Inquirer

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu has called for the creation of an enforcement bureau within the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), following the killing of a forest ranger by timber poachers in Palawan province last week.

During the agency's budget hearing in the House of Representatives on Friday, Cimatu admitted that the DENR still lacked teeth in enforcing the country's environmental laws, while many frontline officers remained at risk.

"We believe that the creation of an enforcement bureau under the DENR can effectively stop illegal logging, smuggling of wildlife species and other environmental crimes," he said. "We hope that there would be a law to help us."

Cimatu, a former chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, also said during the hearing that he had initiated training of enforcers in handling weapons, particularly shotguns.



Roy Cimatu

The DENR's enforcement officers, including forest rangers, are not allowed to bring weapons in their patrols. Instead, they are accompanied by soldiers or policemen in their operations.

## Weapons

Some DENR personnel, however, still resort to patrolling on their own when their armed escorts are unavailable, the agency's officials said.

According to Henry Adornado, DENR director in Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan), the agency's for-

est rangers are under the supervision of the DENR's Forest Management Bureau.

With the death of forest ranger Bienvenido Veguilla Jr. last week, the environment department also renewed its call to Congress to allow its enforcement personnel to carry weapons to protect themselves.

Veguilla was killed by suspected illegal loggers that his team had caught in the act of cutting lumber in El Nido town.

Veguilla, who carried a .45-caliber gun, managed to shoot one of his attackers, Filman Flores (not Fernan Flores as earlier reported), before he died from hack wounds.

Flores, who was hit in the abdomen, died in a hospital on Saturday afternoon.

Also on Saturday, another suspect, Ruel Fulgencio, was wounded in a shootout with policemen when he tried to resist arrest in Barangay Corong-Corong, El Nido.

Adornado said the police, in a series of operations, also arrested Welmer Juancho, Dexter Sumalague and Carding Fulgencio, leaving one unidenti-

fied suspect at large.

## Welcome development

The police filed murder charges against the suspects on Friday.

"This is a welcome development. Police acted fast on [Veguilla's] case," Adornado said.

Green group Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (Kalikasan) has called the attention of the Commission on Human Rights to Veguilla's killing.

Kalikasan national coordinator Leon Dulce noted that Veguilla was the 18th environmental defender killed in Palawan since 2001, making the province the third deadliest for environmentalists in the country.

"The culture of impunity is clearly affecting environmental defenders even from the ranks of government itself," he said in a statement. "Defenders, both in and out of the government, are neglected by the state ... There should be a greater state support for our forest rangers and voluntary paraenforcers." —WITH A REPORT FROM MADONNA VIOLA INQ



# Cimatu wants more teeth for DENR

By **ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ**  
and **AARON B. RECUEÑO**

**S**ecretary Roy Cimatu is seeking the enactment of a law creating an Enforcement Bureau within the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), amid the brutal killing of a forest ranger in El Nido, Palawan last week.

"We believe that the creation of an Enforcement Bureau under the DENR can effectively stop illegal logging, smuggling of wildlife species and other environmental crimes," Cimatu pointed out.

The DENR chief appealed to House members present during the budget hearing last Friday to help the DENR have its Enforcement Bureau in the soonest time possible.

Cimatu condemned "in the strongest sense of the word" the killing of DENR forest ranger Bienvenido Veguilla Jr. by suspected illegal loggers in El Nido.

"I will never allow another crime such as the killing of Mr. Veguilla to happen to any of my people," he said.

"This incident shows how greed and disregard for our laws can have

appalling consequences on people and our society," he added.

Police reports said yesterday that a third suspect in the killing was collared in a follow-up operation in El Nido.

Brig. Gen. Tomas Apolinario, director of the Mindoro Occidental and Oriental, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan (Mimaropa) regional police, said suspect Ruel Fulgencio was wounded

when he tried to shoot it out with his men.

Fulgencio was tagged as among the six illegal loggers who hacked Veguilla to death.

The first suspect to fall as Felmar Flores who was caught when the cops responded to the hacking incident, while Ricardo Fulgencio was arrested in a raid in his house in Pasadena in El Nido town.



## Cimatu vows to protect DENR workers

ENVIRONMENT Secretary Roy Cimatu on Sunday vowed to "do everything" to protect workers of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources against "environmental" criminals.

He took a swipe at "fearless, cunning and greedy" individuals who destroy the environment for their own selfish interests.

He made the promise while condemning "in the strongest sense of the word" the recent brutal killing of forest ranger Bienvenido Veguilla Jr. by suspected illegal loggers in El Nido, Palawan.

"I will never allow another crime, such as the killing of Mr. Veguilla to happen to any of my people," he said.

"This incident shows how greed and disregard for our laws can have appalling consequences on people and our society," he added.

Veguilla, along with fellow forest ranger Jenuel Casel, forest extension officer Herson Caliao, and park rangers Marvin Flamiano, Godensio Caber and Norlito Jongay, was conducting a forest patrol last Sept. 4 in an area covered by the national greening program when they heard the sound of a chainsaw whiling passing through Barangay Pasadena.  
Rio N. Araja



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## Forest ranger's slay suspect hurt in shootout

A suspect in the murder of a forest ranger in Palawan was wounded in an alleged encounter with police officers on Saturday.

Ruel Fulgencio, 39, allegedly resisted when police officers arrested him in Barangay Corong-Corong in El Nido at around 4 p.m.

Fulgencio reportedly shot at the arresting team, triggering a firefight, according to Lt. Col. Socrates Faltado, spokesman for the Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan) police.

The suspect was brought to a hospital for treatment of a gunshot wound in the foot.

Fulgencio was among the alleged illegal loggers accused of killing forest ranger Bievinidio Veguilla in Barangay Pasadena.

Another suspect, identified as Fernan Flores, was arrested in followup operation earlier conducted by the police.

— Emmanuel Tupas



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## EDITORIAL

# Arming forest rangers

ILLEGAL loggers recently killed a personnel of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, prompting DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu to order his forest guards to undergo arms training.

A retired four-star military general, Cimatu, who used to head the powerful Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), said that the agency's forest rangers are being trained to handle shotguns.

"I initiated the weapons training of my enforcers kasi pinapatay po ang mga tao namin...Hindi naman kami pwedeng mag-hire ng security guards to help us in patrolling (our forests)," said Cimatu.

Environment Undersecretary Benny D. Antiporda, on the other hand, called on the leadership of the House of Representatives to come up with a law creating a DENR enforcement bureau.

Antiporda, a former president of the National Press Club, directed his appeal to House Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano and Majority Leader and Leyte 1<sup>st</sup> District Rep. Martin G. Romualdez.

Romualdez, an environmentalist and president of the influential Philippine Constitution Association (Philconsa), cited Cimatu's "exemplary performance" as top honcho of the DENR.

The Leyte solon, a lawyer and banker by profession, said Cimatu displayed his political will in the rehabilitation of Boracay, the country's top tourist destination, and historic Manila Bay.

Romualdez even described the soft-spoken but highly-effective Cimatu as "the best DENR secretary ever."

Various quarters said the killing of the DENR personnel has thrust out front the need to create the proposed bureau as part of the campaign against violators of environmental laws and rules.

Soldiers and policemen have been accompanying DENR forest rangers while conducting patrols in various parts of the country, according to Secretary Cimatu.

Certainly, training DENR forest rangers to handle shotguns is a move in the right direction considering the continued existence of illegal loggers in various parts of the Philippines.



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## 3rd suspect in forest ranger's murder nabbed

Police have arrested the third suspect in the killing of a forest ranger last week in a follow-up operation in El Nido, Palawan.

Police Brig. Gen. Tomas Apolinario, director of the Police Regional Office 4-B (Mindoro Occidental and Oriental, Marinduque, Romblon, and Palawan), identified the suspect as Ruel Fulgencio.

Fulgencio, Apolinario said, was wounded in a shootout with the police.

The suspect was tagged as among the six illegal loggers who hacked to death forest ranger Bienvenido "Toto" Veguilla who caught them cutting trees inside a protected forest in El Nido.

The first suspect to fall was Felmar

Flores who was caught when police responded during the hacking of Veguilla. The second was Ricardo Fulgencio who was arrested in a raid in his house in Barangay Pasadena, El Nido.

As soon as police were tipped of the location of 29-year old Ruel, a police team was immediately deployed to Barangay Corong-Corong, El Nido.

"But while police personnel are approaching the area, he shot one of our policemen. But he missed," said Apolinario.

Police returned fire and wounded Ruel. He was shot in the foot and was taken to the nearby hospital.

**(Aaron Recuenco)**



## 'P1.35B for Mla Bay rehab may be for naught'

**A**T least P1.35 billion earmarked for Manila Bay's rehabilitation could just go down the drain until private water concessionaires put up sewer lines as ordered by Supreme Court, Buhay Party-list Rep. Lito Atienza warned at the weekend.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is spending another P1.35 billion next year for the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program, but the failure of Manila Water Co. Inc. and Maynilad Water Services Inc. to capture and decontaminate the national capital's wastewater will make the effort and

funding for naught, he said.

"Nothing has changed. Right now, the bulk of Metro Manila's raw sewage, including those from households, still drain into the Pasig River and other waterways that all empty out into Manila Bay," Atienza, former three-term mayor of Manila, said.

The DENR's Operational Plan for the Manila Bay Coastal Management Strategy is getting another P1.35 billion in the proposed P4.1-trillion General Appropriations Act for 2020, to renew and preserve Manila Bay's coastal and marine ecosystem, according to Atienza, a former DENR secretary.

"We will, of course, continue to support all new spending to revitalize Manila Bay. But Malacañang really has to crack the whip on the two water concessionaires that have been defying the Clean Water Act," Atienza said.

"Otherwise, all our efforts to fully restore Manila Bay, which still functions like a vast septic tank, will be without real success," Atienza said.

Last month, the Supreme Court upheld a 2009 DENR order penalizing Manila Water and Maynilad, along with the Manila Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), with fines—which have since ballooned,

per the court's computation, to P1.84 billion—for their failure to put up sewerage lines, violating Section 8 of the Clean Water Act.

Atienza issued the 2009 order when he was DENR head.

Until they fully comply with the Clean Water Act, the Supreme Court said Manila Water, Maynilad and the MWSS will have to continue to pay a P322,102 daily fine that escalates by 10 percent in two years, plus legal interest of 6 percent per annum.

The three erring parties were supposed to pay the initial fine within 15 days from receipt of the Supreme Court decision announced August 6.





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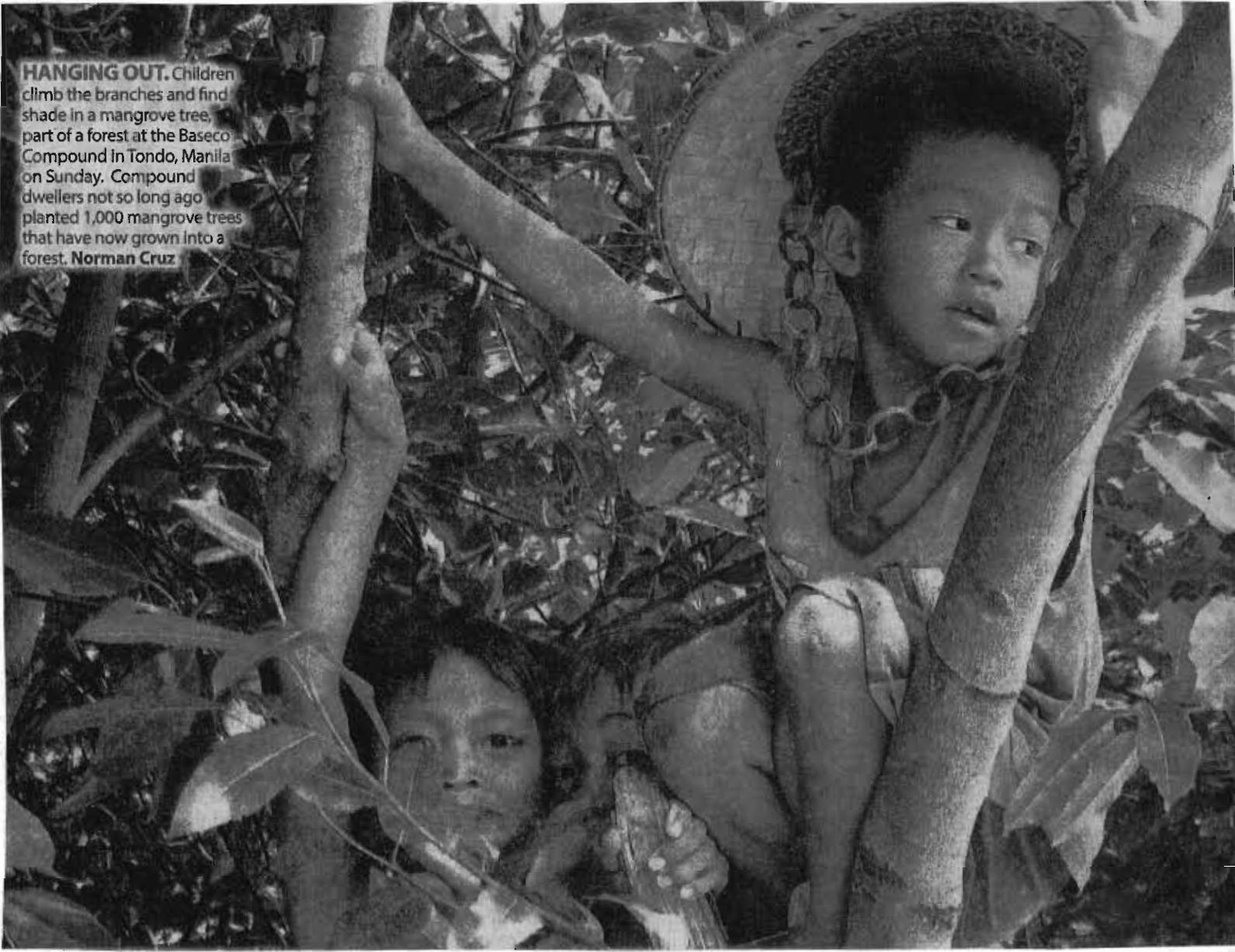
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**HANGING OUT.** Children climb the branches and find shade in a mangrove tree, part of a forest at the Baseco Compound in Tondo, Manila on Sunday. Compound dwellers not so long ago planted 1,000 mangrove trees that have now grown into a forest. **Norman Cruz**





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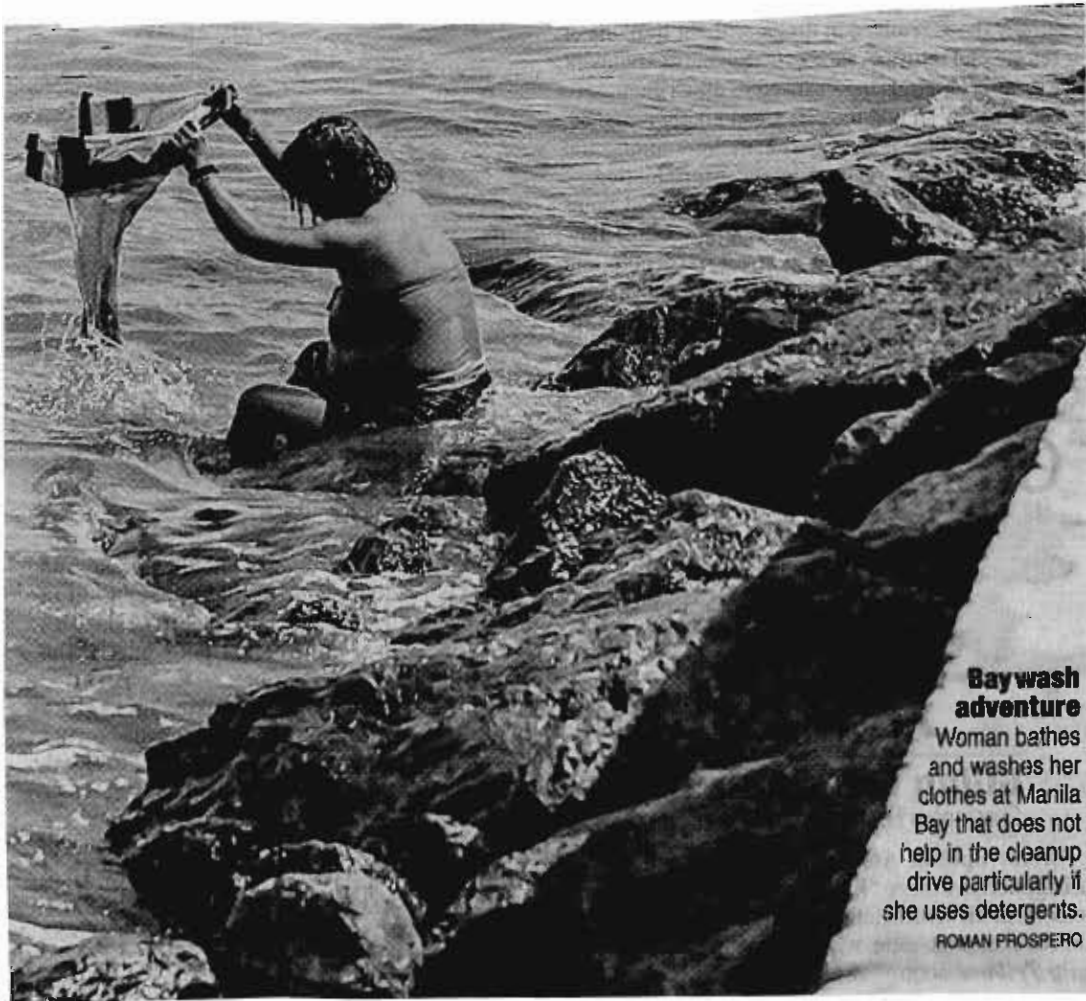
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**Baywash  
adventure**

Woman bathes  
and washes her  
clothes at Manila  
Bay that does not  
help in the cleanup  
drive particularly if  
she uses detergents.

ROMAN PROSPERO



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**Hidden wonder** Believe it or not, mangroves thrive at the Baseco Compound in Manila. In the midst of the call for the Manila Bay Rehabilitation, a group of urban poor dwellers in Baseco successfully grew almost 1000 mangroves.



FILE:

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## Money for nothing



IT'S NICE to hear the government, particularly the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, is finally taking the rehabilitation of Manila Bay seriously. For next year, the DENR has allotted P1.35 billion to rehabilitate the bay, so people like us could again enjoy the sight of the mighty sun slowly being swallowed by the expanse.

Records from the proposed 2020 national budget reveals that DENR's Operational Plan for the Manila Bay Coastal Management Strategy will get P1.35 billion out of the proposed P4.1-trillion proposed budget.

The money will be spent to renew and preserve Manila Bay's coastal and marine ecosystem.

However, every single centavo of that huge amount of money, could,

*“Every centavo of the project will go down the drain unless Manila Water and Maynilad put up sewer lines as ordered by Supreme Court.”*

in the words of Buhay Representative Lito Atienza, go down the drain unless Manila Water and Maynilad put up sewer lines as ordered by Supreme Court.

“Nothing has changed. Right now, the bulk of Metro Manila's raw sewage, including those from households, still drain into the Pasig River and other waterways that all empty out into Manila Bay,” Atienza says.

Last month, the Supreme Court upheld a 2009 DENR order penalizing Manila Water and Maynilad, along with the Manila Waterworks and Sewerage System, with a com-

bined P1.84-billion fine for their failure to put up sewage lines, violating Section 8 of the Clean Water Act.

Until they fully comply with the Clean Water Act, the Supreme Court said Manila Water, Maynilad and the MWSS will have to continue to pay a P322,102 daily fine that escalates by 10 percent in two years, plus legal interest of six percent per annum.

The three erring parties were supposed to pay the initial fine within 15 days from receipt of the Supreme Court decision that was announced Aug. 6.

Incidentally, it was Atienza himself who issued the 2009 order when he was DENR head.

Atienza nonetheless assures DENR of his support especially in its effort to revitalize Manila Bay including additional funding.

But Malacañang really has to crack the whip on the two water concessionaires that have been defying

Turn to A5

## Money...

From A4

the Clean Water Act. Otherwise, all our efforts to fully restore Manila Bay, which still functions like a vast septic tank, will be without real success,” Atienza says.

Rightfully said. P1.35 billion is such a huge amount of people's money to just let go to waste.

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Critics of the government should not only focus on China's incursion into our waters.

Not only have we failed to yet submit a proposal to the International Maritime Organization on the designation of our archipelagic sea lane passage, which is a requirement under the UNCLOS. We also have to enact a law requiring clearance or prior notification of foreign vessels passing through the waters within our baseline.

In a media forum held at the Nanka Japanese Latin Restaurant in Quezon City last Friday, Professor Roland Simbulan said that while he strongly believes China is violating

our sovereignty by deliberately intruding our waters, China is doing so to protect its trade lanes, which is also being used by the United States as a playground for its vaunted Seventh Fleet. In fact, Simbulan said the US did not sign the UNCLOS as it claims both Pacific and Atlantic oceans as its own.

And the Philippines happens to host at least eight most important straits which serve an important transit route for international trade between the Pacific and the Indian Ocean with an amount of around 15,000 annual ship passage. Thus, China needs to assure its trade lanes will never be hampered, especially now that tensions between it and the US appears to be escalating.

It's a good thing, PBA Rep. Jericho “Koko” Nograles bared that the enactment of a law governing our archipelagic sea lanes is one of the priority bills now pending in Congress.

In the meantime, we should also train our “guns” on other countries, especially the United States, that are violating our sea lanes.



## Manila Bay rehab tuloy-tuloy: DENR chief

**S**INIGURO ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) kamakailan sa Kamara na tuloy-tuloy ang isinasagawang Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program, na inaasahang magiging ligtas nang paglanguyan sa pagtatapos ng taong ito.

Ito ang ibinahagi ni DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu sa presentasyon ng ahensiya ng mungkahi nitong P25.5 bilyon budget para 2020.

Nasa 16 porsiyentong mas mataas ang panukalang pondo ng ahensiya

kumpara sa nakuha nitong P21.959 bilyon para ngayong 2019.

Kabilang sa pangunahing proyekto na paglalaanan ng pondo ng ahensiya ang Manila Bay Rehabilitation, na may nakalaang P1.5 bilyon.

Nabanggit sa pagdinig ang rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay matapos matanong ni House Minority Leader at Manila 6th District Rep. Bienvenido Abante Jr., kung ano na ang nangyayari sa tinaguriang "Battle for Manila Bay."

Ibinahagi naman ni Environment Undersecretary Juan Miguel Cuna na kasalukuyang nasa unang bahagi na ang Manila Bay rehabilitation, na nakatuon sa paglilinis at monitoring ng kalidad ng tubig sa look.

Ayon pa kay Cimatu, patuloy pa rin ang idinadaos na "weekly cleanup" na

mandato ng Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) sa lahat ng mga barangay.

"We are strictly are monitoring the compliance to this directive along with DILG," paliwanag ni Cuna sa mga mambabatas.

Mahigpit din, aniyang nakikipag-ugnayan ang DENR sa Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) at sa Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) para masiguro ang pagsunod sa sewage treatment facilities ng mga establisyamento.

"Since the Battle for Manila Bay was launched last January 27, we have witnessed a lot of improvement in terms of solid waste that we see floating in the bay," ani Cuna.

"We inspect all esteros flowing to

Manila Bay. In fact the Secretary assigned particular undersecretaries, assistant secretaries, and directors to oversee particular rivers and esteros, and we have been coordinating with the barangays and other agencies to ensure that they are clean and to stop the loading of the pollution primarily," dagdag pa ng opisyal.

Sa kasalukuyan, nakapaglabas na ang ahensiya ng 1,572 Notice of Violations sa mga hindi sumusunod na mga establisyamento at nakakolekta ng nasa 1.6 million kilo ng basura mula sa mga cleanup activity.

Nakapagmobilisa na rin ito ng nasa 48,661 volunteer at natukoy ang nasa 34,000 informal settler na naninirahan sa paligid ng look na nakatakandang ilipat ng tirahan.



## Kadayawan revelers, Smart join hands to save the environment

**P**LASTIC waste pollution continues to be one of the major environmental challenges of the world.

Recognizing this, PLDT and its wireless unit Smart Communications brought their #PlanetSmart campaign to Davao City to benefit attendees of the Kadayawan Festival.

Through #PlanetSmart waste collection vendo machines, residents and revelers were able to dispose of their plastic bottles and cans in exchange for Smart load.

Vendo machines were installed in two festival areas—Kadayawan Village, Magsaysay Park, and Santa Ana Garden Park.

Among the Davaoños who actively participated in the campaign was Christine Joy Ruiz, a senior high student and a resident of Matina, Davao City.

The 16-year-old Davaoña got curious when she saw the reverse vendo device and collection bin, so she approached the Smart team to see how the device worked. She dropped 15 plastic bottles.

"I dropped around 15 plastic bottles. Actually, I only used one bottle, the rest were bottles I collected from the park," she said in the vernacular.

She underscored that the #PlanetSmart initiative was



A REPRESENTATIVE of Smart (right) demonstrates to an elder tribe member how the #PlanetSmart recyclables collection system works.

a fun and innovative way of garbage collection.

"Besides getting free Smart load from this activity, the best part is we can help make our community greener and cleaner," she added.

Smart Community Partnerships Senior Manager Nova Concepcion said this initiative was part of Smart's efforts to promote environmental awareness and to encourage adoption of the city's "no single-use plastic" campaign.

"Mismanaged waste threatens public health and the environment. Our #PlanetSmart program helps address this by harnessing technology for environmental protection. This initiative helps

achieve two things: raise environmental awareness and incentivize the process of waste management," Concepcion said.

"Through this program, we want waste segregation and recycling to be everyone's lifestyle. We want people to get used to it and make it a habit," she added.

### How it works

THE #PlanetSmart reverse vendo machines are powered by electronic sensors that send out SMS messages each time plastic bottles and empty cans are deposited into the recycling bins.

The messages trigger the free load given to the subscriber who

deposits the plastic bottles.

Collected items are then turned over to a recycling facility.

"The local office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources [DENR] is currently our recycling partner. We turn over the PET bottles to them during festivals and they forward it to recyclers. In the future, we plan to partner directly with plastic recyclers," Concepcion said.

The #PlanetSmart recycling machine is a homegrown innovation of PLDT employees. It was the winning entry during the 2018 MVP Geek Olympics, the PLDT Group's annual innovation competition across all employees of the MVP Group.

The competition is a brainchild of PLDT Innolab, the group's incubator for start-ups and developer communities that want to scale extensible partnerships.

Besides the #PlanetSmart activity, Smart also led the #LearnSmart educational apps exhibit that aims to promote literacy in the mother tongue.

Festival revelers were also treated to free Wi-Fi, charging services, games and prizes at the Smart Hub at Santa Ana Garden Park. PLDT and Smart also provided connectivity support during the festival.



## HIGH HOPES FOR LOWLY BAMBOO

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA  
@jonlmayuga

As "ber" months set in, the peculiar feeling brought about by the Christmas season is felt by young students as they are asked to plan for their special projects in school, testing their creativity and skills, in producing projects from the simple Christmas tree to glittering lanterns or a manger depicting the birth of Jesus.

However, the use of bamboo, locally called *kawayan*, is way past the level of school projects the students make, said the country's top environment and natural resources officials.

In fact, officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) have high hopes on bamboo in saving the country's dwindling forests.

Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu believes that bamboo, a giant grass species that naturally occur in tropical countries like the Philippines, can be a good alternative to wood, it can save our forest and boost our natural defense against climate change.

How? Through its massive cultivation, research and development and information campaign to popularize its use by various stakeholders from the big players in the construction industry to wood producers and furniture makers in the Philippines.

Bamboo is a versatile renewable resource. Being a giant grass, it is fast-growing and resilient and survives extreme weather conditions.

In terms of environmental benefits, bamboo improves the microclimate, controls soil erosion, protects riverbanks, reduces flash floods, serves as a windbreak and sequesters atmospheric carbon efficiently.

Bamboo has good properties that are comparable to most tree species as it offers a variety of uses either in its raw form or as processed into engineered products.

### Dwindling forest

DESPITE the country's reforestation efforts,

Cimatu noted that only 23 percent of the country's total land area—approximately 30 million hectares—are covered by forest, making the Philippines having one of the lowest forest covers in Southeast Asia.

The average forest cover in other countries in the region is between 30 and 35 percent.

The DENR chief noted that the Philippines early on had the biggest forest cover in Asia but because of overuse of timber, its forest cover has dwindled.

Incidentally, the DENR's Forest Management Bureau (FMB) is eyeing a bigger budget for the implementation of the Enhanced National Greening Program (eNGP)—P5.152 billion of the total DENR budget requisition of P19.93 billion for 2020. Of the amount, P4 billion is for capital outlay, while the remaining P1.062 billion is for maintenance and other operating expenses.

### Bamboo solution

THE DENR chief said that using bamboo as an alternative to traditional hardwood building materials would eliminate the need to cut trees in the forest, which helps lessen climate-change impacts by reducing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

"We are envisioning to produce engineered bamboo as a substitute for actual lumber instead of cutting trees in the forest in order to increase our forest cover in the next several years or decades to catch up with our Asean neighbors," Cimatu said in his speech during the first-ever Asean Bamboo Congress held in Iloilo City on August 13.

Moreover, Cimatu said bamboo reduces the need for timber resources and greatly help in carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation and low-cost rehabilitation of degraded lands. This explains a new policy that aims to establish more bamboo plantations in the country.

Bamboo, he said, not only provides food and raw materials for construction—even clean fuel—but also generates local jobs,

creating new income streams.

Equally important, he said, is that bamboo will help mitigate flooding, prevent soil erosion and protect communities from rising sea level.

### Panay Island as bamboo capital

THE DENR chief earlier vowed to develop Panay Island in the Western Visayas region as the center of bamboo production in the Philippines in support of the National Convergence Initiative for Sustainable Rural Development (NCI-SRD) during the summit in Iloilo City.

With Panay Island being naturally abundant with bamboo, Cimatu vowed to transform the island as the center for bamboo production and make it the DENR's contribution to the NCI-SRD.

"We will adopt the latest technology in producing lumber and timber out of the bamboo stands. This can usher in inclusive development on the island and provide income and livelihood not only to the marginal farmers, and promote



BAMBOO trees



Panay as the country's "bamboo capital," he said in a statement.

To make this happen, he ordered the DENR Western Visayas Regional Executive Director Francisco Milla Jr. to conduct an inventory of existing bamboo plantations and establish more bamboo processing plants that would produce high-quality engineered *kawayan* products.

The DENR in Western Visayas had initially identified 60 hectares for the propagation of bamboo on Panay Island, where more than 6,100 hectares of plantation currently exist.

The agency has committed to plant 13,500 hectares of industrial bamboo species, such as *tinik*, giant *buho*, *bayog* and *bolo* by 2020.

To achieve this, some P10 million has been initially earmarked in the 2019 budget for the production of planting materials and capacity building of farmers.

## Bamboo industry

THE development of the Philippine bamboo industry was conceptualized by former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo who signed Executive Order 879.

The order mandates the creation of the Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Council to promote the development project and directing the use of bamboo for at least 25 percent of the desk and other furniture requirements of public elementary and secondary schools, and prioritizing its use in furniture, fixtures and other construction requirements of government facilities.

The order manifested the government's commitment then to reforest at least 500,000 hectares with bamboo as part of the 1 million hectares designated areas as its contribution to the Asean commitment of 20 million hectares of new forest by 2020 to improve the environment.

Unfortunately, the enthusiasm behind the policy failed to gain traction.

Even under the eNGP, bamboo was not as popular and, hence, not a priority.

Forest plantations were established using fast-growing trees. It was only recently in the latter part of the eNGP's implementation that the government shifted to planting native tree species.

## Renewed commitment

RECENT developments saw the Philippine government renewing its commitment to promoting bamboo as alternative to wood when it hosted the first Asean Bamboo Congress for Climate Change Adaptation Towards Environmental Sustainability and Economic Resiliency in Iloilo City last month.

The event convened more than 200 researchers, academics, policy-makers, professionals and business groups within the Asean region who discussed and exchanged information on bamboo and sustainable environmental strategies.

During the event, participants adopted a resolution calling for the establishment of the Asean Bamboo Network that will explore the

vast potential of bamboo for environmental sustainability and economic resiliency amid climate change.

Cimatu described the resolution as a "decisive output" of the conference as it enabled a formal commitment of the signatories toward "a sustainable and climate resilient future for the entire region."

"With this resolution, we are assuring that we will put our utmost endeavors in the continuous research and development in bamboo production technologies, as well as stronger linkages within the Asean region," Cimatu said in a statement as he thanked the participants.

## Valuable resource

DR. Sofio B. Quintana, Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB) director and National Coordinator of the Bamboo Plantation Development Project (BPDP), said hosting the event is recognition of the importance of bamboo.

"Bamboo is considered as a valuable economic and environmental resource, and ERDB hopes to continue to innovate ways on increasing awareness on the promising potentials of bamboo especially in attaining environmental sustainability and economic resiliency," Quintana said.

He said the DENR-ERDB will continue to conduct research and development and come up with programs that will ensure the sustainable development of an industry anchored on bamboo.

In the ongoing budget deliberations in Congress, Quintana expresses high hopes that lawmakers will allot a budget for the establishment of bamboo plantations and the conduct of more research and development on bamboo—including the production of disease-free and quality planting materials and engineered bamboo products.

Quintana said he will bat for a bigger budget for the eNGP, confident that with no less than the DENR chief's recognition of its vast potential, the establishment of bamboo plantations or its cultivation in degraded areas will not be left out.





## Solon bats for development of PHL bamboo industry

BY JOVEE MARIE N. DELA CRUZ

🐦 @joveemarie

**A**LAWMAKER from Las Piñas is pushing for the development of the bamboo industry to make it competitive in the local and international markets so it can provide more job opportunities to Filipinos.

In House Bill 3309, or the Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Act of 2019, House Deputy Majority Leader Camille Villar of Las Piñas City said the measure seeks to institutionalize bamboo industry development through the creation of the Bamboo Industry Research and Development Center (BIRDC) tasked to continuously provide relevant technologies and new products to the bamboo industry.

Under the the bill, BIRDC will

also serve as the secretariat of the Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Council to be created under the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), which shall provide the overall policy and program directions and coordinate the activities of various agencies and instrumentalities to ensure the implementation, accomplishment, and periodic review and enhancement of the bamboo industry road map.

Also, the bill said the Office of the President (OP) through the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) shall allocate P100 million as initial funding for the trust fund for the implementation of this proposal.

Thereafter, the amount of not less than P200 million shall be allocated every year for the next 20 years for the trust fund lodged in the center.



## House bill seeks to promote bamboo plantations, product research

A BILL has been filed at the House of Representatives seeking to encourage the adoption of plantation production of bamboo, as well as research and development to promote its wider use.

House Deputy Majority Leader and Las Piñas City Rep. Camille A. Villar filed House Bill 3309, which if passed will become the Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Act of 2019.

The bill hopes to set up the Bamboo Industry Research and Development Center (BIRDC) "tasked to continuously provide relevant technologies

and new products to the bamboo industry."

The measure requires that bamboo represent 20% of the annual planting of the national greening program a reforestation initiative. It also calls for 25% bamboo content in desks and chairs used by public schools.

Ms. Villar noted that the main challenge in the development of a bamboo industry is a shortage of land.

"There are about 8,500 hectares devoted to bamboo cultivation, with four economically viable species – the

*Kawayan Tinik, Giant Bamboo, Buho, and Bolo.* According to the DTI (Department of Trade and Industry), while 8,500 hectares is a significant number, the huge demand for bamboo requires more coverage," said Ms. Villar said in a statement Sunday.

The measure requires the BIRDC to promote the establishment of bamboo nurseries, plantations, and processing facilities; and promote the commercialization and market access of the "appropriate innovative and viable" bamboo industry products.

The BIRDC is also expected to provide capacity-building initiatives for farmers, processors, designers, and other stakeholders in the bamboo industry.

"Nursery and plantation owners shall be exempt from the payment of rent for the use of public lands for commercial bamboo plantation for the first 10-years or when the plantation owner starts to harvest his/her nursery/plantation subject to existing tenurial agreement with concerned government agencies," according to the bill.

"Plantation owners in public lands shall be exempt from the payment of for-

est charges imposed by national government and other fees or taxes imposed by local government units."

It added, "Plantation owners, including nursery facilities, bamboo processing, and other related businesses shall be exempt from the payment of import duties for imported machines and equipment subject to pertinent rules and regulations."

If signed into law, the bill directs the Office of the President through the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. to allocate P100 million to start-up the trust fund. — **Vince Angelo C. Ferreras**



## Antipolo bishop opposes Kaliwa Dam project

By **CHRISTINA I. HERMOSO**

Diocese of Antipolo Bishop Francisco de Leon is worried about the impact of the proposed Kaliwa Dam in Quezon on the environment and the residents in the affected communities.

"The Diocese of Antipolo is against the construction of the Kaliwa Dam as it threatens the communities particularly in Tanay and the

Dumagat-Remontado tribe who lives in the Sierra Madre mountain," De Leon said over Church-run Radio Veritas.

"The Dioceses of Infanta, Laguna, and Antipolo will be severely affected by this project," he added.

The Dumagat tribe earlier expressed concerns over the project which they said will drive them out of their ancestral land, deprive them of their livelihood, and destroy even their place of

worship. Tribe leader Octavio Pranada said, some 11,000 indigenous people stand to lose their homes once the project starts.



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## Make sure we get the best Metro water projects

**R**EP. Manny Lopez of Manila, chairman of the House Committee on Metro Manila Development, has called on Congress to revisit the Kaliwa Dam project being pushed by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) to boost the water supply for Metro Manila, a need that drew widespread public attention this last summer when the water supply to many areas was cut off.

The Commission on Audit (COA) has raised questions about the procedure in the bidding for the New Centennial Water Supply Project or Kaliwa Dam, funded by Official Development Assistance (ODA). The COA, in an Audit Observation Memorandum addressed to the MWSS administrator, questioned the qualifications of two of the three bidders. They appear to have been included merely to comply with the requirement of at least three bidders under the Procurement Law, the COA said. Congressman Lopez asked the MWSS to comply with the COA findings before pushing through with the project.

During the hearings of the Lopez committee in the House last week, the MWSS administrator said construction of Kaliwa Dam will begin once an environmental compliance certificate is se-

cured from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

But the dam is getting stiff opposition from the Dumagat tribe which fears that their community will be displaced by the dam. When completed, the dam's water level will be 150 meters higher than the nearby Daraitan village and other communities in Quezon province. A rival plan has been submitted by Japanese firm Global Utility Development Corporation which will not raise the issue of flooding.

Congressman Lopez also asked the government to restudy the funding for the project. As an Official Development Assistance (ODA) project, China would provide P12.2 billion – around 64 percent of the P18.7-billion cost of the dam. Under PPP, Lopez said, the government would not have to shell out any amount.

The Kaliwa Dam is one of a number of projects that will boost the water supply for Metro Manila's fast-growing population. We need all the additional water supply we can get, but we must make sure that all the projects are above-board in meeting all government requirements and that they are the best choices from the many proposals that have been made to solve our region's water problem.



## EDITORIAL

### Make sure we get the best Metro water projects

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## EDITORIAL

### Siguraduhing mapili ang pinakamainam na Metro water project

**N**ANAWAGAN si Rep. Manny Lopez ng Maynila, pinuno ng House Committee on Metro Manila Development, sa Kongreso na balikan ang Kaliwa Dam project na isinusulong ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) upang mapalakas ang suplay ng tubig sa Metro Manila, isang pangangailangan na nakakuha ng matinding atensyon mula sa publiko nitong tag-araw nang makaranas ng matinding pagkaantala sa suplay ng tubig ang maraming lugar sa metro.

Kinukuwestiyon ngayon ng Commission on Audit (CoA) ang naging proseso ng bidding para sa New Centennial Water Supply Project o Kaliwa Dam, na popondohan sa ilalim ng Official Development Assistance (ODA). Sa isang Audit Observation Memorandum na naka-address sa MWSS administrator, kinuwestiyon ng CoA ang kuwalipikasyon ng dalawa sa tatlong bidder. Lumalabas umano na tila isinama lamang ang dalawa upang mapunan ang panuntunan na hanggang tatlong bidder sa ilalim ng Procurement Law, ayon sa CoA. Sinabi ni Congressman Lopez na kailangang tugunan ng MWSS ang mga nasilip ng CoA bago umusad ang proyekto.

Sa naging pagdinig ng komite ni Lopez sa Kamara nitong nakaraang linggo, sinabi ng MWSS administrator na magsisimula ang konstruksiyon ng Kaliwa Dam kapag nakuha na nito ang environmental compliance certificate mula sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Ngunit ang dam na ito ay mahigpit na tinututulan ng tribong Dumagat sa pangamba sa mapapaalis ang kanilang komunidad dulot ng proyekto. Kapag natapos, aabot ang lebel ng tubig ng dam sa 150 metro, na mas mataas sa kalapit nitong barangay ng Daraitan at iba pang komunidad sa probinsiya ng Quezon. Isang katunggaling plano ang isinumite ng kumpanya mula Japan na Global Utility Development, na hindi magdudulot ng pagbaha sa lugar.

Nanawagan din si Congressman Lopez sa pamahalaan upang muling pag-aralan ang pondo para sa proyekto. Bilang isang proyekto sa ilalim ng Official Development Assistance (ODA), ipagkakaloob ng China ang P12.2 bilyon – halos 64 na porsiyento ng P18.7-bilyong gugugulin para sa pagtatayo ng dam. Sa ilalim ng PPP, ani Lopez, hindi kinakailangang maglabas ng pamahalaan ng anumang halaga.

Isa lamang ang Kaliwa Dam sa mga proyekto na inaasahang magpapalakas sa suplay ng tubig sa lumalagong populasyon ng Metro Manila. Kinakailangan natin ang lahat ng dagdag na suplay ng tubig na maaari nating makuha, ngunit kailangan din nating siguraduhin na ang lahat ng mga proyektong ito ay dumaan sa panuntunan ng pamahalaan at ang pinakamainam mula sa maraming mungkahi na isinumite para masolusyunan ang problema sa tubig ng ating rehiyon.



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## Chinese company tatalupan sa Kaliwa Dam project

NAIS paimbestigahan ng isang opisyal ng Kamara ang umano'y kuwestyonableng pag-award ng gobyerno sa P18.7 bilyong Kaliwa Dam project kahit sa isang Chinese company kahit hindi sapat ang mga isinumite nitong papeles.

Ayon kay House Assistant Majority Floor Leader at Rizal Cong. Fidel Nograles, nakakabahala na ipagkatiwala ng pamahalaan ang bilyong pisong proyekto na layuning bigyan ng sapat na supply ng tubig ang buong Metro Manila sa isang kompanya na bukod sa kulang-kulang ang requirements ay kuwestyonable pa ang reputasyon.

"It is imperative that an investigation on the flagged awarding of KDP to Chinese firms be conducted," saad ni Nograles.

Inilahad kamakailan ng Commission on Audit (COA) sa kanilang 2018 annual report ang umano'y paggawad ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) P18.7 bilyong New Centennial Water Source-Kaliwa Dam project sa China Energy Engineering Corporation (CEEC) kahit pa hindi kumpleto ang isinumite nitong requirements.

Bukod dito, dalawang kompanyang Tsino ang napabilang din sa short-list ng mga pinagpilaan ng gobyerno nitong natapos na bidding kahit walang sapat na kakayahan.

Nais alamin ni Nograles kung may special treatment pa na ibinigay ng Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) ng MWSS, at panay Chinese firms ang mga napabilang sa short-list nito.

"We have to make sure that no special treatment is being given to project contractors and all involved parties, and that every precaution is taken to vet those bidding for this crucial project," saad ni Nograles.

"Only after those involved in this mess have explained how such basic procurement standards can be cast aside and steps are taken to properly bid out this project to a deserving contractor can we call this a done deal," dagdag pa ng kongresista.

Ang P18.7 billion New Centennial Water Source-Kaliwa Dam project ay popondohan gamit ang loan deal agreement ng administrasyong Duterte sa Export-Import Bank of China na nagkakahalaga ng \$234.92 milyon.

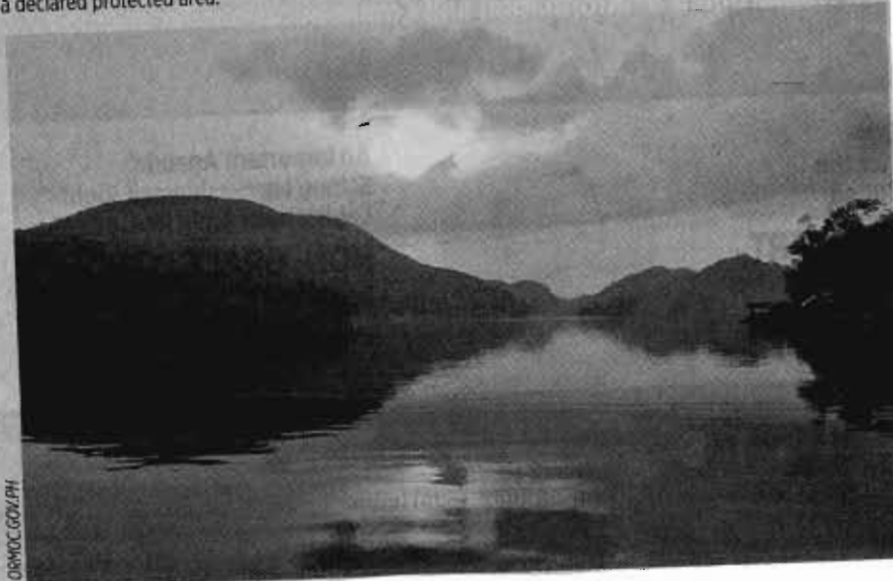
Ang nasabing proyekto na unang inilatag noong 1967, ay magbibigay sa Kalakhang Maynila at karatig probinsya ng karagdagang 600 milyong litro kada araw. **(JC Cahinhinan)**



EASTERN VISAYAS: ORMOC CITY

### Ormoc eyes Lake Danao water supply project for PPP

THE ORMOC City government signed an agreement last week with the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Center for assistance on various projects that will be proposed under a PPP scheme. One of the priority projects that will be pursued is the Lake Danao Water System Project, which still needs a feasibility study. "We will be proposing to provide source of water from Lake Danao to serve potable water throughout the city," Mayor Richard I Gomez said in a statement. Following the Sept. 3 agreement signing with the PPP center, Mr. Gomez met with the heads of the local engineering and planning departments to discuss how they can fast-track the Lake Danao plan as well as tourism projects at Quintolimbo, site of an eco-park. Lake Danao is part of the bigger Lake Danao Natural Park, a declared protected area.



ORMOC.GOV/PH





## #nationataglance

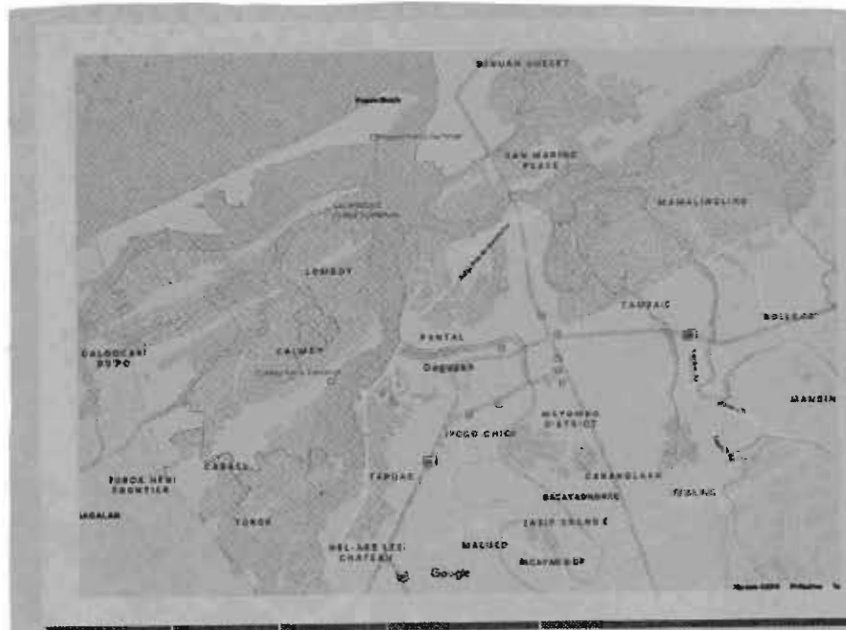
### ILOCOS REGION: DAGUPAN CITY

#### Dagupan City to buy boats for waste management in island communities

THE DAGUPAN City government is purchasing six boats this year, two of which will be assigned to the Waste Management Division (WMD) for hauling garbage from the city's five island communities. At forum on waste management last week, Mayor Marc Brian C. Lim gave this assurance as he called on barangay officials to strictly implement segregation policies. *"Maaasahan po ninyo na bibigyan natin ng pansin ang tamang collection ng basura, basta't kayo rin po sa barangay ay tama rin ang collection niyo ng basura, tama ang* (Rest assured that we will attend to concerns on garbage collection, as long as on your part, you observe proper collection and) segregation and the use of your MRF (material recover facility)," Mr. Lim said. Teddy Villamil, WMD consultant, welcomed the announcement, noting that garbage collection in the island villages "had always been a struggle." He said garbage from the villages of Carael, Calmay and Pugaro are collected twice a week using a six-wheeler truck, which takes a 20-kilometer route via Binmaley town. In Lomboy and Salapingao, garbage is hauled twice a week using an old motorboat of the City Engineer's Office. "But there were times when village officials rented privately-owned boats just to haul the garbage," Mr. Villamil said. Two of the four other boats will go to the City Agriculture Office, and one each to the city police and City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office.

#### OPEN DUMP

Meanwhile, Mr. Lim reiterated his intent to close the city's open dump in Bonuan Boquig by the end of this year, recognizing that this facility violates the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act. He stressed that to achieve this, he needs improved waste management systems at the barangay level. "Your commitment to cooperate with the city government is very important," he said.





## MAYNILAD MAG-I-INSTALL NG 30 KM SEWER LINES SA LAS PIÑAS CITY

ANG West Zone concessionaire Maynilad Water Services, Inc. (Maynilad) ay naglabas ng malaking puhunan na nagkakahalaga ng mahigit P6 bilyon gagamitin sa pag-install ng 30 kilometro ng mga linya o sewer lines sa Las Piñas City ngayong taon, para mapabilis ang pagkakaloob ng bagong sewerage lines para sa mga customer nito.

Ang 30-km sewer conveyance ay bahagi ng nakaplanong 80-km sewerage system project para sa Las Piñas City na ipatutupad sa huling apat na buwan ng 2019. Gagamitin ni Maynilad ang walang kaparis na pamamaraan para sa proyektong ito upang mabawasan ang epekto na kadalasan nagdulot ng trapiko kapag sinimulan na ang paghuhukay.

Kapag nakumpleto na ang proyekto sa taong 2021, ang sewerage system ay magbibigay-daan sa Maynilad na makakuha ng wastewater na nanggaling sa may halos 600,000 kustomer mula sa 20 barangays sa lungsod, at madali mailipat ito sa Las Piñas Water Reclamation Facility para sa tamang paggamot.

Ilinayo ang Las Piñas Wa-

ter Reclamation Facility noong Marso 2019 na may tinatamasa na makumpleto ang proyekto sa taong 2021, ang may dinisenyo alisunod sa mga Water Quality Guidelines and General Effluent Standards of 2016 (DAO 2016-08). Isang pamantayan na ipinag-uutos ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). Ito ang pinakamalaking sewage treatment plant ng Maynilad na mayroon malaking kapasidad, na kaya gamutin ang halos 88 milyong litro ng maruruming tubig (wastewater) sa bawat araw.

"We are determined to do our part in ensuring the proper treatment and disposal of wastewater in our concession area. Our commitment is such that we have allotted the largest portion of this year's capi-



### ANG INYONG LINGKOD

DR. HILDA C. ONG

tal expenditure budget to wastewater management for programs aimed to protect the health and sanitation of our customers and the environment," ayon kay Maynilad President and CEO Ramonci to S. Fernandez.

Kasalukuyang naglalagay rin ng sewer lines si Maynilad sa Valenzuela, Cavite City, at Barangays Cupang at Tunasan sa Muntinlupa City.

Mula lamang sa dalawang pasilidad ng paggamot ng wastewater bago muling naging pampribado noong 2007, ang Maynilad ay nakapagtayo na ng 20 higit pa, na nagsasagawa sa paggamot sa higit 600 milyong litro ng wastewater bawat araw.

Ang Maynilad ay ang pi-

nakamalaking pribadong water concessionaire sa Pilipinas na ang tunturin ay serbisuhan ang kustomer nito. Ito ay isa sa mga ahente at kontratista ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) para sa West Zone ng Greater Manila Area, na binubuo ng mga lungsod ng Maynila (ilang bahagi), ang Lungsod ng Quezon (ilang bahagi), Makati (kanluran ng South Super Highway), Caloocan, Pasay, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa, Valenzuela, Navotas at Malabon, ang lahat nasa Metro Manila; ang mga lungsod ng Cavite, Bacoor at Imus, at ang mga bayan ng Kawit, Noveleta at Rosario, lahat sa Lalawigan ng Cavite.



(Photo credit to Facebook)



STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES  
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## Maynilad to install 30 km sewer lines in Las Piñas

**WEST Zone concessionaire Maynilad Water Services, Inc. is investing over P6 billion to install 30 kilometers of sewer lines in Las Piñas City this year, to expedite sewerage services for its customers.**

The 30-km. sewer conveyance—which is part of the planned 80-km sewerage system project for Las Piñas City—will be implemented in the last quarter of 2019. Maynilad will utilize trenchless methodology for this

project to minimize impact on traffic of the pipe diggings.

Once completed in 2021, the sewerage system will enable Maynilad to catch wastewater generated by some 600,000 customers in 20 barangays in the city, and convey it to the Las Piñas Water Reclamation Facility for proper treatment.

The Las Piñas Water Reclamation Facility, constructed beginning March 2019 and also targeted for completion by 2021, is de-

signed to comply with the Water Quality Guidelines and General Effluent Standards of 2016 (DAO 2016-08)—a standard mandated by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. It will be Maynilad's largest sewage treatment plant in terms of capacity, treating about 88 million liters of wastewater per day.

"We are determined to do our part in ensuring the proper treatment and disposal of wastewater in our concession area. Our com-

mitment is such that we have allotted the largest portion of this year's capital expenditure budget to wastewater management for programs aimed to protect the health and sanitation of our customers and the environment," said Maynilad President and CEO Ramoncito S. Fernandez.

Maynilad is also currently laying sewer lines in Valenzuela, Cavite City, and Barangays Cupang and Tunasan in Muntinlupa City.



## PBSP, TOP FIRMS PARTNER FOR MARIKINA WATERSHED REHAB

**D**ESPITE the bad weather, around 500 employee-volunteers from 27 companies, professionals, athletes, enthusiasts and families trooped to the Marikina Sports Complex recently to run for the reforestation of the Marikina Watershed.

The second Marikina Watershed Family Fun Run (MWFFR) was organized by the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP), in partnership with the city government of Marikina and PLDT Inc.

Proceeds from the run for a cause will support the organization's Collective Impact initiatives in the Marikina Watershed, particularly the reforestation efforts at the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape (UMRBPL).

### Business sector response

PBSP has long been engaging member-companies in watershed rehabilitation and management of the UMRBPL and the Buhisan Watershed in Cebu City, and in helping provide livelihood to communities residing in these areas.

The initiative also creates a platform for employee-volunteers to help in their own ways through tree planting and participating in the fun run.

"We, at PBSP, believe that each of us can contribute in addressing social problems. This is captured in our campaign called #KasaliAko that aims to invite everyone to be involved and included in our nation's growth and development," said PBSP Executive Director Reynaldo Antonio Laguda.

By running in the Marikina Watershed Family Fun Run, Laguda said that one is already doing his or her part in helping the environment and is included in PBSP's collective response that leads to restoring the watershed and bringing various interventions to the locals.

A staunch supporter of the initiative is the Aboitiz Group which has planted over 200,000 trees in 138 hectares of the Marikina Watershed for two years now.

"The Aboitiz Group fully supports PBSP's Marikina Watershed Family Fun Run. We dedicate this 2019 run to the A-PARK program, the Aboitiz Group's contribution to the government's National Greening Program, consisting of various reforestation efforts for a health ecosystem," The Aboitiz Group said in a statement.

PLDT Inc. which mobilized around 70 employee-volunteers for the fun run, underscored the need for environmental protection.

"With all the recent environmental catastrophes the world is facing, we must do

everything we can to save and protect our one true home—Mother Earth. We hope that our collective efforts in rehabilitating the Marikina Watershed will help in ensuring a better future for our children and the next generations to come," PLDT Community Relations (ComRel) Division Head Katherine P. Diaz de Rivera said.

Meanwhile, ICTSI Foundation which participates in PBSP's tree-planting initiatives also joined the fun run for the second time around.

"The deforestation of the Marikina Watershed affects not just Marikina but also the neighboring cities and with the current water crisis, it's more important to support this kind of initiative. Moreover, when we joined the fun run last year, we saw the interest of the employee-volunteers who joined. Many of them would ask us when the next fun run will be so we decided to participate again this year," said ICTSI Foundation Program Operations Manager Joy Lapuz.

Deloitte Shared Service Center Inc. employee Ellen Joy Cajés, who bagged first place in the 10K female category, expressed her excitement in joining the fun run.

"In joining fun runs, you get to meet people and talk about the advocacies that you want to push forward. Joining the Marikina Watershed Family Fun Run is a really great experience and I'm thankful to Deloitte Philippines Outreach Inc. for sponsoring us to join this event, help out the environment, and promote a healthy lifestyle," Cajés said.

Joseph Pirmejo, Bookmark Inc. employee-volunteer and first-time runner, also echoed Cajés's thoughts, adding that besides giving him the chance to improve his physical fitness, the fun run also enabled him to do his part in saving the Marikina Watershed.

### PBSP in the Marikina watershed

IN 2010, PBSP launched its Marikina Watershed Initiative Program as a response of the private sector to the deluge caused by Typhoon Ondoy in September 2009.

The deforestation of the Marikina Watershed largely contributed to the record-breaking floods in Metro Manila and neighboring cities at that time. The lack of trees in the watershed left the ground unable to absorb rainwater, which flowed to the lowlands instead.

To date, PBSP and its member-companies have reforested 318 hectares and planted around 200,000 native fruit-bearing trees that will also provide sustainable source of livelihood for the locals.



# Deforestation must be treated as a global threat – Pope

ANTANANARIVO (Reuters) – Pope Francis said on Saturday rapid deforestation and the loss of biodiversity in individual countries should not be treated as local issues since they threaten the future of the planet.

Francis made his appeal on a visit to Madagascar, the world's fourth-largest island, which research institutes and aid agencies say has lost about 44% of its forest over the past 60 years, abetted by illegal exports of rosewood and ebony.

Francis zeroed in on endemic corruption, linking it with persistent, long-term poverty as well as poaching and illegal exports of natural resources.

Addressing Madagascar's president, Andry Rajoelina, his cabinet and other officials, Francis said some people were profiting from excessive deforestation and the associated loss of species.

"The deterioration of that biodiversity compromises the future of the country and of the earth, our common home," he said.

Following recent huge fires in the Amazon region, Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro rejected international criticism about his policy to expand farmland, saying it was a domestic issue.

"The last forests are menaced by forest fires, poaching, the unrestricted cutting down of valuable woodlands. Plant and animal biodiversity is endangered by contraband and illegal exportation," Pope Francis said.



**Pope Francis waves from the pope mobile as he arrives for a prayer vigil with youth at the Soamandrakizay Mess site in Antananarivo, Madagascar, September 7, 2019. (Reuters)**

Jobs must be created for people whose livelihood harms the environment so they will not see it as their only means of survival, the pontiff added.

"There can be no true ecological approach or effective efforts to safeguard the environment without the attainment of a social justice capable of respecting the right to the common destination of the Earth's goods, not only of present generations, but also of those yet to come," he said.



# Timber-poaching in Zambo del Sur protected area found

SAN MIGUEL, Zamboanga del Sur — Authorities on Saturday busted a timber-poaching operation in the surroundings of Mt. Timolan here, supposedly a protected area under existing environment laws.

Piles of timbers awaiting transport and newly cut trees greeted environment officials, Army personnel, and

operatives of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) in Barangay Dumalian when they raided the area.

But those involved in the poaching of trees were no longer around.

More than a thousand board feet of timber and another 2,000 board feet of round logs were seized, all of lawaan and yakal species.

Authorities also

found old stumps, indicating previous tree-cutting activities in the area.

The timber-poaching operation was located two kilometers from the barangay center, and well within the delineated area of the Mt. Timolan Protected Landscape, which was declared through Presidential Proclamation No. 354 signed on August 14, 2000.

Ben Acana, provincial

environment and natural resources officer, told the Inquirer they received information about the tree-cutting activities inside the Mt. Timolan area, hence the conduct of Saturday's raid.

NBI Pagadian District Office Chief Israel Ivan Peralta said they will conduct further investigation to determine the personalities behind the illegal operation. — *Inquirer*



**Illegal** Environment officials inspect illegally-cut lumber of assorted species in the vicinity of Barangay. Pasadena in El Nido, Palawan. DENR PHOTO.



## PHL raises Asean, biodiversity awareness in cultural show

A FREE cultural show at the Rizal Park Open Air Auditorium in Manila on August 31 put the spotlight on the region's shared environment and one desire and responsibility to protect nature, focusing on the Asean region's rich marine life.

This was made through commemorative speeches, music and dance performances based on environmental awareness, conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity to further highlight the Asean Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) as the only regional hub for biodiversity conservation hosted by the Philippines.

The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) of the Philippines, led by its Chairman and National Artist Virgilio S. Almario, spearheaded the Asean Month Celebration with "Sama Sama Asean Para sa Kalikasan [Asean, Our One SEA]."

The multi-arts concert was celebrated in accordance with Proclamation 282 (s. 2017) declaring August as Asean Month. This was also part of the regional commemoration of the 52nd anniversary of Asean.

With its peoples at the heart of Asean cooperation, the concert aimed to enjoin the general public in the regional celebration and to further raise awareness about Asean, the values the cooperation fosters, and its role in the development of the country and the region.

"We deeply appreciate this initiative of the Philippine [government] to promote awareness on Asean and on the values of biodiversity, particularly of our teeming marine life in the region. It is high time for us to emphasize the interconnectivity of the region's marine ecosystems, for the public to realize that what we do in our country will

affect the overall health of the region's biodiversity," said ACB Executive Director Dr. Theresa Mundita S. Lim.

Lim added that one of the most pressing issues that threatens our marine life is plastic pollution. "Every year, the world produces around 5 trillion plastic bags—that is more or less 700 bags per person annually."

She said the plastic bags, which are usually utilized in just a few minutes or hours, "take centuries to decompose."

"Before being decomposed, the wastes pile up in lands and easily washed up into streams, and rivers until they reach the oceans; polluting waters, destroying aquatic habitats, and eventually kill marine species," Lim said.

With its commitment to sustain awareness about Asean in the country, the Philippine Asean Committee on Culture and Information showcased cross-cultural presentations and performances that feature Asean dances from Indonesian artist Aisha Munaf, Guang Ming Dance Project and the Ramon Obusan Folkloric Group.

A glimpse of musical prowess was rendered by the Viva Voce and Bayang Barrios at Ang Naliyagan Band.

Part of the program were some video presentations and other preshow activities that include the exhibit, "Ripples: Awakening Consciousness of the Asean Biodiversity and the Seas."

Joining the multi-sectoral celebration in the Philippines are agency partners including the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the National Parks Development Committee, the Presidential Communications Operations Office, Philippine Information Agency, People's Television, the Bureau of Communications Services and the ACB.

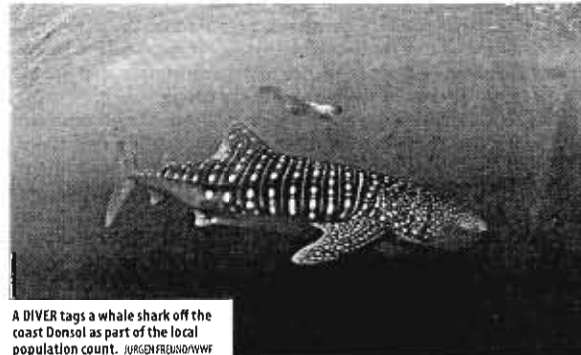




# WWF: Whale shark population increases

*More than 100 new 'butanding' (whale shark), including juveniles, spotted in Donsol, the highest number in several years*

**D**ONSOL, Sorsogon—One-hundred-four new *butanding* (whale shark) individuals have been identified in Ticao Pass off the coast of Donsol, Sorsogon, between January and June 2019, according to a report from the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Philippines.



A DIVER tags a whale shark off the coast Donsol as part of the local population count. JURGEN FREUND/WWF

Whale shark, classified as Endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) on their Red List of Threatened Species, is a filter-feeding carpet shark and the largest living fish species in the world.

Each whale shark can be identified based on the unique pattern of spots behind its gills, which serves as a "fingerprint" for identification. Just as no two human fingerprints are alike, no two whale sharks have the same spot pattern.

The addition of these new sightings puts the total number of whale shark individuals spotted in Donsol at 676 since the monitoring began in 2007, the WWF said in its news release.

This represents nearly 40 percent of all the 1,724 whale sharks identified in the Philippines. The number of individuals spotted in 2019 was also the largest in several years, with only 22 new individuals spotted in Donsol between 2017 and 2018 by comparison.

The whale sharks were sighted during this year's photo identification activities conducted by WWF-Philippines. In the first half of this year, 168 individuals—with 64 sightings alongside the 104 newly identified ones—were noted.

Very young whale shark juveniles were also identified among the 168 individuals that were spotted. Their presence suggests that the Ticao Pass may be a pupping ground for whale sharks, further increasing the ecological significance of the area.

"These whale sharks that pass by Donsol aren't just important due to their value to local tourism. More than that, they play an important systemic role in providing resilience to the local ecosystem," said WWF-Philippines Donsol Project Manager Manuel Narvadez Jr. in the news release.

"The number of whale sharks spotted in Donsol indicates that its waters are now rich with plankton, which is their primary food.

They have even come here with their young," he added.

WWF-Philippines has been active in Donsol since 1998 and has actively worked with the local government unit (LGU) for more than two decades for the conservation of the Ticao Pass and the local whale sharks.

The whale shark census, which monitors the number of whale shark individuals passing through Donsol, began in 2007.

A thriving ecotourism industry centered on communal participation in the conservation of the whale shark has helped Donsol rise from a fifth-class municipality on its way to first class.

Conservation activities in the Ticao Pass between WWF-Philippines and the LGU of Donsol will continue in the coming years. WWF-Philippines is currently exploring options of expanding the current Marine Protected Areas

(MPA), or establishing new ones in neighboring Masbate municipality to further protect the Ticao Pass and its inhabitants.

"Whaleshark tourism at Donsol is a long established eco-tourism venture, which the WWF-Philippines team helped set up and running. After so many years, it is very gratifying to see local communities and the whale sharks continuing to benefit," said Dr. Andy Cornish, leader of "Sharks: Restoring the Balance," WWF's global shark and ray conservation program.

"Protecting more marine areas near Donsol could play a key role in enhancing protection for these endangered ocean nomads for generations to come," Cornish said.

WWF's global program on sharks includes work to conserve whale sharks in Ecuador, Mexico, Pakistan, and Tanzania, in addition to the Philippines, it added in its news release.



## Keeping the water where it should be in Teresa, Rizal

**T**ERESA, Rizal—In less than 25 years, there will be no more water to drink or to use in watering crops in Rizal.

According to a 2014 study conducted by World Wide Fund for Nature-Philippines (WWF-Philippines), the Morong-Teresa Sub Watershed will dry up. This raises issues of climate change, unabated development and unsustainable water management practices.

In response to the situation, Republic Cement has turned its

quarry into a catchment that harvest rainwater.

The Teresa Quarry Rainwater Catchment holds about 235 billion liters of water that is equal to 11,750 water delivery tankers.

If this amount of water freely runs off, this would have caused massive flooding in the area. During the dry season, the collected water supplies the cement plant its operational water requirement, including fugitive dust abatement.

A neighbor, farmer Willie Natividad of Barangay Dulumbayan, expresses gratitude to Republic Cement because of this initiative. The water from the catchment is shared to the farmers ensuring that they can plant two crops of palay a year while allowing vegetable growing in between.

He also shared that the catchment helps in the flood-prevention of the Teresa town which is situated on a valley in between mountains.

Natividad said in Filipino that besides assuring irrigation for the crops, the water catchment helps prevent flooding in the area.

Rainwater harvest is only one of Republic Cement's contribution to wider collective efforts of managing the area's finite natural resources.

In partnership with community and collaboration with stakeholders, they build a more climate-change resilient and stronger community.



## Slow action on inferior steel

**T**he government is moving very slowly in addressing concerns about the proliferation of steel-making furnaces that are harmful to the environment and produce unsafe products. These equipment—called induction furnaces—were banned by China in 2017 as part of a crackdown on manufacturers of low-quality steel. However, these machines found their way to some countries in Southeast Asia, the Philippines and Indonesia in particular. The proliferation of these furnaces has triggered environmental concerns on pollution and safety issues because of the low and inconsistent quality of steel they produce.

As early as February last year, Philippine steel-makers have raised concerns that induction furnace-produced steel (mostly rebars used in construction) did not meet national quality standards and posed a big safety risk when used in building homes and high-rises, given that the Philippines is prone to earthquakes and typhoons. They urged the government to ban the importation of these furnaces that were, in the first place, already prohibited in China.

The Iron and Steel Council of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations also urged members of the regional grouping in January last year to prohibit the importation of induction furnaces from China for use in steelmaking, noting that the region had become a preferred dumping ground for the obsolete and unwanted equipment.

The government actually began investigating this issue following concerns raised by local steel-makers. But after shutting down some plants using induction furnaces for environmental violations such as the lack of permits, those facilities were allowed to reopen after their owners complied with the requirements. Back then, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) had pointed out that the steel plants using induction furnaces lacked antipollution devices. It said it was not safe even for the workers and for the neighboring areas, but that it could not just ban them without justification, so the government had to go through due process, thus the investigation.

Last week, or more than a year later, the DTI and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) issued a statement quoting Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez and Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu as saying that the agencies have agreed to review existing environmental standards and production technologies used in steelmaking.

There still was no outright ban, with the DTI only saying that it would intensify its campaign for safer and higher-quality steel products, and was therefore reviewing its policies and regulations on this matter. The statement said the DTI and the DENR would form a technical working group (TWG) to align its policies and strategies, to ensure that steelmaking facilities are compliant with environmental standards and product quality. Lopez added that both agencies are studying proposed regulations on the use of secondhand equipment or machineries in the steel industry. The TWG would also review the proposed increase in penalties imposed on manufacturers violating environmental standards or the terms and conditions in their environmental permits.

The Philippines will be needing a lot of steel, especially with the Duterte administration's "Build, build, build" program that seeks to address the country's lack of airports, roads, bridges and other infrastructure. Steel products that pass quality standard tests are needed in all these projects.

As Lopez himself pointed out during his meeting with DENR's Cimatu: "What we need in the country are modern, environmentally friendly technologies that will consistently produce quality products. We do not want those used pollutive induction furnaces (from China) to transfer to our country."

Isn't a year and a half more than enough time to have determined with accuracy that induction furnaces—already outlawed in the neighboring giant manufacturing country for polluting and producing inconsistent quality steel products—are bad for the Philippines, and therefore should also be banned here?



## FCF's mining forest project targets 100 ha.

By Ben Moses Ebreo

QUEZON, Nueva Vizcaya,— FCF Minerals Corporation here will be planting 100 hectares of land with agroforestry trees as part of their Mining Forest Project(MFP) this year.

Ian Moller, FCF Mineral's General Manager for Sustainability said the MFP seeks to compensate tree cuttings in their project area where a tree cut will require them to plant 100 hectares with various tree species.

"It's a quite huge effort from our group with the local environment and natural resources office who approves the implementation of the project off site," he said.

Moller said the MFP will be implemented in identified private lands with farmers and land owners in barangay Didipio using agroforestry and fruit trees.

He added that FCF Minerals Corp. provides the technology and planting materials including assistance to the workers for three years so that the plantation will be properly maintained and managed.

"We have to make sure that the planted trees will have good growth before turning them over to our plant owners," Moller said.

Forester Tito Tanguilig, Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer(PENRO) said the company has already established its tree nurseries in barangay Didipio.



## Mining firms to discuss issues, challenges in three-day confab

**A** THREE-DAY series of talks about mining issues, challenges and opportunities in the local and global scene organized by the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) will kick off on September 10.

COMP said the theme for this year's conference, "Riding the Wave: Capitalizing on Opportunities," sets the tone of the annual Mining Philippines International Conference and Exhibition, which will gather various stakeholders in the industry.

"It will be an opportune time to hear from government officials, specifically from agencies mandated to manage the country's environment and natural resources, the challenges and opportunities for growth as a way forward for the Philippine mineral resource industry," Gerard Brimo, chairman of COMP said in a statement.

The event is expected to gather representatives from the government, private sector, academe, indigenous people and mining host communities to tackle mineral resource development issues, chal-

lenges and opportunities in the local and global scene.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary for Climate Change and Mining Concerns Analiza R. Teh, who will represent Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, will keynote the event on the first day of the event.

Participants will be given an update on the "Towards Sustainable Mining Initiative" with Pierre Gratton, president and CEO of the Mining Association of Canada as guest and speaker.

The event will explore the government's way forward for the metallic mineral resource industry and provide a venue for exchanges of ideas and best practices in the mining industry.

"We have an array of topics lined up for this year as we ask ourselves the questions: What is the way forward for the industry? How do we capitalize on the opportunities in the face of the daunting challenges confronting the industry? Answers to all these, hopefully, will be provided by our speakers and resource persons," Brimo said.

*Jonathan L. Mayuga*



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## Battery minerals, our next boom?



WE ARE a country with a trillion-dollar potential in mining waiting to be unleashed. But because of the unstable regulatory environment that the government created, the industry has been deprived of vast opportunities to help and uplift our country, by and large. Thus, the potential remains to be that—a potential.

For instance, in 2016, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines came out with a list of potential FDIs (Foreign Direct Investments) and from that short list alone, there was a total of \$23 billion in investment potential.

The top of the list is Tampak (Sagittarius Mines), South Cotabato at \$5.9 billion, followed by: Intex Resources in Mindoro at \$2.5 billion, Silangan (Philex Mining Corp.) in Surigao del Norte at \$2 billion, Kingking (Nadecor) in Davao del Norte at \$2 billion, Asiaticus in Davao del Norte at \$2 billion, FSE (Lepanto Mining Corp.) in Benguet at \$2 billion, Philsaga Mining in Masbate at \$2 billion, Philnico (San Miguel Corp) in Surigao del Sur at \$2 billion, Balabag (TVIRD) in Zamboanga del Sur at \$2 billion, Balatoc (BC) in Benguet at \$350 million, and Global Ferronickel in Palawan at \$250 million.

These 11 projects, all in remote, underserved, underdeveloped areas, have been stranded in regulatory limbo for years, some even decades and are low lying fruits the government can harness to boost economic growth in these areas. shows that theshows a readily available growth potential of the mining industry in our country is real. The century and a half experience that we have had is a definite advantage to propel the country to economic victory!

We are 4th in the world in terms of cobalt reserves and our copper reserves are estimated at 4 billion metric tons and this makes the Philippines the fourth largest in the world in terms of copper reserves. While nickel is our biggest mineral production, in 2016 we were able to produce 500,000 MT, with Indonesia opting out of nickel exports we are positioned to be biggest producer of nickel in the world.

### POTENTIAL FDIs IN MINING AS OF 2016

Project (Company name)	Location	Investments, \$ Billions
Tampak (Sagittarius Mines)	South Cotabato	5.9
Intex Resources	Mindoro	2.5
Silangan (Philex Mining Corp.)	Surigao del Norte	2.0
Kingking (Nadecor)	Davao del Norte	2.0
Asiaticus	Davao Oriental	2.0
FSE (Lepanto Mining Corp.)	Benguet	2.0
Philsaga Mining	Masbate	2.0
Philnico (San Miguel Corp.)	Surigao del Sur	2.0
Balatoc (BC)	Zamboanga del Sur	0.35
Global Ferronickel	Palawan	0.25
<b>Total potential investments</b>		<b>23.0</b>

### So, what's the problem?

The government must cut the policy chains tying down the potential of our mineral resources. We have been picking our minerals in trickles and wasting the current capacity of the mining industry. We missed an opportunity in the last congress when House Bill 8400 establishing a new fiscal regime for the mining industry passed in the House of Representatives (HOR) but did not make it through the

Senate for lack of time. This was after months of deliberation between the government and industry stakeholders that finally resulted in a compromise that increased the government's share while maintaining viability and competitiveness in the global market. The proposed revenue

sharing scheme was based on existing tax regimes of countries with well-developed mining industries where mining is a major economic engine of growth.

The HOR Committee on Ways and Means will be conducting new hearings of the refiled version which should hopefully see fast approval. The bill aims to rationalize and institute a single

*“ Just imagine the millions of families that will benefit from the quality jobs and infrastructure developments in remote areas. ”*

↓  
MORE TECHNOLOGY

↓  
fiscal



UPPER  
 LOWER

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### More technology needs more minerals

Today, technological innovation is foremost in any industry creating an emerging surge in demand for mineral resources creating new opportunities for that the Philippine mining industry should be ready to exploit.

The demand for electronic devices (mobile phones, etc.) and the global trend shifting to electric vehicles and more environment friendly hybrid power generation and micro-grids are pushing the development of power storage solutions, in other words, rechargeable batteries. It so happens that essential battery minerals such as nickel, cobalt and manganese are just some of our endowed resources that we have barely started to harvest.

Tesla, one of the world's leading innovators in battery technology, has warned of a potential shortage in battery metals and has invested in securing its own metal resources with several metallic mines. Other manufacturers are doing the same and positioning to capture the looming switch to renewable energy solutions where dependable batteries will be indispensable.

fiscal regime applicable to all mineral agreements and enhance the equitable share of the government in the utilization of natural resources without compromising the mining sector's need for reasonable return on its investment and support the industries' development.

When signed into law, this should satisfy the controversial provisions of Executive Order 79 issued by President Benigno Aquino III banning the issuance of new mining permits and proving to be the industry killing policy that President Duterte would do well to scrap.

The next time you charge your phone, bear in mind that there are \$23 billion in pending investments just waiting for a stable and competitive regulatory environment that will spark an industry boom driven by the rising demand for metallic minerals from tech manufacturers. Just imagine the millions of families that will benefit from the quality jobs and infrastructure developments in these remote areas. If only the government will let the legitimate (not the illegal) responsible mining industry do their thing, the revenues and prosperity they will create will negate the need for more taxes, and that will be great for all of us.



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# Smart cities, smart country



Thomas M. Orbos

## STREET TALK

**T**HERE is something good brewing among LGUs nationwide outside Metro Manila. Forward thinking heads of cities and provinces are now looking at how to improve the quality of life of their constituents through the use of technology. Generally termed as “smart city” solutions, the latest information and communications technology are being tapped to improve their services in areas, such as traffic management, solid waste, flood control, water, electricity and other utilities. Technology enhances these services by reducing resource consumption, operating costs and wastage, thus making them more efficient and sustainable.

I have seen this in my recent travels outside Metro Manila. In Baguio City, newly elected Mayor Benjamin Magalong hit the ground running by immediately looking at smart city solutions to address the problem of traffic and solid waste. Aside from planning to implement an intelligent traffic system to control traffic flow in the summer capital, a cable car system, similar to the Metrocable in Medellin, Colombia, is being pushed in collaboration with the national government. Also in the pipeline is a waste to energy plant, which would do well than a solid waste facility in a land-starved area like Baguio. In General Santos City, Mayor Ronnel Rivera is also implementing an intelligent traffic system to address the growing traffic congestion as a result of rapid development. And rightly so, as I have been told that vehicle sales in General Santos are among the highest in the entire Philippines. In Mandaue and Cebu, Mayors Jonas Cortes and Edgardo Labella are looking at enhancing their traffic system with an automated no contact apprehension component and exploring an integrated approach to traffic management along with the rest of the nearby cities that make up the greater Cebu area. Good because as we all know in Manila, traffic flows do not end at city boundaries. In Davao City, Mayor Sara Duterte is intent on pursuing its transport modernization plan and has gone a notch higher by planning to bring in low floor, low entry buses that will be operated together with the local PUJ groups. And in my home province, Pangasinan, Gov. Amado

Espino III is looking at intelligent flood monitoring solutions, among others, in anticipation to the perennial effect of flooding caused by the Agno River.

I am sure other cities and provinces are also seriously looking at such a road map. With smart city solutions, local administrators are given data-driven decision-making tools that lead to enhancing the

**I am sure other cities and provinces are also seriously looking at such a road map. With smart city solutions, local administrators are given data-driven decision-making tools that lead to enhancing the quality of life of their constituents. Equally important, smart cities bring in investments. And investments mean bringing direct and indirect revenues to the community.**

quality of life of their constituents. Equally important, smart cities bring in investments. And investments mean bringing direct and indirect revenues to the community. Take the case of the business-process outsourcing companies or BPOs, which are now on the lookout for capable cities, especially given their present restrictions and the prohibitive costs of real estate in Metro Manila. A smart city will provide the same technical and communications needs of a BPO. And with BPOs, local commerce, transportation, lodging and other businesses will grow as well.

We talk about moving to a new capital city to solve the Metro Manila problem—similar to what President Widodo of Indonesia did recently when he announced a new Jakarta. Maybe we don't need to do that to solve traffic congestion, lack of space, pollution and all the problems that is Metro Manila. Maybe what we need is to produce more Metro Manilas nationwide but now doing it more methodically and learning from our Metro Manila mistakes. Maybe we need to be smarter. And developing and encouraging smart cities in the countryside may be one of our answers.

*Thomas “Tim” Orbos was former DOTr undersecretary for roads and general manager of the MMDA. He is currently undertaking further studies at the McCourt School of Public Policy of Georgetown University. He can be reached via e-mail at thomas\_orbos@sloan.mit.edu*





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## BOI mulls smaller prod'n volume rules for ECO PUV program

The Board of Investments (BOI) is crafting an ECO PUV Program that would require delivery of commitment within a shorter period of time even at lower production volume.

Initial figures point to BOI's plan of requiring smaller production batches of 5,000 units to be sold within 6 months. The same small volume requirement would apply for the succeeding batches for participants to be eligible of the program's tax incentives.

Bautista said that this scheme is being pushed to encourage ECO PUV pro-

gram participants to produce as soon as possible to meet the government's timetable to replace the 200,000 old jeepneys with cleaner mass transport.

Bautista explained that the tax incentives are meant to reduce the cost of PUVs, which could reach up to ₱2 million a unit as these are bigger than the current jeepneys, environment-friendly and equipped with new technologies.

The incentives for the ECO PUV Program participants will be taken from the remaining ₱9 billion worth of tax incentives under the Comprehen-

sive Automotive Resurgence Strategy (CARS).

The mechanics would be similar to the CARS Program where the tax incentives to participants are based on the fixed investment support (facilities and capital equipment) and the number of cars produced over a period of six years.

Under the CARS Program, each participant must produce 200,000 units of the enrolled CARS model over a six-year period to fully utilize the ₱9 billion worth of tax incentives.

By **BERNIE CAHILES-MAGKILAT**



## The future of business and why sustainability matters

**T**ough choices, turbulent world—these are the challenges that today's CEOs face. Globalization 4.0 is changing the business equation that now, they have to aim for sustainability with the same vigor they put in pursuing profitability targets.

As discontent with the old order continues to escalate because of perceived global imbalance, people are turning to businesses to help solve society's problems.

The 2019 Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) CEO Conference boldly brings this discussion in a forum that will tackle the future of business and how business leaders can navigate the pressure points in this emerging world order.

Thought leaders will provide insights that can help expand the arsenal of strategies and options as they face the future.

With climate change and sustainability becoming two of the world's most serious challenges, businesses have to review the way they operate alongside governments and communities to address the triple bottom line—profits, people, planet.

Keynote speaker Eur. Ing. Henry K.H. Wang (president, Gate International) will speak on "Business Sustainability Impacts and Future Developments," sharing his extensive knowledge on energy and sustainable business.

A figure in the international speaking circuit, Mr. Wang has published over 100 papers and speeches plus several books on climate change and renewable energy, and holds international patents on new process inventions.

Author and innovation strategy consultant Deepa Pralhad will explore the profound changes that are moving the needle to close the gap between the haves and the have-nots. With the business environment continuously in a state of flux, it's time to realize "The New Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid." Ms. Pralhad's book, "Predictable Magic: Unleash the Power of Design Strategy to Transform Your Business," was selected by Fast Company as one of the Best Design Books of the Year. She will share her thoughts about emerging markets and innovation.

Businesses cannot operate in a vacuum and they have to pay attention to their stakeholders—regulators, investors, employees, governments and NGOs alike. Companies are now expected to disclose their sustainability efforts and performance, yet many still have to define the linkage between what they do and the value these create for their businesses and stakeholders. Sustainability is more than just a compliance requirement, it is poised to become a core business agenda.

In "How Sustainability Practices Impact Shareholder Val-



**MAPPING  
THE FUTURE**  
JUNIE DEL MUNDO

ue," Andrew WK Chan (Sustainability & Climate Change Leader, PWC South East Asian Consulting Services, Malaysia) will share the insights gained from PWC's research, especially on the factors that will establish the link between sustainability performance and value creation.

All these raging issues cannot just be plain talk. Social entrepreneurs are showing through their initiatives that development can be a major undertaking that can combine doing well by doing good.

These pioneers will take the spotlight in the panel discussion on "Doing the Unthinkable," where a new breed of entrepreneurs will share their experiences in building enterprises anchored on engagement with their communities.

Four Filipino social entrepreneurs who are slowly changing the world will discuss

their philosophies and how they animate what they do.

Jeannie Javelosa, founder of Echostore and of Gender-Responsive Economic Actions for the Transformation of Women (GREAT Women), is an advocate for culture and sustainable development, providing opportunities for underprivileged women in the Philippines and in Southeast Asia and helping them establish their own micro-enterprises and gain access to global markets.

Ilac Diaz founded Liter of Light, which has helped thousands alleviate themselves from energy poverty through a clever and environment-friendly lighting concept, using recycled plastic bottles to avoid relying on traditional and centralized energy providers, such as coal, nuclear or hydro plants. Mr. Diaz works to empower communities in the Philippines and around the world through several pioneering programs in rammed earth, bamboo, and PET plastic bottle construction. Georgianna Carlos, who made it to Forbes' 30 Under 30 Asia 2019 list, is the cofounder and CEO of Fetch! Naturals—a premium pet care brand that uses only natural ingredients such as neem or jicama.

Bro. George Maria will talk about Yamang Bukid, a successful agrifarm endeavor that shares the harvest of the enterprise with the employees and staff whom they consider partners in their initiatives.

The future of business places people front and center. Today's competitiveness will hinge in a large measure on the ability of organizations to leverage their human capital.

"How Top Tier Companies Across the Globe Create Organizational Excellence" highlights human capital development as key to outstanding results, particularly the actions that produce the most significant increases in energy, performance and relationships.

Deanna Murphy (founder and CEO, People Acuity), author of the book "Shift Up! Strengths Strategies for Optimal Living," will talk about people acuity—clearly seeing and effectively optimizing people in a people-focused human economy.

She will be joined by psychologist, coach and adventurer Steve Jeffs (Chief Innovation Officer, People Acuity), who translates his passion for extreme sports and environments into results. He focuses on helping people to achieve what was previously impossible.

Clearly, the 2019 MAP Conference is where we expect ideas to trigger innovation and action by providing Filipino business leaders with the spark and inspiration to begin the process of reinventing themselves, at least for those who intend to sustain their operation now and in the future.

Mark this not-to-be-missed conference in your calendar:

Sept. 10, 2019, at the Makati Shangri-La. This is spearheaded by MAP and BusinessWorld, along with knowledge partner PwC/Isia Lipana & Co.

Platinum sponsors include Ayala, Shell, BDO, SM Investments and Sun Life Financial. Diamond sponsors are EON and FranklinCovey. Gold sponsors are Divina Law and Navarro Amper & Co./Deloitte Philippines. Silver sponsors are BPI, Development Dimensions International (DDI) Philippines, Digital Out of Home, Inc. (DOOH), Maynilad, Meralco, NOAH Business Applications, SGV and Unionbank. Bronze sponsors are Air21, BDB Law wts, FPH, FWD, Gardenia, Grand Hyatt, Healthway Medical, IP Converge, Megawide, MPTC, NLEX, P&A Grant Thornton, Philippine Coffee Board, PLDT, RSM (Reyes Tacandong & Co.), Stradcom, Teleperformance and The Bellevue Manila.

Print media partners are the Philippine Daily Inquirer, The Daily Tribune, The Manila Times, and The Philippine Star. Broadcast Media Partner is ANC. Makati Shangri-La is the hotel partner. The conference will be livestreamed by BIPStream. **INQ**



The author is the chair of the MAP CEO Conference Committee and the CEO of The EON Group, a fully integrated communications agency. Feedback at [rmap@map.org.ph](mailto:rmap@map.org.ph) and [juniedelmundo@eon.com.ph](mailto:juniedelmundo@eon.com.ph). For previous articles, please visit [map.org.ph](http://map.org.ph).



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MABILIS na tumugon ang ilang lumayang preso na pinababalik ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa Bureau of Corrections dahil sa kontrobersya sa Republic Act No. 10592 o Good Conduct Time Allowance (GCTA) law.

Habilin ni Duterte, basta sumurender o sumuko ang mga ito sa pinakamalapit na awtoridad gaya ng mga pulis at militar sa lugar.

At nagaganap nga ito habang ang iba ay dumiretso mismo sa sangay ng BuCor na pinanggalingan nila.

Ang BuCor kasi ay para sa mga pambansang bilanggo o na-convict o napatunayan nang nagkasala ng hukuman at may mga bilangguan ito sa Bilibid sa Muntinlupa, sa Mindanao, sa Palawan at iba pa.

Maraming aalamin sa mga ito, lalo na ang mga kaduda-duda ang paglaya.

'Yun bang === binili ang kanilang kalayaan o kapalit ng pangongotong ng mga taga-Bureau of Corrections at iba pang paraan.

Kasama sa mga dapat bumalik ang mga nililitis pa lang ang mga kaso ngunit pinalaya rin sa kaduda-dudang paraan.

### TAKOT SA DEAD-OR-ALIVE

Sa interbyu sa ilang bumabalik na preso, takot silang mahagip ng patakarang dead-or-alive ni Pang. Digong.

Sabi ng Pangulo, may 15 araw silang sumuko at kung lilipas ang panahong ito, ituturing na silang mga fugitive o takas na bilanggo.

Dito sila maaaring manganib, lalo na ang mga lalaban na ikapanganib ng buhay ng mga mang-aaresto sa kanila na pulis, military, National Bureau of Investigation at iba pang naaatasang mang-aaresto.

'Yung iba, lalo na ang mga may pera, sa mga abogado sila pumupunta at komukonsulta kung babalik sila o hindi.

Ito'y dahil hati ang mga abogado sa kautusan ng Pangulo.

May mga abogado nangangatwiran na iligal o kwestiyunabile ang kautusang pagpapanumbalik sa BuCor ng mga pinalaya ng



## MAS MABUTING SUMUKO KAYSA MA-DEAD OR ALIVE

ahensya.

At umaasa ang mga may pambayad sa abogado, kasabay ng pagtatago nila o paglayas ng bansa para makaiwas sa pang-aaresto.

Magpapakita lamang sila batay sa kautusan ng korte.

Pero lalong magtatago o tatakas palabas ng Pinas ang mga gumawa talaga ng milagro gaya ng panunuhol sa mga taga-Bucor sa salapi at iba pang paraan kapalit ng kanilang kalayaan.

### 1,800 HEINOUS CRIMINALS, ATBP.

Ang nasa 1,800 na convict at may dinidinig pang kasong masasabing heinous crime na lumaya sa hindi tamang panahon ang napagtuunan ng pansin sa kautusang mag-sibalikan ang mga ito sa kulungan, particular sa mga kulungan ng BuCor.

At sa kalaunan, kasama na ang mga recidivist o paulit-ulit na gumagawa ng magkakahalintulad na kaso, habitual delinquent o gumagawa ng iba't ibang kaso at escapee o tumatakas.

Kabilang sa mga may heinous crime sina ex-Calauan, Laguna Mayor Antonio Sanchez at mga convict sa kasong Chiong sisters sa Cebu at mga druglord, Pinoy man o dayuhan.

May panggagahasa at pagpatay ang kaso nina Sanchez at mga convict sa kasong Chiong habang malakihang droga naman ang kinasasangkutan ng mga druglord.

Siyempre pa, may mga may kasong pagpatay na parricide, kidnapping o carnapping na may pagpatay, rape, masaker na katulad ng sa mga Ampatuan at iba pa.

### PARUSA AT GIYERA SA KORAPSYON

Sa kabuuan, kabilang sa mga pinakamahalinga na sangkap ng kautusan sa "balik-kulungan" ni Pang. Digong ang parusa at giyera sa korapsyon.

Maliwanag sa kautusan na hindi makikibang ang mga may hei-

nous crime, recidivist, habitual delinquent at escapee sa grasyang ipinagkakaloob ng GC-TA.

Kailangang buuin ng mga bilanggo na convict o nililitis pa lang ang kaso ang mga parusang 21 taon at isang araw hanggang 40 taong pagkabilanggo sa ilalim ng reclusion perpetua ayon sa takda ng Revised Penal Code of the Philippines at 30-40 taong pagkabilanggo sa ilalim ng life imprisonment ayon naman sa takda ng mga espesyal na batas.

Sa pagbabalik ng mga bilanggo, kailangan nilang magtapat kung sila'y kinotongan ng salapi at iba pang pabor kaya sila lumaya.

Kailangan din nilang magtapat kung sila mismo ang nag-alok ng suhol at tinanggap ng mga taga-BuCor para sa kanilang kalayaan.

Kailangan din nilang ipagtapat kung ginamitan sila ng mga pakana na pagsasampa ng kaso kung hindi sila bumigay sa gusto ng mga taong pamahalaan.

Ito'y para masibak, makasuhan at makulong din ang mga korap na opisyal ng BuCor at iba pang may kinalaman sa iskam sa pagpapalaya ng mga bilanggo.

At maituwid na rin ang pagkukulang o kamalian ng gobyerno sa mga sobra-sobra ang parusa na malalaman sa muling pagkwenta sa haba ng panahon ng pagkakabilanggo ng mga preso.

Dapat magtulungan ang lahat para sa makamit ang tunay na katarungan para sa mga biktima at akusado, kasama na ang mga nasasangkot na komunidad at buong bayan.

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