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IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



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DENR to remove illegal structures in Pasig

By Rio N. Araja

ENVIRONMENT Secretary Roy Cimatu on Friday vowed to go after illegal structures along the Pasig River and all esteros in Metro Manila.

Cimatu said the crackdown would harmonize the government's rehabilitation efforts for the Pasig River and Manila Bay.

He asserted his objective of recovering the easements of the Pasig River and its connecting tributaries or esteros as well

as all waterways in the National Capital Region.

"Let us fix the easements. Let us clean them. Maintain the three-meter easements. Those are the things we will have to with our esteros in the metro," he said.

Last Sept. 10, President Rodrigo Duterte signed Executive Order No. 90 transferring the leadership of the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission to Cimatu.

According to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources chief,

he would discuss the directions that the DENR and PRRC would take under the his leadership.

The PRRC follows several easement laws, such as Article 51 of the Water Code of the Philippines and the Metro Manila Council Ordinance No. 81-01 for the minimum 10-meter easement along the Pasig River.

Cimatu warned that he would dismantle structures and properties that were unlawfully built along the river.

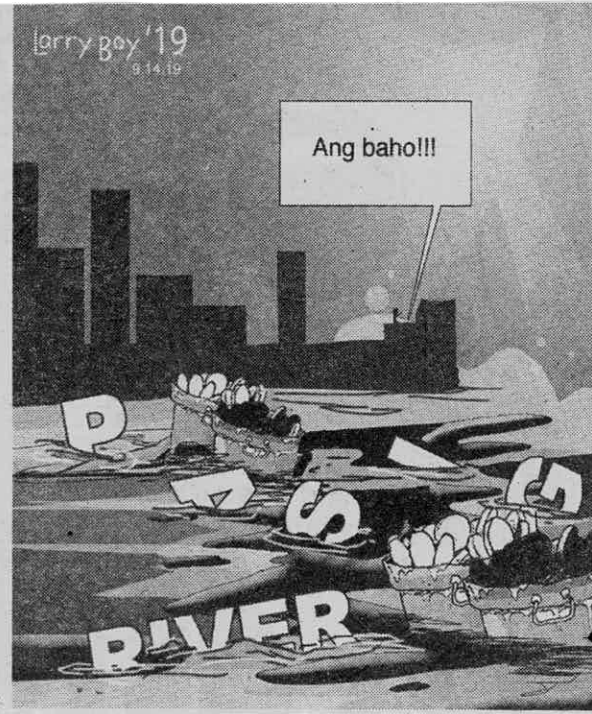


Editorial

Ipagpatuloy ang paglilinis sa Pasig River

MABAHO ang Pasig River dahil hindi lubusang nalilinis. Makapal ang burak at patuloy na dinudumihan ng mga irresponsableng mamamayan at mga abusadong may-ari ng mga pabrika na nasa pampang nito. Malayung-malayo sa dating ilog noong unang panahon na puwedeng manalamin sa tubig at maraming nahuhuling isda. Sa kasalukuyan, ang nahuhuli sa ilog ay mga basurang plastic na itina-pon ng mga walang pakialam na mamamayan.

Lalo pang umalingasaw ang Pasig River nang kumalat ang balitang may anomalya sa Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC). Lalo pang bumaho nang sibakin ni President Duterte si PRRC Executive



Director Jose Antonio Goitia noong nakaraang Lunes dahil sa corruption. Gayunman, itinanggi ni Goitia ang paratang at hindi na nagkomento pa ukol sa isyu. Sinabi lang niya na patuloy niyang susuportahan ang Presidente. Nagpapasalamat umano siya rito dahil sa pagbibigay ng pagkakataon na maglingkod.

Noong nakaraang Hunyo, naging kontrobersiya ang PRRC nang mapabalita na hindi naisakatuparan o hindi natapos ang rehabilitation projects ng Metro Manila waterways sa kabila na may budget itong P107 milyon para sa 2018. Inaasahan matatapos ang rehabilitasyon subalit hindi umano ito nagkaroon ng katuparan. Ang paglilinis sa mga waterways ay mahalaga sapagkat ito ang dahilan kaya may mga pagbaha sa Metro Manila. Marami sa mga estero at kanal ang barado sa basura kaya walang pagdaanan ang tubig-baha.

Makaraang sibakin si Goitia, si DENR Sec. Roy Cimatu na ang magpapatuloy ng paglilinis sa Pasig River. Sinabi ni Cimatu na lilinis niya ang ilog.

Para maisakatuparan ang paglilinis, pagbawalan ang mga pabrika at ang mga tao na rin na huwag magtapon ng kanilang basura. Kapag hindi sila pinagbawalan, patuloy ang pagdumi ng ilog at mamamatay ito. Huwag hayaang mamatay ang matulaing ilog.



Haribon: Kaliwa Dam remains a threat to biodiversity

THE Haribon Foundation maintains its position that the multibillion peso Kaliwa mega dam project will not only have a devastating impact on people's lives, but would also destroy the homes of many threatened flora and fauna found in the area.

Communities in the Barangay Pagsangahan in General Nakar and Barangay Magsaysay in Infanta, composed mostly of Dumagat-Remontado tribes, would be displaced. Thousands of threatened wildlife species inhabiting the forests of Sierra Madre, including Philippine Brown Deer, Philippine Warty Pig, Vulnerable Northern Rufous Hornbill, restricted-range birds of the Luzon Endemic Bird area and the Philippine Eagle would also be in danger.

At least 12,147 hectares of residual forests where around 172 diverse plant species were recorded would also be at risk. Thirty-nine of these could only be found in the country, and 17 are threatened with extinction.

Haribon thus contends the construction of the Kaliwa mega dam has proven to be a short-sighted solution.

More than the supposed livelihood arrangements to compensate for the project's damages, the fight for the protection and preservation of ancestral domains as supported by the Republic Act 8371, or the "Indigenous Peoples Rights Act Law," remains to be a resounding call by the Dumagat-Remontados.

Without doubt, the ecosystem benefits of the Sierra Madre moun-

tain forests to the country are invaluable. For one, it remains to be the country's source of pride and a priceless natural resource providing clean air we breathe, regulating and stabilizing climate, and increasing temperature. It also protects communities from landslides, droughts and floods, and is an indispensable part of the water cycle.

Water comes from forests, not dams

Forests absorb water through their roots, releases it from their leaves via transpiration, then turns into rainwater together with water evaporated from oceans and other water bodies.

Consequently, the most advantageous, cost-effective and sustainable

solution to current and future water problem is to restore and conserve forests in existing watersheds such as Angat and La Mesa. A strengthened program toward this end would help ensure continued water supply in Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

Another recommendation is for the government to rehabilitate existing water reservoirs and to strengthen the implementation of efficient water distribution systems and facilities. Recycling and treating wastewater is also a viable solution, especially for irrigation and other industrial applications.

Ultimately, the response to the water problem should not be taken at short-range, but must involve developing long-term solutions, ensuring the good of both present and future generations.



'Mining 'essential' to nat'l dev't

"Mining is essential part of the development of a country. The extremes of mining are what we need to watch out for," according to Fr. Jerome Marquez, provincial superior, Society of Divine World and canon lawyer,

Marquez said even Pope Francis cited that minerals are gifts of God and historically are being used by people.

The religious leader and canon law expert made the remarks as the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines has bared the composition of its Community of Interest advisory panel as the organization of the country's biggest large-scale mining firms prepares to roll out Towards Sustainable Mining – a set of tools and indicators to drive performance and ensure that key mining risks are managed responsibly, and best practices are used at members' facilities.

"Mining per se is not evil, but rather mining is how we use what God has given us. This TSM COI advisory panel is a step towards the direction of using mining for the good of all," he said.

"I think this TSM is a conversion to self-assess and to improve. This means that the

industry recognizes the reality that it is not perfect and needs to change," he added.

Marquez, said TSM's value of honesty is "very laudable".

"Without honesty, all these assessment is nothing. Let us be honest to engage one another," he said.

The TSM was established by the Mining Association of Canada in 2004 and adopted by COMP in 2017, making the country the first in Asia to subscribe to this self-assessment system that is rapidly evolving into the global standard for best practices in sustainable mining.

COMP has made compliance with the TSM mandatory to all its members.

COMP chairman Gerard Brimo said the COI panel would "provide guidance and a place for robust discussions with COMP on current mining issues".

"Its members – all with the necessary respect and credibility within their respective area of interest to be an authoritative voice on the panel – will advise COMP on the implementation of TSM and review TSM implementation results," Brimo said.

The COI advisory panel is

composed of 12 regular members from various sectors and experts in related fields and three ex-officio members from the industry.

Panel members usually are not formal representatives of organizations within the COI categories.

The COI advisory panel members and the sectors they represent are:

- Rogelio Francisco Bantayan Jr., executive director, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples – IP sector;
- Gov. Al Francis Bichara, Governor of Albay – local government;
- Carlos Primo David, professor of Geology and Environmental Science at the University of the Philippines National Institute of Geological Sciences – environment;
- Edwin Domingo, former OIC director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Mines and Geosciences Bureau – policy/technical;
- Cielo Magno, assistant professor, School of Economics, UP, and concurrent Civil Society Organization representative, International Board, Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative – CSO/academe

- Fr. Jerome Marquez, SVD, provincial superior, Society of Divine World and Canon Lawyer – religious;

- Lawyer Jose Mejia, partner at the Ligon Solis, Mejia, Florendo Law Firm and a member of the Judicial and Bar Council – legal;

- Ronald Mendoza, dean of the Ateneo School of Government and a senior fellow, East-West Institute – academe;

- Lieyzi Liton-Rellea, VP & project director, GAIA South Inc. and a member of Foresters League of the Philippines – forestry/environment;

- Gerard Seno, national executive vice president and national executive board member, ALU-TUCP – labor;

- Luchi Cruz-Valdes, head News and Information at TV5 – media;

- Alexis Benjamin Zaragoza III, partner at SGV & Co. – finance.

On the other hand, the ex-officio members of the COI advisory panel are Eulogio Austin, president of Philex Mining Corp.; Gloria Tan Climaco, chairperson of Film-nera Resources Corp., and Brimo, who is also chairman and CEO of Nickel Asia Corp.



Miners upbeat in 'going beyond mere compliance'

THE Chamber of Mines of the Philippines remains upbeat about "go(ing) beyond mere compliance" in its operations amid some unresolved policy issues, such as the ban on open pit mining that adversely affected the growth of the minerals development sector.

In his presentation in the ongoing 2019 Mining Philippines Conference and Exhibition at Sofitel Philippine Plaza Hotel in Pasay City, CoMP chairman Gerard Brimo said the completion of the Mining Industry Coordinating Council audits on 26 companies that were served closure or suspension orders as a result of previous audit "bears positive news" for the industry.

Brimo said a vast majority passed the MICC audit criteria, which he described as more thorough and encompassing.

As of August 2019, the government has lifted the suspension order against three mining firms --Berong Nickel Corp., Carrascal Nickel Corp., and Emir Mineral Resources Co.

The suspension on two other mining firms--Strong Built Mining Development Corp. and Zambales Diversified Metals Corp.--have also been recommended by the Mines and Geosciences

Bureau Regional Offices for lifting.

Brimo said going beyond mere compliance is the reason why CoMP decided to adopt the Towards Sustainable Mining initiative of the Mining Association of Canada.

"TSM represents a series of sustainable 'best' practices that we should implement and rate ourselves against. In certain aspects, the program goes beyond regulatory compliance," he noted.

Brimo said CoMP has completed the formation of a Community of Interest Advisory Panel, which is critical in implementing TSM.

The panel is composed of 12 high-level individuals in their respective fields, and three CoMP trustees who will serve in the panel on an ex-officio basis.

Brimo said there are policies that need to be addressed, such as the ban on open pit mining method due to the destruction of the environment.

In her presentation, Environment and Natural Resources Undersecretary for Climate Change and Mining Concerns Analiza Teh said the MICC has earlier identified several measures as alternative for open pit mining.



Vizcaya town opens 1st engineered landfill

BY LEANDER C. DOMINGO

BAMBANG, Nueva Vizcaya: In an effort to improve and strengthen this town's ecological solid waste management (SWM), the municipal government here opened on Thursday a P65-million sanitary landfill (SLF) in Aliaga village, the first of its kind in Cagayan Valley (Region 2).

Mayor Pepito Balgos said waste segregation should start at source for the facility to last as he challenged village officials to be forward-looking, to always consider the future of the children and to ensure the protection of public health and the environment.

"The establishment of this solid waste facility only shows the municipal government leadership's seriousness in the enforcement of environmental laws," he added.

On September 6, the first SWM meeting lead here by Balgos was participated in by 25 village officials, and representatives from business establishments and edu-

cational institutions.

"We conducted the meeting to brief them of the duties and functions of the board as well as discussed suggestions and recommendations on the strict implementation of solid waste management, and issues in the collection and disposal of garbage," Balgos said.

Citing Republic Act (RA) 9003, or the "Ecological Solid Waste Management of 2000," Balgos said local government units (LGUs) had to ensure the protection of public health and environment, and were mandated to be primarily responsible in the implementation and enforcement of

the law within their respective jurisdictions.

He said RA 9003 mandates LGUs to construct, operate and maintain waste disposal sites, thus the establishment of this town's sanitary landfill that was initiated by former mayor Flaviano Balgos.

Lawyer Antonio Abawag, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Region 2 executive director, said this was the first of its kind engineered waste management facility in the region.

He said engineered waste management served as a final disposal site for solid and residual wastes, providing a leachate management system, while solid waste is being stored for the decomposition process takes place. The process protects underlying groundwater against contamination.

"These engineered facilities also prevent air pollution and diseases," Abawag added.

Meanwhile, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu congratulated this municipality for coming up

with an SLF to address its solid waste issue.

Cimatu said there was a great need for a place to properly dispose of garbage without any risk to public health "because, whether we like it or not, garbage will always be with us and its volume will increase correspondingly with the growth of the population of this progressive town of Bambang."

The Environment secretary also reminded local officials there must also be a conscious effort to change the culture of insensitivity and indiscretion among people.

"Conceiving and enforcing ways to keep our surroundings clean will be futile as long as some people and entities remain thoughtless and wanton in the disposal of their wastes," Cimatu said.

Abawag hopes that other municipalities will follow suit in properly managing their solid wastes to achieve a cleaner environment.

"We have also been regularly conducting river and estero (waterways) cleanups with our stakeholders," the DENR official said.



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MAKABULUHAN at puno ng impormasyon ang talakayan nina TUCP Spokesperson Alan Tanjusay at NPC President Rolando Gonzalo sa ginanap na Meet the Press, Report to the Nation ng National Press Club kung saan nanawagan ang una na dapat tutukan ang mga foreign worker sa POGO na nakabase sa Pilipinas. **CRISMON HERAMIS**



GIVEN TIME TO HEAL

PH'S OLDEST, TALLEST TREE SPARED FROM CUTTING

By Chris Panganiban
@InqNational

SAN FRANCISCO, AGUSAN DEL SUR—Officials of the local government, and public works and environment agencies have agreed to save a giant centuries-old Philippine Rosewood (*Peterianthus quadrialatus*) tree, believed to be the tallest and oldest in the country.

Located along the Maharlika Highway at Barangay Alegria here, the 54-meter high Toog tree was earlier marked for cutting by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to eliminate hazard to motorists and commuters should it collapse.

The tree, estimated to be 300 years old, already leans because of decay in some parts of its lower trunk.

Dennis Gilbero, science research specialist of the DENR's Forest and Wetland Research

Development and Extension Center, said there was a high risk the tree would collapse, based on its current health.

But Dr. Marcelino Pacho, a tree surgeon, said the tree can still be treated.

Director Felix Alicer of the DENR Caraga earlier gave the go signal to cut down the tree, triggering protest from residents, local officials and tree preservation advocates who considered the tree part of local heritage.

The giant tree, they said, is a tourist landmark.

Davao City-based forester Jose Kanapi, vice president of the Society of Filipino Foresters in Davao region, said the decision to cut down should not have been immediately resorted to as the tree is covered by a law on tree preservation.

"If we kill this treasure, then we lost our pride," said engineer Jaime Bernat, a retired



CHRIS V. PANGANIBAN

STANDING TALL The majestic 54-meter giant Toog tree in San Francisco, Agusan del Sur, was saved from being cut down.

public works official.

Bernat suggested to put up a reinforced concrete buttress, with enough breathing space, to support the leaning tree and prevent its collapse, side by side with work on treating its sickness.

"We will do everything possible to preserve the Toog tree. It's everybody's concern. This is a national heritage," said Mayor Solomon Rufila. INQ



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Foresters mobilized to contain fire in Agusan Marsh

By **ANTONIO L. COLINA IV**

BUNAWAN, Agusan del Sur – Government foresters were mobilized yesterday to try and put out the fire in an estimated 63-hectare wetlands near the protected area of Agusan Marsh in landlocked Agusan del Sur province.

The fire is currently raging in Bayugan III in Rosario town.

Bunawan Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer (CENRO) Forester Jerome I. Albia is forwarding daily reports to Regional Executive Director (RED) Atty. Felix S. Alicer.

The CENRO Officer of Bunawan already asked the help of Bantay Danao Conservation Group volunteers, through the Protected Area Superintendent (PASu) and Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office (MENRO) as local researchers, to help contain the fire.

There are 120 Bantay Danao Volunteers from the marsh communities of the municipalities of Bunawan, La Paz, Loreto, Rosario,

San Francisco and Talacogon, all in Agusan del Sur.

Albia also created a task force to investigate on what originated the fire.

Reports said dark smoke has been billowing from the area for several days since the fire began that prompted alarmed local foresters and local officials to call for firemen from the nearest station about 25 kilometers away.

Initial report from CENRO Officer Albia said the firefighters tried but failed to penetrate into the exact location of the fire because the area is "swampy" and considering the water and vegetation of peat soil.

The air route has been identified as a priority in the air transport and tourism strategic pillar of Brunei Darussalam Indonesia Malaysia and Philippines East Asian Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA), a 25-year-old sub-regional economic cooperation initiative in Southeast Asia designed to spur economic development in the lagging sub-economies.



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OFFICIALS of Barangay Daang Hari and Department of Environment and Natural Resources give a plastic bag of rice in exchange for a bag of garbage to residents during a clean-up operations in Navotas City. (Jansen Romero)



BOSES

NI RYAN B. SISON

Basura palit bigas, gawin na sa buong bansa para bawas-polusyon

SA kalagitnaan ng hindi matapustapos na problema sa basura, kani-kanyang diskarte ang mga lokal na pamahalaan para masugpo ito, gayundin, para magkaroon ng disiplina ang mga residente.

Isang barangay sa Muntinlupa City ang nakaisip ng paraan para maubos ang mga plastik na basura sa pamamagitan ng pagbibigay ng bigas sa mga residente kapalit ng mga basurang maiipon ng mga ito.

Para sa inyong opinyon, sumbong, hinaing o nais hingging tulong ito ang pagkakataong marinig ang inyong boses, sumulat lamang sa BOSES ni RYAN SISON at ipadala sa Bulgar Bldg. 538 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City o mag-email sa bores.bulgar@gmail.com.

Maaaring makakuha ng isang kilo ng bigas sa bawat dalawang kilo ng plastik na basura kung saan ang mga ito ay iturnover sa gobyerno para sa proper disposal at recycling.

Ayon sa pag-aaral, ang Pilipinas ay isa sa mga top marine polluter sa buong mundo o sanhi ng pagdumi ng mga karagatan dahil sa mga basura at kemikal.

Gayundin, dapat umano itong isisi sa kakulangan ng mahigpit na pagpapatupad ng mga batas hinggil sa solid waste management at kawalan ng regulasyon sa packaging ng mga produkto.

Samantala, dahil sa basura palit bigas, tuwang-tuwa ang mga residente dahil anila, ang bawat kilo ng bigas ay maituturing na malaking tulong dahil ito ang pangunahing pagkain ng bawat pamilya.

Ayon sa pamunuan ng barangay, nakakolekta na sila ng higit 200 kilos ng mga sachet, plastic bag at bottle mula noong nakaraang buwan.

Maituturing na "win-win solution" ang hakbang na ito dahil kasabay ng unti-unting paglinis ng kanilang komunidad, nagkakaroon ng disiplina ang mga residente at bonus pa na nakatutulong

silang pamilya ng mga ito.

Kung ngayon pa lang ay makikita na ang magandang epekto nito sa komunidad at mga residente, panahon na para subukan din ito sa iba pang mga lugar.

'Ika nga, puwede tayong maging malikhain sa paglutas ng problemang kina-haharap natin kaya panawagan sa mga kinauukulan, huwag magsawang mag-isip ng mga paraan para masolusyunan ang problema sa basura.

At para sa mamamayan, makipagtulungan para pagdating ng panahon ay walang sisihan!



Para makatulong sa mga magsasaka

P37-B RICE SUBSIDY PROGRAM GASTUSIN

Mula sa pahina 16

Sa Senate Joint Resolution No. 4, hinihikayat ni Marcos ang Department of Social Welfare and Development (DWSD), Department of National Defense (DND), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) at Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na makipagugnayan sa National Food Authority (NFA) at Department of Agricul-

ture (DA) para bilhin ang mga nakaimbak na palay ng mga local farmer mula sa pondo ng rice subsidy program ng mga nasabing ahensiya.

Bunsod nito, iginiit ng senadora na mas makabubuting gastusin ang P33.9 bilyong rice subsidy ng DSWD para sa mga beneficiary ng Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps).

Gayundin ang paggamit ng P2.89 bilyon na rice allocations ng

mga military at police uniformed personnel, kabilang na ang BJMP, PCG at Bureau of Fire Protection.

Ayon kay Marcos, dapat tulungan ang halos dalawang milyong magsasaka na patuloy na umaaray dahil sa pagbagsak ng farm gate price ng palay matapos bumaha ang halos apat na milyong sako ng imported rice.

"Dapat ngayon ang presyo ng palay ay

mataas na at mamili na ang NFA dahil ang fear natin na matambakan tayo ng lokal na bigas habang papasok na ang anihan (harvest season) next week, yari tayo," pangamba ng senadora.

Kaugnay nito, ipinagutos na ni DA Secretary William Dar sa NFA na ibenta na sa palengke ng Metro Manila at iba pang lungsod ang 3.6 milyong sako ng imported rice na nakaimbak sa warehouses.

Sinabi pa ni Dar na bibilhin ng NFA ang mga palay sa halagang 17-19 pesos per kilo kasunod ng kautusan ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

VICKY CERVALES

Climate adaptation can deliver \$7.1T in net benefits

OUR column for today hosts the call of the Global Commission on Adaptation for urgent action on climate adaptation as it launched recently its report titled "Adapt Now: A Global Call for Leadership on Climate Resilience."

Leaders from the Global Commission on Adaptation call on governments and businesses to take urgent action to innovate and advance climate adaptation solutions.

The report is being released as climate impacts — such as super-charged hurricanes, floods, and wildfires — are becoming an increasingly urgent reality. As recent events have shown, climate change affects people everywhere. Furthermore, without action, millions of people would be pushed further into poverty, leading to increased conflict and instability.

The report puts forward a bold vision for how to transform key systems to be more resilient and productive. The commission finds that adaptation could produce significant economic returns. The overall rate of return on investments in improved resilience is high, with benefit-cost ratios ranging from 2:1 to 10:1, and in some cases even higher.

Specifically, the analysis finds that investing \$1.8 trillion globally in five areas from 2020 to 2030 could generate \$7.1 trillion in total net benefits. The five areas the report considers are early warning systems, climate-resilient infrastructure, improved dryland agriculture, mangrove protection and investments in making water resources more resilient. These areas represent only a portion of the total investments needed and total benefits available.

Climate adaptation can also deliver a "triple dividend" — it avoids future losses, generates positive economic gains through innovation, and delivers additional social and environmental benefits.



ALL ABOUT CHOICES

LUDWIG O. FEDERIGAN

The report calls for adaptation that addresses underlying inequalities in society and brings more people, especially people most vulnerable to climate impacts, into decision-making. The reality is that those most affected by climate change did the least to cause the problem — making adaptation a human imperative.

"Climate change doesn't respect borders: it's an international problem that can only be solved with co-operation and collaboration, across borders and worldwide. It is becoming increasingly clear that in many parts of the world, our climate has already changed, and we need to adapt with it. Mitigation and adaptation go hand-in-hand as two equally important building blocks of the Paris Climate Change Agreement. Adaptation is not only the right thing to do, it is also the smart thing to do to boost economic growth and create a climate resilient world," said Ban Ki-moon, the eighth Secretary General of the United Nations and Chair of the Global Commission on Adaptation, on the report's findings.

"People everywhere are experiencing the devastating impacts of climate change. Those most impacted are the millions of smallholder farmers and their families in developing countries, who are struggling with poverty and hunger due to low crop yields caused by extreme changes in temperature and rainfall. With greater support for innovation, we can unlock new opportunities and spur change across the global ecosystem. Adaptation is an urgent issue that needs support from governments and businesses to ensure those most at risk have the opportunity to thrive," Bill Gates, co-chairman of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and co-chairman of the Global Commission on Adaptation, said.

"Climate change threatens homes, lives, and livelihoods everywhere, but it is the poorest

who are often hit hardest because they lack the resources to cope. Without urgent action to respond to the ravages of climate change, millions more people could be plunged into poverty. The World Bank (WB) is increasing investment in adaptation because the evidence shows that resilient buildings, infrastructure, and public services are good for communities, business and the sustained growth of the entire economy," Axel van Trotsenburg, acting chief executive officer (CEO) of the WB, said.

The Global Commission's report highlights many economic, social and environmental benefits of adaptation such as:

- Restoring mangrove forests, in places like Thailand, India and the Philippines, protects coastal communities from deadly storm surges while providing critical habitat to local fisheries, boosting the regions' prosperity.

- The Netherlands' "Room for the River" strategy moved dikes inland, widened rivers and created water-absorbing plazas. These projects manage and slow floodwaters while providing innovative public use spaces and revitalizing neighborhoods.

- In Zimbabwe, farmers using drought-tolerant maize were able to harvest up to 600 kilograms more per hectare than with conventional maize. The additional harvest was enough to feed a family of six for nine months and provided \$240 in extra income, helping them send their children to school and meet other household needs.

- Reducing flood risks in urban areas lowers financial costs, increases security and makes investments that would otherwise be too vulnerable to climate risks more viable. London's Canary Wharf and other developments in East London would have been impossible without flood protection from the Thames Barrier.

The report calls for revolutions in three areas — understanding, planning and finance — in order to ensure that climate impacts, risks and solutions are factoring into decision making at all levels. The report explores how these major changes can be applied across seven interlocking systems: food, natural environment, water, cities, infrastructures, disaster risk management and finance.



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Climate adaptation can deliver \$7.1T in net benefits

About the Global Commission on Adaptation

The Global Commission on Adaptation aims to inspire heads of state, government officials, community leaders, business executives, investors and other international actors to prepare for and respond to the disruptive effects of climate change with urgency, determination and foresight. By accelerating climate adaptation, we can ensure that people benefit from cost-effective options, reduce risks, and come out stronger. Composed of 34 commissioners — one of them is Deputy Speaker and Antique Rep. Loren Legarda — and convened by 20 countries, the Global Commission on Adaptation brings together leaders from political, business, multilateral and scientific worlds to identify solutions and drive action.

The Commission is led by Ban Ki-moon; Bill Gates; and Kristalina Georgieva, CEO of the WB.

The author is the executive director of the Young Environmental Forum. He completed his climate change and development course at the University of East Anglia (United Kingdom) and executive program on sustainability leadership at Yale University. He is one of the resource speakers during the Philippine Association of Campus Student Advisers National Capital Region Mid-Year Convention happening today. He can be emailed at ludwig.federigan@gmail.com. //

Law of war vs environmental law

SINCE time immemorial, the devastation brought about by armed conflict extended beyond the battlefields and caused not only the destruction of lives, but the environment as well. In the recent past, damage to the environment featured much in "pocket wars" around the world as a necessary consequence of armed conflict. Among those: *Gulf War* — Millions of cluster bombs were dropped in the Persian Gulf and littered the desert with an estimated 320 tons of depleted uranium. Retreating forces set ablaze the oilfields of Kuwait causing pollution of incalculable damage; *Kosovo conflict* — A fertilizer, refinery and petrochemical plant complex in Pancevo was deliberately and repeatedly bombed because it was claimed that in addition to making products for civilian consumption, the Pancevo complex supplied gasoline and other essential materials to the Serb army and was therefore, a legitimate military target; *Vietnam War* — Aside from utilizing bulldozers to remove topsoil from thousands of hectares of land, a large-scale defoliation campaign using Agent Orange as a strategy to eliminate cover for enemy fighters in jungle areas was later traced as the cause of birth defects among children born after the war because of the indiscriminate use of the chemical. It turned out the Vietcongs had been well ensconced in an elaborate underground tunnel complex the whole time.

Add to those instances the widespread destruction in Syria as a consequence of an Islamic State deterrence strategy of the Syrian regime and allies Russia and Iran against that of the US, Turkey and Saudi Arabia. Reportedly, militaries are carrying out a "scorched earth" campaign of air strikes hitting medical facilities, schools and other civilian infrastructures, such as markets and bakeries. The frequency of attacks has left entire villages destroyed or almost completely destroyed. The environmental crisis (starvation and famine) brought about by the civil war in Yemen is worth mentioning, too.

International conventions on war

Apart from a general law of war principles (necessity, proportionality, discrimination and humanity), there are two major groups of international conventions on war or armed conflict.

The Geneva Conventions consist of treaties governing the behavior of



AMBASSADORS' CORNER

AMADO S. TOLENTINO, JR.

belligerents and provides protection of combatants, prisoners of war, civilians and their property, and cultural property. It entails some form of balancing military necessity against collateral damage.

Notable is the later Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques, which explicitly protects the environment from use of techniques such as alteration of atmospheric conditions to alter weather patterns and ocean current modification (tidal waves, etc.).

The Hague Conventions — This body of treaties govern weapons that "cause unnecessary suffering" in recognition that in any armed conflict, the right of the parties to the conflict to choose methods or means of warfare is not unlimited. Restricted or banned weapons have come to include various exploding munitions, poisonous gas, chemical and biological weapons, blinding lasers and land mines.

Choice of weapons

Of late, weapons choice could be said to have humanitarian and environmental concerns. For example, the precision "smart bombs" widely use in the Gulf War have the dual advantage of increasing the likelihood that the bomb would hit its desired target thereby reducing unnecessary collateral damage. Additionally, some countries expect to make a transition from lead ammunition to bullets made of tungsten and tin or tungsten and nylon, removing a large source of lead pollution in the environment.

Like the rest of international law, the law of war or international humanitarian law has been slow in providing the environment with a set of rules specific to it. In fact, the word "environment" does not even appear in the Geneva Conventions (1949) and Hague Conventions (1907) nor do they address specific environmental issues. And, granting that the rules of war are sufficient, perhaps what is needed is to ensure greater compliance with the rules. But to be able to comply, it is necessary to clarify and interpret the scope and context of those rules. For instance, what constitutes "widespread, long-term and severe

damage to the environment" or the obligation "not to cause far-reaching damage to health"?

Other categories of environmental concern during wartime include, but is not limited to, the impact of war on protected natural or cultural heritage sites (e.g. Asean Heritage Parks, World Heritage Sites) and the planting of explosives in agricultural or even barren lands.

Protection of environment

At a consultation of legal experts at which the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the International Council of Environmental Law and the International Committee of the Red Cross were represented, suggestions on further protection of the environment in times of armed conflict were recommended, some of which are as follows: 1) Any new international legal instrument should be based on the concept that the environment *per se* has to be protected; 2) A catalogue of human activities with hostile purposes injurious to the environment should be prepared, e.g. intentional attacks on the environment, manipulation of natural processes causing environmental damage, and significant collateral damage to the environment; and 3) Sites which, although not inherently dangerous, are essential to human health or the environment should not be military targets, e.g. water purification facilities, waste treatment plants, etc.

The recommendations went on to include revision and update of military procedures in order to ensure protection of the environment to the fullest possible extent during armed conflict in the light of advances in scientific understanding of environmental damage. For example, the sinking of oil tankers, which could contaminate marine waters and resources, should be avoided in favor of other military tactics that could prevent or impede delivery of oil on which an adversary state's military forces depend.

Equally important is the suggestion on coverage of damage and reparation for consequences of the armed conflict. Damage, actual or potential, and restoration should include all reasonable measures to reinstate or restore damaged or destroyed components of the environment equivalent to those impaired or lost. To illustrate, restoration in kind could include establishing a fish hatchery when a

natural hatchery for fish is lost, or planting a new wetland area in lieu of one which cannot be restored. In short, compensation in kind should be required when restoration is not physically possible.

Furthermore, the United Nations should establish a system of emergency preparedness to protect the environment during wartime.

The recommendations clearly suggest that more legal effort is needed to answer questions unresolved by existing law. What are inhumane weapons of war at this point in time? Is civilian infrastructure a legitimate target when it contributes to the war effort?

Should there be an International Court of the Environment with jurisdiction, among others, over environmental war damage and crimes? What about creating a no-fault international environmental remediation fund that could overcome troublesome gaps in the civil and criminal liability approaches? Above all, however, the need is for a mechanism that, together with the entire body of laws protecting the environment in times of armed conflict, can be practically and efficiently implemented.

Actually, the most difficult issue confronting the community of nations in regard to the law of war *vis-à-vis* environmental law is how to apply the law against powerful nations. Examples are: the US in Vietnam; Western allied forces (including France, US and UK) in the Gulf War and Kosovo conflict; the respective contending allies in the ongoing armed conflict in Syria and Yemen.

Certainly, the often quoted Martens Law interpreted in such a way that where the law of war does not address a particular case, reference should be to the "rule of the principles of the law of nations, as they result from the usages established among civilized people from the laws of humanity and the dictates of public conscience" which to date still expects equal application among nations in the 21st century.

**Before joining the Philippine diplomatic corps, the author served as consultant to the United Nations (UN) Environment Program in Nairobi (Kenya). He was executive-governor (for developing countries) of the International Council of Environmental Law, a Bonn-based public interest organization with consultative status at the UN.*



14 SEP 2010

TITLE :

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DATE

May-ari ng 55 tinapon na baboy sa Marikina river mananagot

Pananagutin ni Marikina City Mayor Marcelino Teodoro ang mga taong responsable sa pagtatapon ng mga patay na baboy na pinaniniwalaang tinamaan ng African Swine Fever (ASF) sa Marikina river.

Napag-alaman na mula Huwebes nang umaga hanggang kahapon ng hapon ay umaabot na sa 55 mga patay na baboy ang nakuha ng Marikina City Veterinary Service Office (VSO) sa kahabaan ng Marikina river.

Agad naman nilang inilibing ang mga nakukuhang patay na baboy upang hindi na makahawa pa ng anumang sakit base na rin sa abiso ng Department of Agriculture (DA).

Samantala, pinaniniwalaan namang galing ang mga patay na baboy na ipinaanod sa ilog sa bayan ng Rizal partikular sa Rodriguez at San Mateo dahil wala namang piggery o slaugh-

ter house sa lungsod ng Marikina kaya patuloy ang isinasagawang imbestigasyon hinggil dito.

"Para hindi na maulit, dapat ay may managot. Dapat proper disposal. Hindi puwedeng walang mananagot, dapat may managot", saad ni Mayor Teodoro.

"May proper disposal na dapat sundin para walang possible contamination", dagdag pa ng alkalde.

Samantala, nakipag-coordinate na si Dr. Manuel Carlos, hepe ng VSO ng Marikina City sa Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) para kumuha ng mga blood sample sa mga nakuhang patay na baboy upang isailalim sa pagsusuri.

"We are checking if may river contamination. We are checking the water quality para mapangalagaan ang well-being ng Marikina residents", pahayag pa ni Teodoro. **(Edwin Balasa)**



14 SEP 2013

TITLE:

PAGE 17

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/ SSS, DENR see action

Games tomorrow
(Pasig City Sports Center)
2 p.m. - DENR vs GSIS
3:30 p.m. - Ombudsman vs SSS
5 p.m. - NHA vs PNP

Social Security System and Department Environment and Natural Resources make their much-awaited debuts tomorrow when they face respective rivals in the 8th UNTV Cup at the Pasig City Sports Center.

The DENR Warriors will take the spotlight first as they collide with the GSIS Furies at 2 p.m. before the SSS Kabalikat tangle with the Ombudsman Graft Busters at 3:30 p.m.

But all eyes will be on the 5 p.m. encounter between Philippine National Police and National Housing Authority - two teams

eager to strike back after falling short in their title bids of the annual event presented by UNTV through its CEO and president Dr. Daniel Razon.

Bannered by former University of the East player Ollan Omiping, the PNP Responders are out to regain the title they won three years ago while the NHA Builders have again expressed their desire to go all-out after finishing third last season.

Winners in tomorrow's matches will draw level with Armed Forces of the Philippines, which launched its title-retention bid in style by blasting Philippine International Trading Corp., 90-70, in the lone opening-day match last Monday.



14 SEP 2019

TITLE:

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SSS, DENR rampa na sa UNTV

Matatasahan na ang Social Security System (SSS) at Department Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa kanilang binyag bukas, Linggo sa magkahiwalay na mga oposisyon sa 8th UNTV Cup 2019 men's basketball tournament sa Pasig City Sports Center.

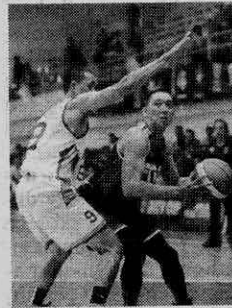
Papagitna ang DENR Warriors kontra Government Service Insurance System Furies (GSIS) sa alas-2:00 ng hapon bago masilayan ang SSS Kabalikat kontra Ombudsman Graft Busters sa alas-3:30 ng hapon.

Pero mas tutok ang marami sa alas-5:00 ng hapong engkuwentro ng Philippine National Police (PNP) at National Housing Authority (NHA) - dalawang kampong gigil makabalik tapos mabigo sa titulo ng taunang torneong prisintado ng UNTV sa pangunguna ng kanilang CEO at President Dr. Daniel Razon.

Pamumunuan ni former University of the East player Ollan Omiping, desidido ang PNP Responders na mabawi ang titulong nasakote tatlong taon na ang nakalilipas, habang todo sa

edisyong ito ang NHA Builders pagkatersero sa nakalipas na taon.

Ang mga papalaring team sa tatlong sultada ang mga sasalo sa maagang liderato sa Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) na inumpisahan ang paghahangad na maidepensa ang tro- no sa pagtambang sa Philippine International Trading Corporation, 90-70, sa tanging laro sa pagbubukas ng torneo nitong Lunes. **(Aivan Denzel Episcopo)**



Isa sa inaasahang aangas para sa Philippine National Police si dating University of the East player Ollan Omiping sa pagpapatuloy bukas ng 8th UNTV Cup 2019 men's basketball tournament eliminations sa Pasig City Sports Center.



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SSS, DENR sasalang na

LARO BUKAS
(Pasig City Sports Center)
2 p.m. - DENR vs GSIS
3:30 p.m. - Ombudsman
vs SSS
5 p.m. - NHA vs PNP

Sasalang na ang mga bagitong Social Security System and Department of Environment and Natural Resources bukas sa pagharap sa magkahiwalay na kalaban sa 8th UNTV Cup sa Pasig City Sports Center.

Unang papagitna ang DENR Warriors na harap sa GSIS Furies sa alas-2:00 ng hapon bago sumabak ang SSS Kabalik sa Ombudsman

Graft Busters sa alas-3:30. Ngunit ang tampok na laro ay sa alas-5:00 ng hapon sa pagitan ng Philippine National Police at National Housing Authority, ang dalawang koponang parehong gustong makabawi matapos kapusin noong nakaraang taon sa annual event na ito na hatid ng UNTV sa ilalim ng pamumuno ni CEO at President Dr. Daniel Razon.

Sa pangunguna ng dating University of the East player na si Ollan Omiping, hangad mabawi ng PNP Responders ang titulo na napanalunan nila tatlong taon na ang naka-

karaan habang determinado rin ang NHA Builders na higitan ang kanilang third place finish noong nakaraang season.

Ang mga mananalong koponan ay hahanay sa Armed Forces of the Philippines na nagtala ng buwenamanong panalo laban sa Philippine International Trading Corporation, 90-70 sa nag-iisang opening day match noong Lunes.

Ang champion team ay tatanggap ng P4 million at P2 million sa runner-up, P1 million at P500,000 naman sa third at fourth placers, ayon sa pagkakasunod.



Editorial

Fires not just an Indonesian problem

OUR Asean neighbor Indonesia is once again experiencing widespread forest fires, an annual occurrence caused by the clearing of land for the expansion of agricultural plantations. Although the Philippines is rarely directly affected by the smog created by these fires, the destructive impact on the global environment can no longer be ignored or tolerated.

The fires are particularly widespread this year, and are happening in what is shaping up to be a bad year for wildfires. Brazil has already lost millions of hectares of rainforest to fires started for land-clearing, and brush fires in Australia have also done significant damage. Malaysia, which is being badly affected by the smoke produced by the Indonesian fires, also has large wildfires burning in a number of locations.

The fires in Indonesia happen every year primarily because land must be cleared for the planting of oil palms; Indonesia is the world's largest producer of palm oil. Because of the fertile volcanic soil and ideal climate in much of Indonesia, plants of all kinds grow very quickly; land that is cleared by burning in one season will usually be overgrown again within three or four years, and so land-clearing becomes a continuous process.

The oil palm plantations need to be expanded, because the

“ The Philippines’ rapacious appetite for imported palm oil not only harms the economic interests of our own farmers, it encourages environmental damage...By continuing to allow palm oil imports, we are in effect contributing to our own destruction and creating a contradictory image of unconcern for the environment to the rest of the world. ”

trees themselves have a limited productive life. An oil palm matures in about four years, and can profitably produce fruit for about 30; by contrast, a coconut palm takes about seven years to reach maturity and is productive for about 50 years. Management of the oil palm plantations requires careful timing to plant new trees that will be producing by the time older ones have outlived their usefulness, and that also requires constant land-clearing.

Clearing land by burning is the most expedient method, but because of its terrible effect on the environment it is no longer acceptable. At a time when most of the world is trying to reduce greenhouse gases, the palm oil industry continues to create massive amounts of them through burning every year. Earlier this year, the use of palm oil in some applications — in particular, as an ingredient in biodiesel — was banned by the European Union in an effort to discourage the unsustainable practice of burning, and in other large markets such as the US and Canada, consumers themselves have begun to shun palm oil and products made with it. But large markets still exist, so the Indonesian plantation interests, as well as some in Malaysia have not modified or stopped the practice at all.

One of those large markets is the Philippines. Very little of the domestic demand for palm oil is produced here, although it easily could be, and so imports have skyrocketed in the past seven years: from 234,000 metric tons (MT) in 2012, the country imported 1.225 million MT last year. So far in 2013, 1.25 million MT of palm oil have been imported.

The Philippines’ rapacious appetite for imported palm oil not only harms the economic interests of our own farmers, it encourages environmental damage that will ultimately harm the Philippines, one of the most vulnerable countries to the impact of stronger storms, droughts and rising sea levels because of global warming. By continuing to allow palm oil imports, we are in effect contributing to our own destruction, and creating a contradictory image of unconcern for the environment for the rest of the world.

Our government should take quick action to redress this unacceptable state of affairs, first by joining other countries in restricting the importation and use of palm oil, and second by providing greater support to the Philippines’ own, environmentally safe palm oil industry.



Solon cites need for coherent gov't response to calamities

A HOUSE leader has joined calls to pass a bill seeking the creation of a government agency that would specifically deal with disasters and other calamities in the country.

In a sponsorship message he delivered for the passage of the bill, Marinduque Rep. Lord Allan Velasco underscored the need for a coherent government response to disasters under a new agency that would be called the De-

partment of Disaster Resilience.

Velasco, who is expected to take over the post of Speaker in over a year from now, noted that the country has an average of 20 tropical cyclones every year which produce floods, landslides and storm surges.

Following a meeting with Dr. Renato Solidum of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, Velasco surmised that the Philippines is

among the top countries in the world with a higher risk of disasters. The others are Bangladesh, Guatemala, and Brunei.

Velasco also noted that the country is host to 300 volcanoes of which 24 are active.

He said 20 earthquakes are recorded by the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) everyday including some 90 destructive earthquakes and 40 tsunamis in

the past 400 years.

Velasco said that the "new normal of the 21st Century" are more intense typhoons and increased disaster risks.

Speaking of earthquakes, he said studies culled by Phivolcs showed that among the areas that have a higher risk of intensity-8 earthquakes are the National Capital Region, Bulacan, Rizal and Cavite, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, Quezon, Laguna and Ba-

tangas are located in the low intensity-8 areas under the seismic map.

Given the risks posed by these looming disasters, the Marinduque lawmaker has called on his colleagues to pass House Bill No. 3459 entitled "An Act Creating the Department of Disaster Resilience Defining its Powers And Functions, and Appropriating Funds Therefor."

Under the bill, the department shall be headed

by a secretary, with four undersecretaries, assistant secretaries and directors who are "preferably specialists in the field of disaster risk reduction and management, science and technology, environmental science and management, urban planning, civil engineering, public finance, information and communications technology, logistics management, mass communication and other fields relevant to disaster resili-

ence.

The department shall also establish regional, provincial, city, municipal and barangay disaster resilience offices following the abolition of the Local Disaster Risk Reduction Management Offices.

"This bill applies the painful lessons from the country's major disasters like Typhoon Yolanda and global best practices," said Velasco.

Ryan Ponce Pacpaco



DENR 'asset', tepok sa tandem

PANTABANGAN, Nueva Ecija - Napatay ang isang umano'y informer ng Department of Environment & Natural Resources (DENR) nang pagbabarilin ng riding in-tandem sa provincial road ng Barangay Poblacion, ng naturang bayan, nitong Miyerkules ng gabi.

Kinilala ng Pantabangan Police ang nasawi na si Gaudencio Arana, 55, Bgy. Ganduz, ng nabanggit na bayan, dahil sa mga tama ng bala sa iba't ibang bahagi ng katawan.

Sa pagsisiyasat ng pulisya,

naglalakad na pauwi ang biktima nang malapitang pagbabarilin ng mga suspek na naka-motorsiklo, dakong 9:30 ng gabi.

Kinumpirma naman ni Provincial Environment and Natural Resources officer Joselito Blanco, na naging instrumento si Arana

sa paglansag sa illegal chainsaw operations sa Bgy. Sampaloc, Pantabangan, tatlong linggo na ang nakararaan.

Light A. Nolasco



Native fern could save the environment

A RESEARCH team of Filipino environmental scientists, led by Ateneo de Manila University Assistant Professor Rene Claveria, has achieved a breakthrough in using plants to remove metal contaminants in the soil.

Pteris melanocaulon, a native fern, was initially determined as a metallophyte — a plant capable of growing in soil even when there's a high concentration of metals. In a copper-gold mining area as study site, the fern was discovered to have an ability to accumulate copper," Claveria said. "What we discovered much later is that this fern can also accumulate high levels of arsenic."

Claveria and members of his team, Teresita Perez of the Ateneo de Manila University, Dennis Apuan of the University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines-Cagayan de Oro, Mary Jane Apuan of the Xavier University Cagayan de Oro and Ellaine Castillo Perez of the

Institute of Biology, University of the Philippines, have observed the fern's ability to tolerate toxic levels of arsenic in mining areas in Surigao and Cebu.

Augustine Doronilla, a Department of Science and Technology (DoST) *balik* (returning) scientist from the University of Melbourne, who also mentored the team, was instrumental in the discovery process. "It was Dr. Doronilla who introduced to us to phytoremediation or using plants to remove and immobilize contaminants in soil and groundwater," Claveria said.

Doronilla, he said, spoke of fern's ability as an accumulator. In 2014, the research team found *Pteris melanocaulon* to be an efficient copper accumulator. Hoping to dig deeper into the plant's tolerance to toxic compounds, Claveria and his team sought to assess fern's ability as an arsenic accumulator.

With funding from DoST-Phil-

ippine Council for Industry, Energy and Emerging Technology Research and Development, the team was given access to field surveys and sampling. They found *Pteris melanocaulon* was able to grow in soils contaminated with copper and other elements such as arsenic. The observations were confirmed on potted experiments where different concentrations of copper and arsenic solutions were made as soil amendments. Findings show that the fern's roots and leaves were not affected.

"It is the first type of fern discovered to accumulate copper in the roots and arsenic in the leaves," Claveria said.

Arsenic is a toxic metalloid that naturally occurs in some copper and gold mining projects and gets exposed during open-pit mining, contaminating the soil and water in the process. Excessive levels of arsenic may cause major health

complications, from skin damage to problems in the circulatory system and even cancer. Arsenic exposure in waterways like streams and rivers may lead to contamination of the living organisms in such ecosystems. Ingesting fish or mollusks exposed to arsenic results in arsenic poisoning.

Claveria said the new discovery is useful, especially in helping the mining industry and the local government remove, stabilize and destroy contaminants in the soil. "Successful propagation of *Pteris melanocaulon* can clean up the entire area, making it suitable for other plants to grow. This can help revegetate and stabilize the land that is already affected by toxic elements," he added.

The findings were published in international scientific journals: *International Journal of Phytoremediation* (2015) and *Chemosphere* (July, 2019). **THE TIMES**



Strike with the youth for climate justice



EAGLE EYES
TONY LA VINA

IN THE next two weeks, on Sept. 20 and Sept. 27, young people from all over the world will be joining the global climate strike. Although I am turning 60 years old next month, I am supporting this activity. I also urge everyone, young and old alike, to do the same.

“ We need to act right now. ”

No issue is more important in these times than that of the climate emergency. But the young are the ones particularly affected by it. This is because those 30 years old or under will be at the peak of their lives when the worst impact of climate change is felt between 2040 and 2050.

We still have a chance to avoid the worst impact, but only if we act decisively in the next five to ten years, and make determined decisions in the next two years to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Philippines will not be spared the impact of the climate emergency. In fact, we are at the top of the list of the most vulnerable. Because of this, we must also do our part to reduce emissions. Above all, that means imposing a moratorium on building new coal-fired power plants and beginning the process of closing down the older coal plants while making sure we have affordable alternatives in place so we do not lose power.

In the Philippines, participants in the global mobilization include the Youth Strike for Climate Philippines Move-

ment, a national youth-led movement aiming to empower young people to take action in addressing the effects of climate change. It takes part in demonstrations on the streets to demand action from the government. The movement is premised on the youth sector's vital role in addressing the climate crisis. It aims to mainstream the climate issue to more young people to engage and inform them to strengthen the collective action toward a sustainable future. It believes the youth must be at the forefront of the ongoing global struggle against the climate crisis for the survival of our planet.

Likewise, the Youth Advocates for Climate Action in the Philippines will also be joining the mobilization. These advocates warn us that our house is on fire and are sounding the alarm: The time has come for multigenerational action against this climate emergency.

There are many other youth and non-youth organizations that are participating in the strike as this is an inclusive movement. Indeed, there will be mass actions in many of our cities and provinces. Students and youth will be joined by adults as is the case in the rest of the world.

Bill Mckibben of 350.org explains what this strike is all about:

“Business as usual is what's doing us in. We live on a planet that finds itself rather suddenly in the midst of an enormous physical crisis. Because we burn so much coal and gas and oil, the atmosphere of our world is changing rapidly, and that atmospheric change is producing record heat. July was the hottest month we've ever recorded. Scientists predict with confidence that we stand on the edge of the sixth great extinction event of the last billion years. People are dying in large numbers and being left homeless; millions are already on the move because they have no choice.

And yet we continue on with our usual patterns. We get up each morning and do pretty much what we did the

Turn to A5

day before.

That's why it's such good news that the climate movement has a new tactic. Pioneered last August by Greta Thunberg of Sweden, it involves disrupting business as usual. It began, of course, in schools: Within months, millions of young people around the world were striking for days at a time from their classes. Their logic was impeccable: If the institutions of our planet can't be bothered to prepare for a world we can live in, why must we spend years preparing ourselves? If you break the social contract, why are we bound by it?

And now those young people have asked the rest of us to join in. After the last great school strike in May, they asked adults to take part next time. The date is Sept. 20, and the location is absolutely everywhere. Big trade unions in South Africa and Germany are telling workers to take the day off. Ben and Jerry's is closing down its headquarters (stock up in advance), and if you want to buy Lush cosmetics, you're going to be out of luck. The largest rally will likely be in New York City, where the U.N. General Assembly begins debating climate change that week—but there will be gatherings in every state and every country. It will almost certainly be the biggest day of climate action in the planet's history. (If you want to be a part—and you do want to be a part—go to globalclimatactive.net.)

It's not a “strike” in the traditional

sense, of course—no one is demanding better wages. But we are demanding better conditions. In the most literal sense, the world isn't working as it should (studies say that increased heat and humidity have already reduced human work capacity as much as 10 percent, a figure that will double by midcentury). And what we're saying is, disrupting business as usual is the way to get there.

This strike will not be the last such action.

But it can't be just young people. It needs to be all of us—especially, perhaps, those of us who have been placidly operating on a business-as-usual basis for most of our lives, who have rarely faced truly serious disruptions in our careers and our plans. Our job is precisely to disrupt business as usual. When the planet leaves its comfort zone, we need to do the same. See you on the streets on Sept. 20!”

From the website globalclimatactive.net, I borrow these Frequently Ask Questions (and their answers):

Why go on #ClimateStrike?

Our house is on fire. The climate crisis is an emergency but we're not acting like it. People everywhere are at risk if we let oil, coal and gas companies continue to pour more fuel on the fire.

Our hotter planet is already hurting millions of people. If we don't act now to transition fairly and swiftly away from fossil fuels to 100 percent renewable energy access for all, the injustice of the climate crisis will only get worse.

We need to act right now to stop burning fossil fuels and ensure a rapid energy revolution with equity, reparations and climate justice at its heart.



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Strike with the youth for climate justice

But it's going to take all of us working together to succeed.

Millions of us will walk out from home, work, school or university to declare a climate emergency and show our politicians what action in line with climate science and justice means.

The climate crisis won't wait, so neither will we.

What difference will it make?

These Climate Strikes won't solve the climate crisis alone. What this moment can do is demonstrate that people are no longer willing to continue with business as usual. The urgency of the climate crisis requires a new approach and a just response centred on human rights, equity, and justice.

Greta Thunberg's lone protest caught the world's attention last year, and has spread to millions of school children who are sounding the alarm. Now it's everyone's turn to stand with young people and show world leaders the people power demanding climate justice. September's climate strikes will kickstart a huge wave of action and renewed ambition all over the world.

What is being demanded by the climate strikers?

The climate crisis is an emergency—we want everyone to start acting like it. We demand climate justice for everyone.

Our hotter planet is already hurting millions of people. If we don't act now to transition fairly and swiftly away from fossil fuels to 100 percent renewable energy for all, the injustice of the climate crisis will only get worse.

We need to act right now to stop burning fossil fuels and ensure a rapid energy revolution with equity, reparations and climate justice at its heart.



NAGTAPON, PANANAGUTIN

Patay na baboy sa Marikina River, 55 na

NI MARY ANN SANTIAGO

Nais ni Marikina City Mayor Marcelino 'Marcy' Teodoro na mapanagot ang mga taong responsable sa pagtatapon ng mga patay na baboy na pinaniniwalaang tinamaan ng African Swine Fever (ASF) sa Marikina river.

Batay sa ulat ng Marikina Veterinary Office, mula Huwebes ng umaga hanggang nitong Biyernes, ay umaabot na sa 55 na patay na baboy ang kanilang narekober na palutang-lutang sa ilog.

Kaagad naman nilang inililibing ang mga nakukuhang patay na baboy upang hindi na makahawa pa ng anumang sakit base na rin sa abiso ng Department of Agriculture (DA).

Matibay ang paniniwala ng Marikina City government na galing ang mga natagpuang patay na baboy sa

bayang Rizal, partikular sa Rodriguez at San Mateo, dahil wala namang piggery o slaughter house sa lungsod ng Marikina.

Tiniyak naman ni Teodoro na patuloy ang isinasagawang imbestigasyon hinggil dito.

"Para hindi na maulit, dapat ay may managot. Dapat proper disposal. Hindi puwedeng walang mananagot, dapat may managot," anang alkalde. "May proper disposal na dapat sundin para walang possible contamination."

Kaagad ding ipinag-utos ng alkalde ang pag re-activate ng quarantine checkpoints sa lungsod upang mapigilan ang pagpasok ng mga karneng apektado ng ASF.

Bukod dito, ipinahinto muna ang pangingsda sa kahabaan ng Marikina

river sa pangambang nagkaroon ng kontaminasyon sa tubig dahil sa nagkalat na mga patay na baboy.

"We are checking if may river contamination. We are checking the water quality para mapangalagaan ang well-being ng Marikina residents," pahayag pa ni Teodoro.

Samantala, nabatid na nakipag-ugnayan na si Dr. Manuel Carlos, hepe ng VSO ng Marikina City sa Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), para kumuha ng mga blood samples sa mga nakuhang patay na baboy upang isailalim sa pagsusuri ang mga ito.

"Pupunta yung teams ng BAI para kumuha ng sample sa baboy para malaman kung ano ang cause of death, including na doon ang ASF," saad nito.



After 33 years, Cordillera autonomy remains elusive

Leaders hopeful Congress would pass new organic law

By Vincent Cabreza
@vincentcabrezaINQ

BAGUIO CITY—Friday the 13th this week commemorated the end of a war waged against the government by former rebel priest Conrado Balweg and his militia group 33 years ago.

On Sept. 13, 1986, at Mt. Data in Mountain Province, Balweg and then President Corazon Aquino exchanged tokens to forge a "sipat," a term for cessation of hostilities for what was the first peace talks undertaken after the People Power Revolt ousted dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

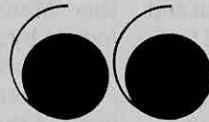
Balweg handed Aquino an automatic rifle and accepted a rosary and a Bible from her. It led to peace negotiations that were concluded 25 years later in 2011 by Aquino's son, former President Benigno Aquino III.

The talks also led to the creation of the interim Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) in 1987.

Balweg led the Cordillera People's Liberation Army (CPLA), a militia that broke away from the communist New People's Army (NPA). CPLA had officially disbanded under a closure agreement signed on July 4, 2011.

The sipat meant "an end to war," Mayor Gabino Gangangan of Sabangan town, Mountain Province, said at a news briefing on Thursday.

To illustrate the impact which the sipat had on peace and order at the time, Gangangan said losing the CPLA crippled the NPA in the Cordillera for years.



Balweg would not be happy about the government's unfulfilled promise to create an autonomous region after decades of neglect

Gabino Gangangan
Mayor, Sabangan, Mountain Province

Balweg left the priesthood to join the NPA in 1979 after the murder of Kalinga elder Macling Dulag, who opposed Marcos' projects that would exploit resources of indigenous peoples such as the proposed Chico River Dam in Kalinga province.

Gangangan served as a close aide of Balweg, who was assassinated on New Year's eve in 1999. Had he lived, Balweg would not be happy about the government's unfulfilled promise to create an autonomous government for six Cordillera provinces after decades of neglect, he said.

A new measure creating a Cordillera autonomous region had been drafted by regional elders and transmitted to Congress in August, after previous measures failed to draw national support.

Third autonomy law

Regional leaders tried to pass a third autonomy law, after two previous organic acts were rejected in plebiscites in 1990

and 1998. A counterpart law in 1989 formed the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, which was replaced this year by the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Any president can dissolve CAR, which was formed through Executive Order No. 220 by Aquino a year after the sipat, according to Virgilio Bautista, former cochair of the Regional Development Council.

"I am not saying there are plans to break up CAR," Bautista said, but pockets of resistance continue to exist in parts of the Cordillera because the government has not fulfilled some of its commitments made in the sipat such as granting the region full control and management of its natural resources.

Because of a doctrine that the state owns all lands and resources, the development of the mines and exploitation of Cordillera rivers were dictated by Manila, Gangangan said, adding that this

"made the national capital richer and the Cordillera poorer."

Inalienable

On top of that, many Cordillera residents have no titles to their lands because of a provision in the forestry code, which renders all lands with 18-degree slopes as inalienable, Bautista said.

Only Baguio City and Benguet province, which hosted the first gold mines and which now serves as a major salad vegetable producer, are exempt from this prohibition.

Cordillera, with 1.7 million dwellers, remains one of the country's least populated and poorest regions, and has been entitled to much smaller budgets.

"Senators and congressmen must visit towns like Sabangan to understand why we strive for budgets that would convert our abortion roads into productive roads," Bautista said.

He said the region's leaders are hoping that Congress would pass the third Cordillera autonomy law, given the passage of the Bangsamoro organic law (BOL), which grants powers to the Muslim region for managing their resources.

"I told them maybe we can just simply adopt [the] BOL and change certain provisions to suit the Cordillera," Bautista said.

He added: "But it needs to be passed this year to give Congress time to fund the plebiscite before attention shifts to the next presidential elections." INQ