

DATE : 10-09-19

DAY : Wednesday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



In Galera, cleanup targets septic tanks

'Tedious' but necessary action on Mindoro resort town's dirty water

By **Madonna Virola**
and **Maricar Cinco**
@inquirerSLB

CALAPAN CITY—Resorts and establishments in the tourist town of Puerto Galera in Oriental Mindoro province were asked to open up their septic tanks to government inspection to make sure that business operations complied with environmental laws.

Plans were also underway to connect each of around 300 resorts to the central sewer treatment plant in Oriental Mindoro's top beach destination.

But while work on the sewer pipelines had yet to be completed, sludge, in the meantime, would have to be collected and hauled to the treatment facility that the local government recently opened near Sabang Bay.

Michael Drake Matias, Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) director in Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan) region, described the work to be done as "tedious" but necessary to address the town's de-



PUERTO GALERA, ORIENTAL MINDORO

SOURCE: Inquirer graphics

INO GRAPHICS

teriorating water quality.

He said recent inspections showed that most resorts had been using "bottomless" septic vaults, causing seepage into groundwater for several years.

Untreated wastewater contaminated groundwater or spilled out into the sea, he said.

New policy

"It's tedious, but as I've told them (business owners), *sa simula lang ito* (this will be difficult in the initial stages)," Matias said in a telephone interview on Tuesday.

The EMB, under its new policy, had required business owners to build "bottom sealed" or "watertight" septic tanks before issuing them discharge permits.

Without an EMB permit, business establishments would not be issued a Department of Tourism accreditation and a business permit by the municipal government.

Matias said it was the perfect time to ask business owners to do something about their septic tanks, noting that the business permit renewal peri-

od is coming in the next few months.

Improving but still bad

In 2018, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Task Force Puerto Galera started its massive rehabilitation in Puerto Galera, an offshoot of President Duterte's order to rehabilitate Boracay Island and other tourist spots across the country.

The task force had since demolished 30 structures over easement violations and issued notices of violation to 235 establishments.

Matias said water quality, particularly in the port area and in the beach area of Sabang, showed an improvement with the coliform level down to 1,900 to 7,900 most probable number (mpn) per 100 milliliters from around 80,000 to 100,000 mpn/100 ml before the rehabilitation.

Still, the figure was way off the standard level of 100 mpn/100 ml.

Strictly speaking, "we still wouldn't allow it for swimming," Matias said. INQ



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INTENSIFIED CLEANUP – Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu (left) talks with Manila Mayor Isko Moreno (right) on Tuesday about the start of massive clean up of Pasig River which pollutes the Manila Bay. On the same day, the Mayor also signed an ordinance mandating all barangays and frontline City Hall offices to conduct a weekly clean-up drive in the nation's capital. (All Vicoy)



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METROLINE

Pasig shuts food firm for untreated sewage

Pasig City Mayor Vico Sotto yesterday closed down a meat processing firm for not having a sewage treatment plant.

Sotto, in a Facebook post, said he shut down Razon Food Corp. because it has been operating without a proper sewage treatment system for the past 12 years.

He said he inspected the plant after receiving reports. "The dirty water goes straight to the drainage and roads of the city and most of the time, there is still pork blood," Sotto said. He added that city environment office employees who allowed the company to operate these past years will be held liable.

- Emmanuel Tupas



Sotto shuts down meat-processing plant over waste disposal

PASIG City Mayor Vico Sotto yesterday ordered the closure of a meat-processing plant for reportedly improper disposal of waste.

Sotto, on his 100th day in office, led the inspection at the Razon Food Corporation located in Bagong Ilog, Pasig and personally saw waste all over the area and flowing straight into the drainage.

"I ordered the closure of a meat processing plant. They have had no STP (sewage treatment plant) for years," Sotto said. "Kahit malaking kompanya pa ang may-ari ng plantang ito wala kaming pakialam. Dumidiresto sa drainage/kalsada ng lungsod ang maruming tubig nila, madalas may kasama pang dugo ng baboy."

The closure of the meat processing plant came after the local government received complaints from residents in the area.

The plant had been operating since 2007.

Arlene Rivera



Silliman University declared wildlife sanctuary

By **MINERVA BC NEWMAN**

DUMAGUETE CITY – Silliman University (SU) has been declared a wildlife sanctuary, not just a bird sanctuary, strictly prohibiting the collection or harming of wildlife on campus, as declared by its board of trustees (BOT).

Dr. Angel Alcala, BOT vice chair and head of Silliman University Angelo King Center for Research and Environmental Management (SUAKCREM), said it is Silliman's responsibility to protect and

conserve wildlife as an institution that has been active in conducting research and advocacy on biodiversity that includes wildlife species since 1941.

According to Alcala, based on a SUAKCREM study of trees and animals on the Silliman campus, there are 69 species of trees, 44 species of recruited trees and community associates, 62 species of birds, 32 species of mammals and 27 species of reptiles and amphibians in SU.

The study includes the A.Y. Reyes Zoological & Botanical Garden and man-

grove garden at the Dr. Angel C. Alcala Environment and Marine Science Laboratories.

"Trees have been included in the study because they serve as habitats of birds, amphibians, reptiles and mammals, and they also provide food for the animals," Alcala said.

The BOT's declaration of SU as a wildlife sanctuary also covers SU's other sites such as the SU Farm at the College of Agriculture and SU Center for Tropical Conservation Studies (Centrop) extension site

in Palinpipinon, Valencia, Alcala added.

Alcala clarified though that there are no poisonous reptiles on the Silliman campus and that all snakes on campus are harmless and they should be free to roam the campus.

"In general, snakes are more afraid of humans, and they should be allowed to move freely," he said.

There are large reptiles that invade the attics of houses, but they are there because they feed on rats. An example is the reticulated python. Another large reptile species is the monitor lizard. This is a beautiful and harmless species, Alcala added.



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Silliman U a wildlife sanctuary

By MINERVA NEWMAN

DUMAGUETE CITY -- Silliman University (SU) is now a wildlife sanctuary and collecting or harming wildlife on campus is strictly prohibited as declared by its board of trustees (BOT) that the university campus is not just a bird sanctuary but a wildlife sanctuary as well.

BOT vice chair and head of Silliman University, Angelo King Center for Research and Environmental Management (SUAKCREM) Dr. Angel Alcala said it is Silliman's responsibility to protect and conserve wildlife as an institution that has been active in conducting research and advocacy on biodiversity that includes wildlife species since 1941.

According to Alcala based on a SUAKCREM study of trees and animals on the Silliman campus that includes the A.Y. Reyes Zoological & Botanical Garden and mangrove garden at the Dr. Angel C. Alcala Environment and Marine Science Laboratories, there are 69 species of trees, 44 species of recruited trees and community associates, 62 species of birds, 32 species of mammals and 27 species of reptiles and amphibians in SU.

"Trees have been included in the study because they serve as habitats of birds, amphibians, reptiles and mammals, and they also provide food for the animals," Alcala said.



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Giant ocean sunfish found in Negros city

By **GLAZYL MASCULINO**

BACOLOD CITY – A weak giant ocean sunfish, locally known as “Mola-Mola”, was found floating few meters away from a beach resort in Barangay Taba-ao, Sagay City, Negros Occidental Monday, October 7.

A caretaker of a beach resort found the sunfish around 5:30 a.m. However, because of its weakness, it died a few minutes later.

According to Jose Roberto Togle of the City Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro), the sunfish weighs about 90 to 100 kilos. It was six-feet long and three-feet wide.

Togle said the fish surfaced probably because of the changes in temperature of the sea.

Meanwhile, Cenro volunteer examiner Esther Tamayo, said they opened the intestines of the fish to determine if it had injuries, but they could not yet tell the cause of its death.

The sunfish has already been buried.



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EXTRA INNING

AFP, DENR triumph

Defending champion Armed Forces of the Philippines scored another breezy win while newcomer Department of Environment and Natural Resources continued to impress in the 8th UNTV Cup held recently at the Pasig City Sports Center.

Behind former Letran star Boyet Bautista, the AFP Cavaliers smothered the SSS Kabalik, 100-86, and stayed undefeated in Group I.

The DENR Warriors, on the other hand, took the solo lead in Group II elims with an 88-77 win over former champion Philippine National Police Responders.

Department of Agriculture rolled to its second win in Group 1 by slipping past the PITC Global Traders, 68-64, thanks to ex-PBA player Emerson Oreta and Christian Dematera, who tallied 16 and 14 points.



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OCA INSPECTS OIL FACTORY FOR SANITATION VIOLATION



CALOOCAN City Mayor Oscar "Oca" Malapitan ordered an inspection of the entire premises of a cooking oil factory where two of the 11 employees were hospitalized after inhaling toxic fumes Sunday morning. Mayor Oca designat-

ed Dr. James Lao, head of the City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (CDRRMO) to lead the inspection of Trans Asia Phils Manufacturing Industries Corp. located at No. 5 Golden Road, Gen. Luis St., Caloocan Industrial

Subdivision Caybiga, in Bgy. 166. Two employees of the factory identified as Limwell Ibe, 31, and Bobby Benitez, 24, along with nine others, were rushed to East Avenue Medical Center after inhaling toxic fumes from the company sewer.

PERSONNEL of Caloocan City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (CDRRMO) inspect the premises of Trans-Asia Phils. Manufacturing Industry Corp. following the reported suffocation of 11 employees.

Photo by Edd Reyes

The city chief executive said the local government, along with the Department of Labor and Employment (DoLE),

will release their recommendation based on the result of the inspection by the city government.

Edd Reyes



NEDA targets final draft of land use plan in Nov

THE National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) said it is targeting to submit its final draft of national land use plan, which seeks to harmonize sector-specific land use policies and institutionalize land use planning, for the cabinet meeting next month, an official said.

At the sidelines of a media forum on "National Land Use Act (NaLUA) for Food Security" on Tuesday held in Quezon City, Adoracion Navarro, NEDA undersecretary for Regional Development, told reporters that NEDA board's National Land Use Committee (NLUC) was already fast tracking the compilations of endorsements from all existing cabinet clusters.

"There are six [clusters]. We have already secured the endorsements of the cabinet cluster on climate change adaption, mitigation and disaster risk reduction, [as well as] human development and poverty reduction," she said.

This means the NEDA board has yet to receive endorsements from four other cabinet clusters namely, participatory governance, infrastructure, security, justice and peace, and economic development.

Navarro said NEDA remained hopeful the proposed NaLUA would be passed in the 18th Congress or before the year ends.

From the 10th to the 17th Congress, various versions of the NaLUA bill underwent deliberations, but none of them hurdled the final approval stage. There are 12 NaLUA bills that have been so far filed in the House of Representatives and four in the Senate in the current Congress.

In his last State of the Nation Address (SONA), President Rodrigo Duterte appealed to all legislators to "immediately pass the NaLUA to ensure the rational and sustainable use of our land and our physical resources, given the competing needs of food security, housing, businesses and environmental conservation".

Among the salient points of the draft of the NEDA board's National Land Use Committee are the establishment of an institutional mechanism that will formulate, review, adopt, approve and update the physical framework and land use plans at the national, regional and local levels. Specifically, it calls for the establishment of an

implementing structure including a national land use council and a regional/provincial/city/municipal land use policy committee.

The NaLUA advocacy was initiated by the NLUC in 1995, under the term of then President Fidel Ramos, to provide a legal basis for the formulation of the National Framework for Physical Planning (NFPP).

Currently, land use and classification are determined in large part by local government units (LGUs), as vested upon them by Section 20 of the Local Government Code to reclassify lands.

Food security

The passage of NaLUA will pave the way in ensuring a food-secure Philippines, according to a lawyer Patrick Velez, parliamentary consultant at United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization — Philippines.

He said the fast-growing population requires the government to directly address it by increasing the country's food production capacity.

"[The] production of food requires the use of land, but we also understand that there are other

policies regarding [other] use[s] of lands. It's looking at a framework that will allow us to maximize the use of these limited resources including enhancement of food production..." Velez said.

"It is tied also with population [that when it] increases, we also need to increase our food capacity and food access. These are the things that we want to look into so therefore the relationship between land use and food security is there. It cannot be divorced from each other," he added.

Furthermore, Velez said the NaLUA could also push for a creation of a food security framework, which has not been largely given focus by legislators in the past years. Doing so could lead to an inclusive value chain management of agriculture and food, he said.

"It's been 20 years. We hope that understanding would push us toward this direction. It's quite difficult as there are some sectors that out of unfamiliarity with the terms take a different stance. But there's nothing wrong with really coming together and threshing out all these matters," Velez said.

EIREENE JAIREE GOMEZ



NEDA wants land use bill passed

By Rio N. Araja

CITING land scarcity amid the rising population, the National Economic and Development Authority is battling for the passage of the National Land Use Act.

At the NLUWhat? forum in Quezon City, Undersecretary Adoracion Navarro said that without the law, there would be irrational and unregulated use of land that could eventually cause disasters and compromise the country's food security.

In a bid to reconcile important issues, arguments and conflicting claims, she met with various stakeholders on Tuesday where she explained the proposed measure's policy guidelines and took into account the sentiments raised by the stakeholders.

Navarro is also the appointed head of NEDA's Regional Development Office.

At least 12 NaLUA bills and four others have been filed in Congress and in the Senate, respectively, but not a single one has been passed in the 17th Congress.

Navarro said NEDA is hoping that the Senate could now give them the chance to be heard in this 18th Congress.

She said NaLUA is for inclusive growth, and that it is not anti-development.

According to NEDA, with lands properly allocated, there would be less conflicts on land use to arise.

The bill, if passed, would help create a better business environment and serve as an effective tool to reduce poverty.



Land titles para sa 766 magsasaka ng Dinagat Island

NASA kabuuang 1,067.5005 ektarya ng agrikultural na lupain ang nakatakdang ipamahagi sa mga magsasaka mula sa iba't ibang bayan ng Dinagat Islands, pagbabahagi ng Department of Agrarian Reform sa Caraga Region (DAR-Caraga).

Sinabi ni DAR-Caraga Director Leomides R. Villareal, na nasa 766 magsasaka ang makatatanggap ng Certificates of Land Ownership Award (CLOAs) sa isang seremonya na idaraos ngayong Miyerkules, Oktober 9 sa bayan ng San Jose, Dinagat Islands.

Inaasahan namang pangungunahan ni DAR Secretary John R. Castriciones kasama ang ipang opisyal ng DAR ang pamamahagi ng CLOAs, pagbabahagi pa ni Villareal.

Sa datos na ibinahagi ng DAR-Surigao del Norte Provincial Office, nakasaad na nasa 1,067.5005 ektarya ng lupain ang ipamahagi na inaasahang sasakop sa pitong bayan sa probinsiya, kabilang ang Libjo, Dinagat, San Jose, Cagdiano, Basilisa, Tubajon at Loreto.

Sa pitong bayan, ang Libjo ang may pinakamalaking bahagi na ipamahagi na may sakop na 604.4122 ektarya kung saan nasa 387 magsasaka ang makatatanggap ng titulo ng lupa habang ang bayan ng Tubajon na may 249.3078 ektarya ay maipamahagi sa 196 magsasaka.

Ayon kay Villareal ang nasabing aktibidad sa Dinagat Islands ay bahagi ng serye ng pamamahagi ng lupa na pinangunahan ng DAR-Caraga Region, mula pa noong nakaraang taon.

Kabilang sa mga malalaking aktibidad ng pamamahagi ang naging aktibidad noong Nobyembre, land distribution sa Surigao del Sur ngayong unang bahagi ng taon, at ang Mindanao-wide CLOA distribution sa Davao City noong nakaraang taon na dinaluhan ni Pangulong Duterte.

Sa paglalabas ng Executive Order 75 ngayong Pebrero ng taon, sinabi ni Villareal na tututok ang DAR-Caraga sa pamamahagi ng lupa na mainam para sa pagsasaka.

Bukod naman sa CLOA distribution, makatatanggap din ang Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Organizations (ARBOs) sa Dinagat Islands ng mga makinarya pang-saka.

Ayon kay DAR-Surigao del Norte Provincial Agrarian Reform Officer Maria Elizabeth de Guzman, kabilang sa mga makinaryang ipamahagi ang mga traktora, turtles o kilala bilang bao-bao, at mga rice threshers.



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4 NA LALAKI, TIKLO SA ILLEGAL MINING

BENGUET—Apat na minero na nagsasagawa ng illegal

mining ang inaresto ng mga awtoridad kamakalawa sa Bgy. Poblacion, Itogon.

Ang mga suspek ay kinilala ng pulisya na sina Roel Charog, Jason Mansueto, Johnny Sembrano at Crisostomo Todco, pawang residente sa nasabing bayan.

Nabatid na may nagbigay-impormasyon sa mga awtoridad na nagsasagawa ng illegal mining ang mga suspek kaya rumesponde ang pulisya at nang walang maipakitang permit mula sa DENR ay agad inaresto ang apat na minero.

Nakakumpiska ang mga awtoridad ng 30 sako ng gold ores at kagamitan sa pagminina sa pag-iingat ng mga suspek.

Nakapiit na ang mga suspek na pawang nahaharap sa kasong illegal mining.



GOVERNANCE MATTERS

Local governments and climate resiliency



By **JEJOMAR C. BINAY**
FORMER VICE PRESIDENT

AS the country's financial center, Makati is particularly vulnerable to climate change. High concentration of people and vehicles at certain periods of the day translates to high levels of greenhouse gas emissions. Strong typhoons also impact on the city, since massive flooding and prolonged power outages disrupt business activities, affecting both the local and national economy.

To mitigate the effects of climate change, Makati has taken proactive steps which have been recognized by international bodies like the World Bank as early as 2008 when the agency named the city as one of East Asia's Climate Resilient Cities. The World Bank made particular mention of Makati's high state of disaster preparedness. In October of that year, I was invited to speak before a World Bank forum in my capacity as city mayor to mark the observance of International Disaster Risk Reduction Day.

Today, Makati is considered a leading city in promoting climate resiliency and disaster risk reduction.

I have been privileged to be asked by Mayor Abigail Binay to be an adviser to the city, on a volunteer capacity, on the issue of climate change. It has always been my view that the readiness of local governments to respond to disasters should go beyond having the right equipment and the right manpower. It also requires having the right policy framework, and being grounded in the science of climate change studies and acting accordingly.

Makati has not been spared the impact of devastating typhoons; yet the city has shown that damage to lives and properties can be kept to a minimum. Aside from adopting the needed policies, Makati has also invested in disaster preparedness. This year alone, Makati has allocated ₱800 million for its Peace and Order and Public Safety (POPS) Plan, and ₱900 million for its Local Disaster Risk Reduction Management (DRRM) Fund. In previous years, the city leadership acquired the latest vehicles and equipment for disaster response.

The same, however, cannot be said of other localities, particularly poorer local governments in the provinces. It underscores a glaring reality – all natural disasters impact on local economies first. When they occur in high intensities, natural disasters displace lives, homes, business and economic activities. They deepen

poverty in communities already mired in poverty.

Natural disasters also stretch the capacity of local governments to respond to the immediate aftermath of disasters and to manage the humanitarian crisis that follows major natural upheavals.

When local economies are disrupted, the capacity of local governments to provide services for their people during normal times is also disrupted. The capacity of local governments to care for the poor, the sick, the children, and the elderly as a matter of regular social service is severely compromised.

This is most especially true in the case of small local governments with limited resources. The need to address climate change, therefore, takes on social dimensions, as it also impacts on a locality's human and social investments, which in turn, would impact on the locality's future stability.

But a recognition of the important role of local governments would also require a recognition of the dynamics of the relationship between local governments and the national government. Most local governments remain dependent on the national government, especially when responding to disasters and its aftermath. There are also shortcomings in national government services that are often blamed on local governments.

Mayors in Metro Manila, for example, are unfairly blamed for flooding in their localities, when the reality is that the national government needs to be made accountable for its failure to institute a reliable flood control program, its failure to properly dispose of Metro Manila's garbage, and its failure to subject to rigorous review all applications for environmental permits from property developers.

While local governments should play a major role in climate change resiliency and disaster response, the reality is that local governments remain hobbled by lack of access to funds and technical expertise. The policy framework has already been set by national laws such as Republic Act 10121, the Philippine DRRM Act of 2010 and the Climate Change Act of 2009, as well as international conventions such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction Global Targets. The challenge is to translate policy into action. This would entail improving the capacities of local governments, of making them fully capable and competent first responders in times of natural disasters.

'Save Earth from extinction'

NEW YORK: Climate protesters from Sydney to New York City blocked roads Tuesday, sparking hundreds of arrests, as two weeks of civil disobedience demanding immediate action to save the Earth from "extinction" kicked off.

The demonstrations, triggered by the group Extinction Rebellion, were mostly limited to a few hundred people in each city, far from the size of last month's massive Greta Thunberg-inspired protests.

Protesters chained themselves to vehicles and other structures and lay down in the middle of streets in defiance of police across Europe and parts of Asia, Africa and North America.

Extinction Rebellion is demanding that governments drastically cut the carbon emissions that scientists have shown cause devastating climate change.

They are backed by Thunberg, the Swedish teenager, whose searing United Nations address in September made international headlines, and by academics studying the rising temperatures and sea levels.

Their protests have irritated drivers and some officials, but raised the hopes of those who see climate change as a threat to the planet.

In London, where the Extinction Rebellion movement was born last



HELP MOTHER NATURE Climate change activists shout slogans at a gathering in Sydney. The activists held rallies in 60 cities around the world to press leaders to act fast in protecting mother nature. AFP PHOTO

year, 276 people were arrested as demonstrators put up structures near Britain's parliament.

"Getting arrested sends a message to the government that otherwise law-abiding citizens are desperate," information technology consultant Oshik Romem, from Israel but working in Britain for 19 years, told Agence France-Presse (AFP).

At New York's Battery Park, some 200 demonstrators took part in a "funeral march" to Wall Street, where protesters threw fake blood over the financial district's famous bronze statue of a bull.

"We need imagery like this in

order to get people's attention," 29-year-old James Comiskey told AFP, as he carried a cardboard coffin in the procession.

Police arrested more than a dozen people who staged a "die-in" — in which people lay down as if they were dead — by the bull.

Protests occurred in 60 cities around the world, including New Delhi, Cape Town, Paris, Vienna, Madrid and Buenos Aires.

Hundreds of Australians joined a sit-in on a busy inner Sydney road before being dragged away by the police. Thirty people were later charged.

"We have tried petitions, lobby-

ing and marches, and now time is running out," Australian activist Jane Morton said.

Australia's conservative government has resisted adopting new environmental standards and backed lucrative coal exports.

Campaigners in Dublin parked a pink yacht outside the office of Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar.

Dutch police said they arrested 90 people after Extinction Rebellion members occupied a bridge outside the famed Rijksmuseum art gallery.

And dozens blocked bridges in the Canadian cities of Toronto, Edmonton and Halifax. **AFP**



DOT eyes more farm tourism sites in Calabarzon

The Calabarzon unit of the Department of Tourism (DOT) plans to increase the number of accredited farm sites in the region in line with its push for sustainable tourism.

In an interview, newly appointed DOT Region IV-A director Jeff Ortega said farm tourism is one of the strengths of the region as it has the most number of accredited farm sites in the country at 31.

At present, there are a total of 174 accredited farm tourism sites across the country.

While noting they have no target of how many more accredited farm sites they plan

to have by the end of the year, Ortega said they are working on benchmarking the industry.

"There's no target since it's a new industry, but what we're trying to do is to make sure to see how much we can benchmark. Right now Calabarzon has the highest number in the entire country," Ortega said.

"So we're pushing how many more we can do (accreditation) until the end of this year," he added.

Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat earlier said she expects the number of accredited farm tourism sites to continue to rise as the

demand for "low-impact tourism" increases with the completion of the Farm Tourism Strategic Action Plan (FTSAP).

"Farm tourism capitalizes on two of our competitive advantages: agriculture, as 41.7 percent of the total land area in the country is devoted to farming as of 2016 according to the World Bank, employing 23.5 percent of the Filipino workforce (as of July 2019), and the world-renowned Filipino brand of hospitality that brought 7.1 million foreign visitors to the country last year," Puyat said.

The DOT said it also targets to install a farm tourism development board this year along with the appointment of private sector representatives.

"A national farm tourism association will likewise be organized to unify farm tourism establishment efforts in addressing issues and to facilitate implementation of the FTSAP," the DOT said.

Puyat emphasized that farm tourism is a catalyst for sustainable tourism and inclusive development.

"We at the DOT are looking forward for farm tourism to serve as a catalyst for greater sustainability; we know that we can now pursue it properly, guided by the IRR. Farm tourism holds the promise of food sufficiency and additional income for our tourism stakeholders, including farmers, farm workers and fisherfolk. After all, gainful employment, enhanced productivity and sustainable livelihoods are what tourism is really all about," Puyat said.

The DOT said the Farm Tourism Development Act of

2016 will provide the policy and enabling environment for the encouragement, development and promotion of farm tourism in the country; and recognize the importance of agriculture in making available food and other products necessary to sustain and enhance human life, and in providing livelihood to a major portion of the population.

Under the law, the DOT, the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) will work together to develop the local farm tourism industry, in a bid to raise the income of farmers and spur the growth of the agriculture sector in the country.

Moreover, apart from its focus on farm tourism, Ortega said the Calabarzon region is also targeting the rehabilitation of destinations such as Matabungkay Beach in Batangas.

Ortega said they have started talks with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) regarding the rehabilitation of the Batangas beach.

"For Matabungkay, we're trying to restore its old glory because it's a very popular beach place especially for families and vacation goers," Ortega said.

Matabungkay Beach, known for its white sand, became a popular weekend destination starting the 1950s due to its proximity to Manila.

"Actually of this moment, this is only my first month (in office) and so far, we've engaged in several talks with a lot of regional offices concerned as well as the stakeholders," he added. - Catherine Talavera



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MABILIS nang naba-bankrupt ang mga negosyo sa Hong Kong dahil sa halos araw-araw na rali ng mga mamamayan laban sa gobyerno nito.

Ayon sa mga Filipino na nagtatrabahoon, may mga kompanya nang nagdeklara ng pagka-bankrupt at malinaw ang pagsasara ng mga ito.

Kung may Pinoy na obrero rito, tiyak na sibak din sa trabaho.

Maging ang mga kasambahay ng mga appektadong may-ari ng mga bankrupt na kompanya ay malamang na masisibak din sa trabaho.

Alalahaning may 250,000 overseas Filipino worker sa Hong Kong.

Bawat isang masisibakan ng hanapbuhay na OFW ay masisibakan ang ikabubuhay ng kanyang pamilya sa mahal kong Pinas.

Lalo na ang mga umaasa lang sa sahod o kita ng Hong Kong OFW.

GOBYERNONG PINAS MAGHANDA NA

Kung magtutuloy-tuloy ang krisis pang-ekonomiya ng Hong Kong, dapat na ring maghanda ang ating gobyerno para rito.

Siyempre pa, dapat nitong paghandaan ang pagtulong sa mga masisibak na OFW sa paghahanap ng trabaho o negosyo sa Pinas o kaya'y pagdeploy ng mga ito sa ibang bansa, kung mas gugustuhin nifa ang mag-abroad.

Sensitibo ang kalagayan ng mga mag-aaral na sinusupportahan ng mga Hong Kong OFW at dapat na isa ito sa dapat na tugunan ng pamahalaan.

Ang mga maysakit na miyembro ng mga nasabing OFW, paano rin?

Ano-ano na ang nalisis ng pamahalaan na mga programa o proyekto para saluhin ang mga mamalasing OFW?

MAGULO

Sa ngayon, napa-paralisa ang sistemang transportasyon dahil sinisira o inilistorbo ito ng mga raliyesta.

Tumitigil ang mga tren at hindi bumibiyahang mga bus at taxi para sa mga mamamayan at turista.

Natatamaan din ang biyahe ng mga eroplano



NI BENNY ANTIPORDA

HONG KONG BANKRUPT NA AT KAINUTILAN SA LRT-2

at pakonti nang pakonti ang biyahe rito sa pagkaunti ng mga turista.

Mabilis din ang pagkaunti ng mga dayuhang turista na isa sa mga pangunahing ikinabubuhay ng Hong Kong.

Nagsasara rin ang mga tindahan, mail at bangko dahil pinapasok ang mga ito ng raliyesta at nagsasara ang mga ito upang hindi sila masiraan sa operasyon.

Ito ang mga dahilan kung bakit bumabagsak na ang ekonomiya ng Hong Kong na tiyak na magkakaroon ng malaking epekto sa maraming Hong Kong OFW at mga pamilya ng mga ito.

Sa rami ng mga OFW na ito, tiyak na aabot sa milyong Filipino ang mapapasama ang kalagayan sa ekonomiya at kaugnay ng mga usapin gaya ng pag-aaral ng mga bata, pagpapagamot sa mga maysakit, pagtugon sa mga utang sa panginibang-bansa at iba pa.

9 BUWANG PARALISADO

Habang tinitipa natin ito, mga Bro, may balitang magkakaroon ng bahagyang biyahe ng Light Railway Transit 2.

Biyaheng Recto-Cubao, dahil ang Cubao-Marikina ay nasunogan ng transformer o power rectifier.

Bagama't oks naman at may partial na biyahe, may pangamba ang ating Uzi, na baka mauwi lahat sa buong pagkaparalisa ng siyam na buwan ang LRT 2.

Ang kanyang dahilan, magkakaedad at parepareho ang mga nakatanim na transformer o power rectifier ng tren mula Recto, Manila hanggang Marikina Station.

Yun bang == kung nasunog ang dalawang transformer o power rectifier sa pagitan ng Anonas at Katipunan stations, malamang na masusunog din anomang araw ang lahat ng mga gamit na ito ng tren sa kabuuang linya ng tren.

May kawiran ang ating Uzi, mga Bro.

KAINUTILAN?

May lumitaw agad na malaking problema rito, mga Bro.

Hindi napaghandan ng mga operator ang aberyang ganito.

Akalain mo, aabutin ng siyam na buwan ang paggawa, pag-import, paglalagay, pag-testing at pagtityak na hindi na mauulit ang pagkasunog ng dalawang piyesa ng tren.

Hindi kaya malaking kainutilan ito?

Ang isang tanong: Hindi ba makagawa ng paraan ang mga operator ng mabilis na pagpapalit ng mga ganitong piyesa sakaling magkaaberya ang mga ito?

Ipagpalagay na nating aabutin ng LRT 2 ang edad ng LRT 1 na ginawa noon pang 1983, gaano kadalas magkaaberya ang LRT 2 dahil sa parehong problema?

Ang LRT 1, 36 taon nang tumatakbo nang walang problema sa transformer at rectifier.

Ang LRT 2, 16 years old pa lang pero nagkasakit na sa nasabing parte at nakatatakot ito dahil malaking sunog pala ito kung mapabayaan.

Paano nga paghandaari ng mga operator ang, una, ang pagkasira ng nasabing mga piyesa anomang araw mula ngayon, at, pangalawa, paano palitan nang mabilis ang mga piyesa ng ito nang hindi aabutin ng 9-9 na buwan?

KUMAYOD KAYO

Dapat na kumayod nang husto ang mga operator sa nabanggit na dalawang problema; paghahanda ng pagkasira ng ibang transformer at mabilis na pagpapalit dito.

Kung hindi magagawa ang mga ito, anak ng tokwa, malaking kainutilan ang namumuro at tiyak na malaking perwisyo 'yan sa taumbayan.

Anomang reaksiyon o reklamo, maaaring iparating sa (09228403333 o i-email sa bantiporda@yahoo.com.