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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service

Climate change is real

What's being done about it?

BY EIREENE JAIREE GOMEZ

GEOGRAPHICALLY, the Philippines is considered highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change and the country's problems are expected to worsen given an apparent lack of national policies.

Because of the country's high exposure to typhoons, landslides, floods and droughts, and its increasing dependence on climate-sensitive natural resources, the United States Agency for International Development has projected that by 2050, the country will see a 1.8°C to 2.2°C increase in temperature, leading to wetter wet and drier dry seasons.

Some of the pressing challenges involve water pollution, air pollution and solid-waste management, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) acknowledged.

The environmental group EcoWaste Coalition, meanwhile, has blamed destructive large-scale mining operations, dirty energy projects and deforestation for wreaking havoc on the environment. It listed plastic pollution, electrical waste, incineration and foreign waste importation as among the issues requiring priority government action.

The Philippines is in a state of "climate emergency," declared Khevin Yu, campaigner of Greenpeace Southeast Asia-Philippines. A root cause, he added, is greenhouse gas emissions from the energy and transportation sectors.

"Looking at the energy sector, the Department of Energy (DoE) has said that the major source of our energy remains to be coal and it's very problematic because it's not only an issue of production of energy. The people should understand that coal is one of the dirtiest fossil fuels and it's a major reason why our greenhouse gas emissions constantly increase."

While President Rodrigo Duterte has ordered the Energy department "to fast-track renewable energy resources to reduce the country's dependence on traditional energy sources such as coal," Yu claimed this had not been relayed significantly to stakeholders.

"There is a need for a drastic shift toward renewable energy as we are faced by climate emergency and if we want to address this, our main source of emissions like coal should have [a] steep decline in the next few years. If we don't change our energy system, the climate impact that we are facing right now will only worsen," he pointed out.

Coal-fired power plants, however, are expected to remain the country's major energy source in the coming decade, making up 59.1 percent of the total power mix by 2028, Fitch Solutions Macro Research noted in a recent report.

Manila, meanwhile, is one of the dirtiest cities in the Philippines, partly due to it having the highest volume of cars nationwide. The proliferation of private vehicles, Greenpeace said, needs to be addressed by the government.

Single-use plastics are another area of concern and the group said this had led to the degradation of water quality and maritime biodiversity losses, among others.

"We need to change the production of plastic... The government should have a policy for the companies to veer away from using single-use plastics and promote alternative delivery systems," Yu said.

Big industries need to shift to eliminating toxics and waste and focus on product quality and safety and packaging durability, reparability and recyclability, according to EcoWaste Coalition.

Because of the lack of "producer accountability," it claimed that "companies tend to see nature as a limitless source of raw materials, producing products using hazardous chemicals and with short lifespans to maximize sales, packaging them in throw-away plastics and ignoring their responsibility for their goods after their useful life."

Adding to the issue is the importation of waste from other countries, highlighted by a row with Canada earlier this year.

Ottawa has since agreed to take back the trash — already shipped back — and Manila has also successfully prodded Seoul to repatriate garbage that had been dumped in the Philippines.

"The Canadian and South Korean plastic garbage dumping incidents... justify a complete ban on foreign waste importation to protect the country from turning into a global dump," EcoWaste Coalition said. While the DENR will start imposing a three-month moratorium on all waste-related imports, the group asserted that it "will not be enough to deter illegal waste traffic and promote environmental justice."

For the Worldwide Fund for Nature-Philippines (WWF), "rural and urban-poor sectors are most at risk to environmental threats because of their lack of access to not just relief, but to basic needs — a lack of financial capacity, for example, makes one more prone to a lack of food, which further exacerbates whatever environmental risks they may be faced with."

"The old and infirm, the young, and those with disabilities are also more at risk since they lack the means to take care of themselves when faced with environmental threats," it added.

The DENR said it was actively addressing the issue. In particular, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said the department was banking on the Enhanced National Greening Program to mitigate the effects of climate change.

"Furthermore, our firm resolve to implement and enforce all environmental laws ensures that violators pay the price for their indifference and utter disregard of the law," Cimatu said.



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Current interventions are not enough, environmental groups claimed.

"[W]hat we often find missing is the lack of political will by national and local government officials to fully implement our progressive environmental laws and regulations, and the lack of corporate responsibility by companies for the environmental and social impacts of their operations," the EcoWaste Coalition said.

Addressing environmental problems should be done in a "decisive, fast, holistic and participatory" manner, it added.

The WWF said the national government should step up its commitment and ensure that local climate-change action plans are properly implemented and adopted. Greenpeace, for its part, warned about the lack of commitment from the government, private sector and the people.

"Whatever the situation is, the Philippines will really be at the forefront of the climate crisis. And if we're looking at the worst scenario for our country, we will be living more dangerously and then we will have few resources to cope with the consequences of environmental degradation," Yu said.



10-11-19

DAR

DENR reduces land dispute cases by half —Cimatu

By Rio N. Araja

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources on Thursday said it has cut over half of the backlog of cases, mostly land disputes, in just a year.

Secretary Roy Cimatu said the agency was able to reduce its case backlog at least by 62 percent over the course of one year.

In an inventory report of DENR's Legal Affairs Service, its director Norlito Eneran said the backlog went down to 559 in January 2019 from a high of 1,482 in January 2018.

He credited the gains to Cimatu's program to eliminate the backlog and adopt alternative dispute resolution.

The DENR chief said such development has only demonstrated how serious they are in addressing their case backlog.

"The days of long, drawn-out cases are finally numbered," he said.

"The process in eliminating undue delays in the resolution of cases are now being felt as gaps and flaws in the process that have allowed delays to thrive in the past are now being addressed," he said.

The cases, mostly land disputes, are farmed out to the four offices under the Legal Affairs Service, along with the zero-backlog task force created in January 2018 aimed to identify cases that could easily be removed from the dockets "moto proprio" or without the need to hear the parties.

"Almost 90 percent of our cases in the DENR are land cases and the parties involved in many of these are either relatives or neighbors," Eneran said, adding the approach proved to be effective.



EYE IN THE SKY

DENR TAPS DRONE TO FIGHT LOGGERS IN SIERRA MADRE

LUCENA CITY—The government's battle against illegal loggers at the Sierra Madre mountain ranges in northern Quezon will get a boost through an eye in the sky.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said a team of forest rangers had been equipped with a drone to monitor illegal logging operations.

"With a drone, we were able to locate the hiding place of illegally cut forest products inside a mangrove area in Infanta town," Lupo Telan, chief of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) in Real town, said.

Effective

Telan said their latest operation recovered at least 8,000 board feet of sawn lumber from assorted hardwood species.

A drone, he said, is an effective surveillance and monitor-



REXMEL TELAN/CONTRIBUTOR

HOT LUMBER Illegal loggers use mangrove areas in northern Quezon to conceal lumber from forest rangers.

ing equipment in the battle against illegal loggers because it captures high-resolution images through its optical and digital zoom lens. A drone has a flight range of about 7 kilometers and a flight time of 30 minutes.

"The drone lessens the risk and danger for forest rangers.

We can search the area [using the drone] ... before making our move," Roxel Telan, a forest technician in Cenro-Real, said in an online interview.

He said the local Cenro started using the drone only in August. Through its images, the Cenro discovered lumber hidden

in mangrove areas in the town. "Most of the pieces of lumber were underwater. But fortunately for us, our drone spotted them because it was low tide when our operator flew it," Roxel said.

Threats

"We've been discovering more as we go inside the mangrove areas," he added.

Telan said most forest rangers had been receiving threats from illegal loggers, making them vulnerable to attacks especially because they lacked firearms.

The northern Quezon section of the Sierra Madre is considered a hot spot for illegal logging operations. Sierra Madre, which stretches from Cagayan province in Northern Luzon to Quezon in Southern Luzon, is home to the largest remaining tract of old-growth tropical rainforest in the Philippines.

—DELFIN T. MALLARI JR. INO



DBM clears release of P2-B additional Mla Bay rehab fund

By BERNADETTE D. NICOLAS [@BNicolasBM](#)

FOLLOWING President Duterte's approval, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) cleared the release of almost P2 billion in augmentation fund for the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Acting Budget Secretary Wendel B. Avisado told the BUSINESSMIRROR that it was the President who ordered the release of the fund after his fourth State of the Nation Address.

He said the President really "wants to clean up Manila Bay so that's why we found a way to [source it from the] contingency fund."

Since the money was sourced from the P13-billion contingency fund of the national government, it needed the President's approval.

Based on the DBM's list, there were seven Special Allotment Release Orders (Saro) already approved by the budget depart-

ment on October 4 amounting to P1,979,305,000. This amount accounted for P15.23 percent of the total contingency fund of the national government.

The approval by the Office of the President of the release of the money was dated September 13, 2019.

Budget Assistant Secretary Rolando U. Toledo also confirmed to the BUSINESSMIRROR that the fund was just an additional release to this year's P80-million budget allocation for the operational plan for the Manila Bay Coastal Management Strategy.

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DBM Clears release of P2-B additional Manila Bay rehab fund

DBM...

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"For this year, there is just an augmentation," he said.

Toledo explained that the department had used its P80-million budget allocation before the grant of the contingency fund was tapped for the augmentation.

Broken down, 93.78 percent of the P2-billion fund, or P1,856,097,000, will be received by DENR Central Office.

Meanwhile, 6.69 percent or P132,461,000, will go to the department's Regional Office in the National Capital Region (NCR).

The remaining percentage of the allocation will go to DENR's Regional Office-IV-A- Proper through the Office of the Secretary (P45,017,000); its Regional Office III through the Office of the Secretary (P32,605,000); NCR- Proper through the Office of the Secretary (P28,297,000); Regional Office-IV-A through the Environmental Management Bureau (P10,311,000); and Regional Office III through the Environmental Management Bureau (P6,978,000).

During Congress's deliberation on the department's proposed P25.5-billion budget for 2020, DENR assured lawmakers of the continuing efforts to clean up Manila Bay, citing a possibility that it would finally be safe

for swimming by year-end.

However, the Manila Bay rehabilitation that started last January 27, 2019, is still in its first phase, which is cleanup and water quality monitoring.

The total rehabilitation—pegged to cost P47 billion—is divided into three phases, with the second and third phases being rehabilitation and resettlement, and education and sustainment.

The Manila Bay Area covers eight provinces and 178 local government units in three regions in the country: NCR, Region III and Region IV-A.

According to the Special Provision under the 2019 General Appropriations Act (GAA), the P13-billion contingent fund shall be used to cover requirements of new or urgent programs, activities or projects of national government agencies, or government-owned and -controlled corporations that need to be implemented or paid during the year.

The contingent fund may also be tapped for the following purposes but not limited to: legal obligation of the government arising from final and executory decisions of competent authorities, such as compromise agreements, arbitral awards, mediation settlement agreement, and professional services in connection thereto; requirements of newly created offices or deficiencies in the appropriations for local and external travels of the President.



DENR cuts backlog of cases, taps mediation

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said it has reduced its backlog of cases by 62 percent over the course of one year.

A report of the DENR Legal Affairs Service (LAS) showed the number of pending cases has dropped to 559 in January 2019 from a high of 1,482 in January 2018.

Of the 559 cases, 193 are with the Legal Research and Opinion Division; 127 with the Claims and Conflicts Division; 97 with the Litigation and Prosecution Division; and 9 with the Investigation and Arbitration Division.

Another 133 pending cases are with the Zero Backlog Task Force whose duty is to dispose of cases filed in or before 1999.

In a statement, LAS said DENR disposition of cases was fasttracked by an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanism.

Almost 90 percent of the cases involve land disputes and parties are among relatives or neighbors.

The ADR taps a neutral third party and is implemented in the community and provincial levels.

The DENR rolls out training activities nationwide for non-lawyer personnel who serve as ADR officers (ADROs) and who become mediators.

A total of 157 ADROs have been accredited after passing rigorous trainings and 64 more are expected to be added after completion of their training programs this month, the DENR said.



DENR resolves 62% backlog cases

AT LEAST 62 percent of backlog cases have been resolved by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in one year.

In an inventory report to Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu, Legal Affairs Service (LAS) Director Norlito Eneran said the agency's case backlog went down to 559 in January 2019 from a high of 1,482 in January 2018.

"The days of long, drawn-out cases are finally numbered," Cimatu said.

He added that the progress in eliminating undue delays in the resolution of cases are now being felt as gaps and flaws in the process that had allowed delays to thrive in the past are now being addressed.

Eneran, on the other hand, said the gains came after the DENR started a program to eliminate the backlog and adopt alternative dispute resolution (ADR) in resolving cases lodged with the agency.

Eneran explained that the cases, mostly land disputes, are farmed out to the four offices under LAS, including the Zero Backlog Task Force, which Cimatu created in January 2018 to identify cases that can easily be removed from the dockets "moto proprio" or without the need to hear the parties.

"Almost 90 percent of our cases in the DENR are land cases and the parties involved in many of these are either relatives or neighbors," Eneran said, noting that ADR proved to be effective in resolving cases of such nature.

ADR, he said, fosters win-win solutions to the parties through a neutral third party, including restoration of strained relationships.

Eneran added that ADR is being implemented in the DENR at the community and provincial levels, pursuant to Republic Act 9285 or the Alternative Dispute Resolution Act of 2004 and Executive Order 523 entitled Instituting the Use of ADR in the Executive Department

of the Government.

He said the DENR has rolled out a number of ADR training activities nationwide and non-lawyer personnel of the agency have been encouraged to become Alternative Dispute Resolution Officers or ADROs.

ADROs are "mediators" who help both parties find or tailor solutions to specific needs of both parties outside of the litigation process.

Eneran said a total of 157 ADROs have been accredited after passing rigorous trainings and 64 more are expected to be added after completion of their training programs this month.

ADR became fully operational at the DENR in December 2016 with the issuance of DENR Administrative Order 2016-30 calling for the establishment of mechanisms and tools for ADR in the disposition of land claims and conflicts, the organization of a pool of ADROs, and the creation of a committee and secretariat tasked to implement the ADR process.

"These efforts have translated into fewer cases elevated to the DENR Central Office for appeal," Eneran pointed out.

Of the 559 cases, 193 are with the Legal Research and Opinion Division; 127 with the Claims and Conflicts Division; 97 with the Litigation and Prosecution Division; and 9 with the Investigation and Arbitration Division.

Another 133 pending cases are with the Zero Backlog Task Force whose duty is to dispose of cases filed in or before 1999 and to resolve those where parties can be considered to have abandoned their claims for failure to submit the required pleadings or non-payment of fees.

The task force used to handle 871 cases that were either for dismissal, archiving or mediation. The bulk of these cases were appeals on land dispute rulings by DENR regional directors.

Cory Martinez



DENR resolves 92% of backlog cases in 1 year

AT least 62 per cent of backlog cases filed before the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) were already resolved over the course of one year.

In an inventory report to DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu, Legal Affairs Service (LAS) Director Norlito Eneran disclosed that the agency's case

backlog went down to 559 in January 2019 from a high of 1,482 in January 2018.

"The days of long, drawn-out cases are finally numbered," Cimatu said.

He added that the progress in eliminating undue delays in the resolution of cases are now being felt as gaps and flaws in

the process that had allowed delays to thrive in the past are now being addressed.

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Cory Martinez



Doing the right thing in reforestation

COMMENTARY

ERNESTO M. ORDOÑEZ

In reforestation, the actual planting is often done right. But concentrating on planting is not the right thing. Professor Peter Drucker shared with me an important insight: "It is important to do things right. But much more important is to do the right thing."

This is the main problem in our reforestation. We may do some things right. But overall, we are not doing the right thing.

In reversing the tragedy of our 5.7 million hectares of denuded forest, we have instead seen the declining size of land planted in 2018. Here is the record of hectares planted from the DENR National Greening Program: In 2015, 360,357 hectares; 2016, 284,089 ha; 2017, 202,488 ha., and in 2018, 132,741 ha. Instead of increasing planting, the hectares planted decreased by two-thirds.

Fortunately, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, with groups like the Movement for Water Security (MWS) which views reforestation as a key strategy for water supply and conservation, are now totally behind a P5.5-billion DENR reforestation budget for 2020. We must ensure this budget is wisely used.

On Oct. 8, Pasig City Mayor Vico Sotto, with the support of Rep. Roman Romulo, launched an innovative scheme on his

100th day in office: the initial planting of 100 trees using the right reforestation approach. This was done at the Pasig Rainforest Park. It was spearheaded by the LGU and coordinated by Green Restorative Actions and Sustainable Solutions (GRASS). GRASS is headed by LPG principal architect Lui Daya-Garcia, concurrent MWS vice chair for flagship projects. The launch, facilitated by architects Rola Vizmonte and Kathleen Runas, addressed three key practices that had caused our country's reforestation shortfall.

The first bad practice is choosing the wrong trees to plant. An example is mahogany, which is bad for reforestation because it harms other plants and animals (e.g., the recent report on tarsier disappearance in Bohol areas with mahogany). GRASS instead advocates bamboo and native trees. These are easier to plant, fit the environment, have good commercial value, clean the air, revive the water table and assist in reducing floods.

The second is concentrating on planting, then leaving the plants to die. The right forestation includes nurturing and growing the plants. The Boy and Girl Scouts present at the launching explained how this was an essential part of their reforestation initiative. This is why their efforts are admired and appreciated nationwide.

The third is using a narrow view of reforestation. This does not support the GRASS approach.

GRASS is a team of professionals that integrates sustainable, liveable, and resilient green strategies in addressing environmental issues and climate crisis adaptation. Key to their approach is a holistic biodiversity perspective and community involvement.

Admu616569's Toto Malvar, this year's recipient of a DENR environmental award, said: "Reforestation is certain to fail unless the community participates, owns, and feels responsible for the reforestation." This was echoed at the launching by Pasig scoutmasters Agnes Gouda, Santiago Dino, and Bryan Escano, who stated that the scouts nationwide ensured community involvement.

The most important lesson learned on Oct. 8 was the critical need for a team of professionals like GRASS to be involved in reforestation planning and implementation. Doing correct reforestation is not automatic. The "right thing" must be determined and done for reforestation success. The MWS and all who want right reforestation must communicate this to our 18 major River Basin Councils, which can help correct the suboptimal reforestation we see today. INQ



The author is Agriwatch chair, former Secretary of Presidential Programs and Projects and former undersecretary of agriculture and Trade and Industry. Contact him via watch_phil@yahoo.com



DENR lifts suspension of nickel miner

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has lifted the suspension of nickel miner Zambales Diversified Metals Corp., DMCI Holdings Inc. said in a regulatory filing on Thursday. DMCI Mining's two nickel subsidiaries, Zambales Diversified and Berong Nickel Corp., were among Philippine ore producers suspended or shut down following a series of government-initiated audit on the industry's compliance with environmental regulations. The DENR lifted Berong's suspension in November last year.—REUTERS



IN BRIEF

DENR lifts ban on DMCI mine

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources lifted the suspension on mining operations of Zambales Diversified Metals Corp., a mining asset of DMCI Holdings Inc.

DMCI said in a disclosure to the stock exchange ZDMC received the resolution dated Sept. 30, 2019 issued by the DENR, which ordered the lifting of the suspension of ZDMC's mine operations.

ZDMC, whose mine is located in Sta. Cruz, was among the nine companies whose operations were suspended following a mining audit conducted by DENR.

DMCI Mining president Cesar Simbulan Jr. said in August that ZDMC already complied with the conditions set by the DENR for the lifting of its November 2018 suspension order.

ZMDC is one of the two mining assets of DMCI Mining. The other one is Berong Nickel Corp. which has operations in Palawan.

DMCI Mining earlier reported that it shipped 343,000 wet metric tons of nickel ore in the second quarter of the year raising its total shipment in the first semester to 681,000 WMT, a 41 percent increase from the 483,000 WMT it shipped a year ago. **Jennifer B. Austria**



DENR lifts suspension on DMCI mining unit

THE government has lifted the suspension of mining operations of DMCI Mining Corp.'s nickel mine in Zambales.

In a disclosure on Thursday, its parent company DMCI Holdings, Inc. said Zambales Diversified Metals Corp. (ZDMC) received the resolution dated Sept. 30 issued by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources on Oct. 9.

"Through said Resolution, DENR has ordered to lift the suspension of ZDMC's mine operations," DMCI said.

ZDMC is a nickel mine site in the municipality of Sta. Cruz in Zambales. It covers 8.58% of the total land area with a mineral resource of about 46.45 million metric tons (MT) based on its Annual Mineral Reserve Inventory Report of December 2016.

It was one of the mine sites that were suspended by the DENR in November 2018. Only Berong Nickel Corp. (BNC), another unit of DMCI Mining, passed the mining audit.

As part of the requirements of DENR, ZDMC has submitted a rehabilitation plan in order to resume operations.

The Berong and Zambales mines, two of more than 30 nickel-ore producers in the Philippines, in recent years accounted for less than 5% of the nation's output of the material, which is used in stainless steel and electric vehicle batteries.

Top nickel ore buyer China is expected to rely on the Philippines, the world's second-largest ore producer in 2018, for supply that will replace ore shipments from last year's top producer Indonesia, which is due to ban its ore exports in 2020.

— Vincent Mariel P. Galang with Reuters



TITLE:

Philex secures pertinent papers for Silangan mine

By LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON

It's all systems go for Pangilinan-led Philex Mining Corp.'s Silangan copper and gold project after it complied with all the requirements to proceed with its operations.

In a regulatory filing, Philex said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, through the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, approved the underground sub-level cave mining method.

The approval of the underground sub-level cave mining method included the three-year development and utilization work program for the second half of the year up to the first semester of 2022.

It also includes the environmental protection and enhancement program, final mine rehabilitation and decommissioning plan, and social development and management program.

Prior to such approval, the Silangan copper-gold project

was also granted an environmental compliance certificate for underground sub-level cave mining method.

Philex finally concluded its definite feasibility study for the first phase of the Silangan project with higher mineral resource estimates of 571 million metric tons, up 43 percent from the previously declared levels of 398 million MT for the Boyongan, Bayugo and Kalayaan ore deposits.

The Silangan mine is a large-scale high-grade copper-gold development, with a number of greenfield and brownfield components, located in Surigao del Norte. It is one of three big-ticket mining projects seen to propel the Philippines as a major regional copper producer.

Philex is earmarking an initial \$750 million for the development of the Boyongan ore body, the maiden phase of the project.

Silangan will be developed in phases with the Boyongan deposit to be fully developed within two-and-a-half years and is expected to commence commercial production by the second half of 2022.

The first phase of the Boyongan deposit has an initial estimated mine life of 22 years. For the initial stage, Silangan is expected to yield high grade mineable ore grades of 0.63 percent for copper and 1.2 grams per MT for gold.

The second phase, which will be composed of the Bayugo deposit, is scheduled to undergo preliminary feasibility study for underground sub-level cave mining within the year.

Bayugo is expected to be mine-ready as early as the fifth year from the start of Boyongan's commercial operations.

The remaining substantial mineral resource and inventory including Kalayaan and the remnants of Boyongan will be subjected to future studies.

Philex reported a 29 percent drop in its first semester net income to P391 million amid lower production levels as Padcal nears the end of its



Philex gets OK to use sub-level cave mining method for Silangan project

THE Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) has given the green light for the Philex Mining Corp. to employ the underground sub-level cave mining method for its Silangan mine in Surigao del Norte.

"Philex Mining Corporation is pleased to announce that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), through the MGB, in a letter dated September 26, 2019, has approved the underground sub-level cave mining method in connection with the previously issued Order dated April 10, 2015 approving the Declaration of Mining Project Feasibility (DMPF) of the Silangan Copper-Gold Project of Silangan Mindanao Mining Company, Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Philex, under MPSA No. 149-99-XII," the listed company told the stock exchange on Thursday.

Sub-level cave mining is a mining method that starts at the top of the orebody and develops

downward. Ore is mined from sub-levels with regular intervals.

MGB's approval of the mining method includes the three-year development and utilization work program on the mine from the second half of 2019 to the first half of 2022, as well as the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Program (EPEP), Final Mine Rehabilitation and Decommissioning Plan (FMRDP), and Social Development and Management Program (SDMP).

Philex Mining said the activities under the three-year development and utilization work program for the Silangan mine can now be implemented.

The Silangan mine has three deposit areas, Boyongan, Bayugo, and Kalayaan, the latter a joint venture with Manila Mining Corp. This is expected to be Philex Mining's biggest source of revenue after its 61-year-old Padcal mine in Tuba, Benguet is set to be closed by 2022.

The operation of the Silangan mine was originally set to begin in 2018, but has been moved to 2022 due to the government's ban on new open-pit mining introduced in 2017.

The mining company is also in the process of looking for possible investors for the Silangan project by December 2019.

The first phase of the mine covers the Boyongan deposit, which has an estimated mine life of 22 years. Target date for commercial operations is July 2022.

Philex Mining is one of the three local units of Hong Kong-based First Pacific Co. Ltd., the two other being PLDT, Inc. and Metro Pacific Investments Corp. Hastings Holdings, Inc. — a unit of PLDT Beneficial Trust Fund subsidiary MediaQuest Holdings, Inc. — maintains interest in *BusinessWorld* through the Philippine Star Group, which is controls. — **Vincent Marie P. Galang**



Deeper probe of Semirara incident urged

Residents of Culasi, Antique has been opposing the operation of the SMPC of the pit

By Jun N. Aguirre

KALIBO, Aklan -- The Save Antique Movement (SAM) has asked the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to dig deeper into the mudslide incident at the listed Semirara Mining and Power Corporation (SMPC).

A worker died while working at the Molave Pit recently after a mudslide occurred in the area. The worker identified as Pepito Andapat, was declared dead after his body was discovered two days after the incident.

Bong Sanchez, SAM president said residents of Culasi, Antique has been opposing the operation of the SMPC of the pit.

"Both the SAM and the residents have been opposing the operation of the Molave Pit since it started its operation two years ago because it is an offshore mining. The SMPC just made a temporary reclamation in order to create a barrier or seawall so that workers could mine the carbon in between the land and the sea. That is Molave Pit," he said.

"It is expected that a mudslide would occur anytime because there's a seepage in the area," he added.

He also cited reports of the existing mangroves, coral reefs and sea grasses in the area.



30 tubs of fish found dead at ecotourism site

At least 30 tubs of dead fish were found floating in the Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat Ecotourism Area (LPPCHEA) yesterday morning.

Las Piñas public information office chief Jimmy Castellano told **The STAR** that species such as *sapsap*, *asuhos*, *silinyasi* and flatfish were recovered near the LPPCHEA's Freedom Island.

Officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, as well as the Bu-

reau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), have collected water samples to determine what led to the fishkill, Castellano said.

Among the possible causes are contaminated water and climate change, he added.

Cesar Canoy, Las Piñas agriculture chief, said the recovered fish is valued at P700,000 to P1 million.

BFAR warned the public not to eat the fish pending the results of its investigation.

- Ralph Edwin Villanueva



Men gather dead fish found at the Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat Ecotourism Area yesterday.



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Libu-libong patay na isda ang napadpad sa baybayin ng Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Eco-tourism Area dahil sa fish kill. (Bernardo Batuigas)

Fish kill umatake sa Las Piñas, Parañaque

Nasa 50 banyera ng iba't ibang uri ng patay na isda ang natagpuan sa mga baybaying sakop ng Las Piñas at Parañaque City kahapon.

Ayon kay Jimmy Castillo, Las Piñas City-Public Information Office (PIO) chief, kabilang sa mga nakitang species ang salay-salay, sapsap, salinyasi at banak sa Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area's (LPPCHEA) Freedom Island.

Inireport agad ito ng LPPCHEA sa Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR).

Nabatid na kumuha na rin ng water samples sa eryl ang BFAR at Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) para pag-aralan kung ano ang sanhi ng pagkamatay ng mga isda.

Sinasabi namang pagdi-dinamita ang umano'y posibleng naging sanhi ng fish kill.

Tinaya sa P700,000 hanggang P1 milyon ang halaga ng mga namatay na isda. (*Ludy Bermudo*)



Manila Water hit for rate hike threat

BAYAN Muna on Thursday slammed Manila Water Company Inc. (Manila Water) for its warning that water rates might increase by as much as P26.70 per cubic meter, because of the P1.8-billion penalty slapped on water concessionaires for violating the Philippine Clean Water Act.

Bayan Muna Rep. Carlos Zarate denounced Manila Water's "temerity."

"They were the ones who violated the law yet they have the temerity to pass the fine to long suffering consumers... this is the height of corporate impunity, insolence and greed," Zarate said in a statement.

Bayan Muna Chairman Neri Colmenares said the group would address the issue and "make the water concessionaires accountable for their neglect of the environment."

"Most of us don't have a good sewerage system up until this day. This is supposed to be the job of

concessionaires for many years now. It's not justifiable for them to pass on the fines to us just because they failed to do their job," he said.

The Supreme Court previously upheld a 2009 Department of Environment and Natural Resources order penalizing Maynilad Water Services Inc., Manila Water and Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) for defying the Clean Water Act.

Section 8 of the Philippine Water Act or Republic Act 9275 requires the MWSS and water concessionaires to connect existing sewage lines found in all subdivisions, condominiums, commercial centers, hotels, sports and recreational facilities, hospitals, market places, public buildings, industrial complexes, and other establishments including household to the available sewerage system.

GLEE JALEA

Manila Water sees consumers bearing brunt of SC penalty

By Othel V. Campos,
Rey E. Requejo
and Macon Ramos-Araneta

HOUSEHOLDS in Metro Manila face a possible 780 percent increase in their water rates, Manila Water warned, while a fifth of all areas in Mindanao remain without electricity.

Manila Water cautioned the Supreme Court that water rates could shoot up 780 percent if the justices fine it P921 million for alleged violations of the Clean Water Act.

The Court had fined Manila Water for failing to complete its sewerage projects by 2009, or five years after the Clean Water Act took effect, and slapped on an additional running daily fine of P322,102 until the projects are completed.

In a motion for reconsideration filed last week, the water concessionaire said

Next page

780%...

From A1

the decision had no basis and urged the Court to reverse its ruling, saying its rates could go up by as much as P26.70 per cubic meter.

The company argued that Section 8 of the CWA did not require the completion of the projects, but merely the interconnection of existing water lines to available sewer lines.

The law, it added, also penalizes only the polluters or their positive acts of commission. An act of omission such as a failure to interconnect is not punishable.

If the concessionaires were to compress into five years as the Court ruling wants, what was planned as a 40-year project, the hundreds of billions of pesos required would lead to an increase in the water bill of subscribers, leaving them less money for other necessities and triggering higher inflation.

Worse, traffic is also expected to worsen, since hundreds of kilometers of roads, including EDSA, which are part of the Manila Water's East Zone, would have to be dug up all at the same time.

The daily loss of P3.5 billion caused by existing traffic congestion could balloon significantly, it said.

Senate Majority Leader Juan Miguel Zubiri, for his part, challenged Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi and other department officials to join him in parts of Mindanao that have no electricity yet. To know how difficult life without electricity can be, he suggested they stay for a week in unenergized places, without a refrigerator where they can store their food.

In a budget hearing, Zubiri said the low electrification rate in Mindanao

was disturbing, given that the region had the highest incidence of insurgency.

"When the barangays and sitios are unenergized, they're living in abject poverty and darkness," Zubiri said.

Based on the Energy Department presentation, 78.2 percent in Mindanao has electricity—which means more than 20 percent has no electricity. In the Visayas, 94.1 percent have electricity; in Luzon, 100 percent have power.

Administrator Edgardo Masongsong of the National Electrification Administration acknowledged that many places in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, Zamboanga Peninsula, SOCCSARGEN and Davao have no electricity.

Meanwhile, the Court also ruled that the approval by the Energy Regulatory Commission of Manila Electric Co.'s unbundled rates, its appraisal of its properties and its rate hike of P0.168/kwh in 2014 were in violation of its mandate to protect the interest of consumers.

In an en banc decision authored by Senior Justice Antonio T. Carpio, the Court partially granted the petition filed by National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms Inc. (Nasecore) seeking to nullify ERC's order issued on June 21, 2011 upholding its decision issued on May 30, 2003, which granted Meralco's application for unbundled rates.

The ERC sided with Meralco's arguments that the rate increase was intended to cover its growing operation and maintenance expenses, which include leased properties on customer premises, construction work in progress, and building plants for future use.

But the Court nullified the adoption by the ERC of the current or replace-

ment cost in the valuation of Meralco's asset base, and remanded the case back to the agency for a proper determination of the power company's assets.

In particular, the Court ordered the ERC to determine whether expenses directly and entirely related to the operation of a distribution utility should be passed on wholly or partially to the consumers, in order that electricity would be provided to consumers in the least costly manner.

The tribunal ruled that ERC's approval of Meralco's unbundled rates was in violation of its statutory mandate to approve rates that will provide electricity to consumers "in the least cost manner."

Consumer advocate Romeo Junia lauded the ruling, calling it "a tectonic shift in rate regulation that will benefit consumers and captive consumers."

"The Court practically overturning the ERC determination of the opening regulatory asset base favors consumers. The asset base of Meralco increased to P134 billion from about P66 billion because of a novel valuation system that ignored historical cost of the assets. The rate of return also increased to 14.9 percent from the 12 percent cap, raising Meralco return on capital from P3.2 billion under RORB to over P20 billion today," Junia said.

"The SC order for ERC to go back to the asset base valuation could reduce the rates by a significant amount. The directive for ERC to consider the parameters whether expenses that are not directly and entirely related to the operation practically overturns the Performance Based rate setting adopted by ERC to replace RORB (Return on Rate Base), and restores the 12 percent cap on return set under RORB," he added.



10-11-99

Water rates could surge ninefold

METRO Manila (CNN Philippines)— Manila Water warned that water rates could surge to nearly ninefold following the nearly P1 billion fine slapped on it by the Supreme Court for its failure to set up sewerage systems a decade ago.

In a statement, the private firm serving Metro Manila's east zone said they will be pushed to raise water rates by 780 percent or around 26.70 per cubic meter (cu.m.) if the high court's ruling "is not reversed."

The high court in August charged Manila Water and west zone concessionaire Maynilad fines of P921.46 million each for their failure to put up sewerage systems in their service areas, citing provisions of the Clean Water Act, which took effect in 2009. The requirement

was made to ensure proper disposal of waste water.

Manila Water currently imposes an average basic charge of 28.52/cu.m., coming from an 0.69/cu.m. approved by regulators in September.

The Ayala-owned con-

cessionaire filed an appeal before the SC on October 2, asserting that Section 8 of the law only required Manila Water, Maynilad, and their regulator Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System to just "interconnect the existing water lines" of their cus-

tomers to available sewer lines.

"The law... also penalizes only the polluters or their positive acts of commission. An act of omission such as a failure to interconnect is not punishable," Manila Water said.



ALOKASYON NG TUBIG PARA SA MWSS MANANATILI SA 40CMS NGAYONG BUWAN NG OKTUBRE

ANG National Water Resources Board (NWRB) ay nagbigay ng alokasyon na 40CMS sa unang araw ng Setyembre 2019 sa Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) at sa mga konsesyunaryo nito, Manila Water at Maynilad, ngunit mananatili sa 30cms metro kubiko bawat segundo alokasyon ang ipatutupad para sa Irigasyon.

Base sa ulat, ang antas ng tubig sa Angat Dam ay nasa 189.73 metro sa araw ng Oktubre 8, 2019, (8:00am), bahagyang bumaba ang water level sa Angat dam, pati na rin sa Ipo Dam mas mababa sa maintaining level na 101 meters.

Ngayong buwan ng Oktubre, mananatili pa ring nasa 40 cubic meters per second (cms) ang alokasyon ng tubig para sa Metro Manila at mga katabing probinsya.

Ayon kay Dr. Seville David, Jr. Executive Director ng NWRB, kailangan pa rin ang pagtitipid sa paggamit ng tubig hanggang sa tumaas ang level ng tubig sa Angat Dam hanggang sa umabot sa end of the year target na 212 meters.

Para sa mga Manila Water at Maynilad, ang 40CMS ay mababa pa rin ito sa normal water allocation na 48 cms dahil nais ng NWRB na maabot ng Angat Dam ang water level na mahigit 210 meters sa pagtatapos ng taon para masiguro ang maayos na supply pagdating ng tag-init sa 2020.

Kaya naman hinihikayat pa rin ang lahat na makiisa sa pagtitipid ng limitadong supply ng tubig.

-ooOoo-

PAALALA MULA SA MAYNILAD

Ito ang mga dapat tandaan at gawin araw-araw

1. Mag-ipon ng tubig na



sapat, o kailangan lamang sa oras na walang tubig, upang maiwasan ang sabay-sabay na heavy withdrawals na makakaapekto sa water pressure sa pipelines.

2. Kapag bumalik na ang water service matapos ang service interruption, padaluyin muna ang tubig ng ilang segundo hanggang sa lumina ito. Gamitin ang unang labas ng tubig sa non-drinking purposes para hindi ito masayang.

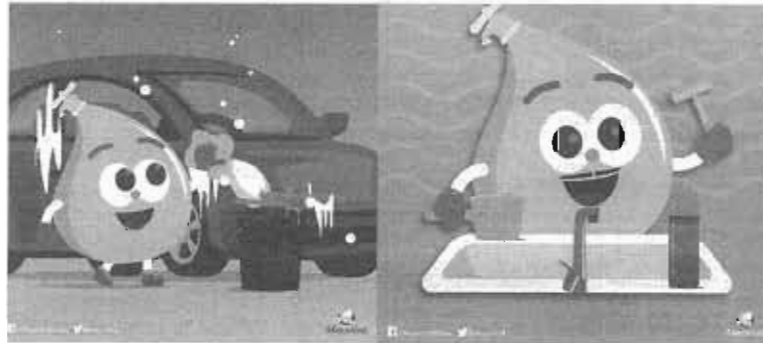
3. Isara ang gripo habang nagsasabon, nag-aahit, o nagsisipilyo. Gumamit ng baso para magmumog. Ito ay makatitipid ng 80% ng tubig na

karaniwang nakokonsumo.

4. Ipinin ang tubig na ginamit sa pagligo o paglalaba dahil maaari itong magamit pang-flush sa banyo.

5. Alam n'yo ba na ang isang oras lang na paggamit ng hose sa paglinis ng kotse ay kumokonsumo ng tubig na higit pa sa nagagamit ng isang pamilya sa isang araw? Kaya makatutulong na balde at basahan na lang ang gamitin sa paglinis ng sasakyan.

6. Sa tuwing ikaw ay nag-aahit at bukas ang gripo, mahigit sa 5 litrong tubig ang nasasayang. Gumamit na lang ng tabo para makontrol ang gamit ng tubig.





Marikina hires 206 street cleaners

By Neil Alcober

At least 206 street-cleaning volunteers were hired by the city government of Marikina as project-based employees of the City Environmental Management Office (CEMO) this year, Mayor Marcelino "Marcy" Teodoro said yesterday.

Most of them have been volunteers since previous administrations, but it is only now they

were given a chance to earn higher.

"We really worked it out so that there will be a budget for their employment, so that they can earn money, and not only an allowance," Teodoro said.

The mayor met with the volunteers last Wednesday to tell them about the good news and sign their contracts making them CEMO employees tasked to ensure the cleanliness of the city.

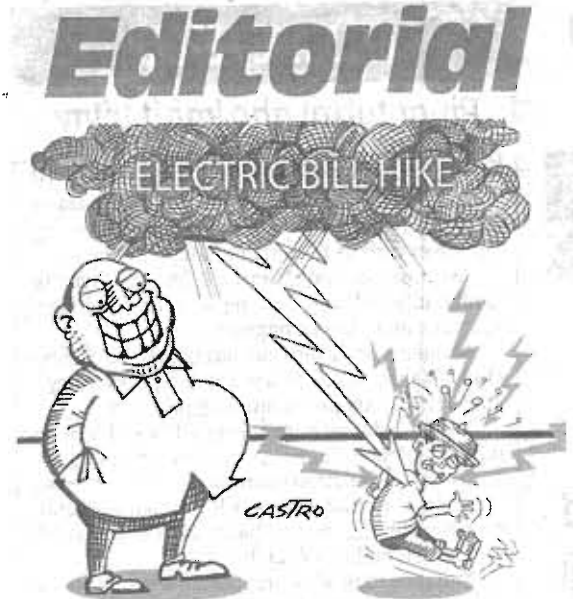
It was learned that most of the volunteers have been working since 2005 or for the past 14 years, rendering four hours community work every day and receiving an allowance of P150.

"If before they only rendered four hours volunteer work, now we will make their duty eight hours so that they may earn the minimum wage. Before they only received about P4,000 monthly allowance, just enough for their fare

and snacks. That's why we did our best to hire them," Teodoro said.

Prior to their employment, they will undergo a skill test in order to assess them. The mayor said they will also have to write an essay on how they could help Marikina, and why they love the city.

The employees will also undergo financial literacy seminars for them to effectively handle their finances.



Sulat kay Editor

Pangalagaan ang kalikasan

Dear **Abante**:

Magandang araw sa ating lahat!

Kasabay ng pag-unlad ng teknolohiya na nakakatulong sa ating pang-araw-araw na pamumuhay, malaki naman ang nagiging kontribusyon nito sa pagkasira ng ating kalikasan. Bali-balita na ang unti-unting pagkatunaw ng mga yelo sa mga malalamig na lugar na nagresulta naman sa lalong tumitinding climate change at pagkawala ng tahanan ng ibang mga hayop. Patuloy pa rin ang walang tigil na pagpuputol ng mga puno at pagkakalbo ng mga bundok. Habang tumatagal, lalong lumalala ang sitwasyon ng ating Inang Kalikasan.

Kung papabayaang lang natin ang ganitong paglapastangan sa ating kalikasan, darating ang araw na tuluyan nang masisira ang kalikasan at mawawalan na tayo ng tirahan kaya't marapat lang na pangalagaan nating ito upang hindi tayo tuluyan mawalan ng tahanan.

Allison ng Cavite



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PANGIL

TRACY CABRERA

Malinis ba ang hangin sa Maynila?

SOONER or later, we will have to recognize that the Earth has rights, too, to live without pollution. What mankind must know is that human beings cannot live without Mother Earth, but the planet can live without humans.

— Cocalero activist Evo Morales

PASAKALYE:

Sanhi ng industrial waste at daan-daang libong sasakyan, laganap ang air pollution sa Kalakhang Maynila at ito ay masama ang epekto sa 98 porsiyento ng ating populasyon sa lungsod. Taon-taon, dahilan ang polusyon ng pagkamatay ng mahigit 4,000 indibiduwal, at ang distrito ng Ermita sa lungsod ng Maynila ang napabilang na pinaka-air polluted dahil sa mga open dump site at industrial waste.

Ito ang situwasyon sa kabisera ng ating bansa, sa kabila ng pagsasabatas ng Republic Act 8749, o ang Philippine Clean Air Act, na bumalangkas ng komprehensibong air quality management policy at programa na ang layunin ay makamit at mapanatili ang malinis na hangin para sa lahat ng mga Filipino. At mahigit isang dekada na nang ipatupad ang nasabing batas, ngunit hanggang ngayon ay nababalot ang Kalakhang Maynila ng smog o usok na tumatakip na para bang kumot ng kamatayan.

Ngunit sa Thailand, hindi hahayaan ng kanilang mga mamamayan na maging katulad ng Maynila ang kanilang kabiserang lungsod ng Bangkok. Inihayag kamakailan ng mga opisyal ng transportasyon ng nasabing bansa na mahigpit nilang ipatutupad ang sinasabing vehicle emissions limits para masolusyonan ang problema ng makapal na smog sa kanilang lungsod.

Ito ang naging dahilan kung bakit napabalik ang Bangkok bilang isa sa mga itinuturong world's most-polluted city.

Kakailanganin ngayong dumaan ang lahat ng mga sasakyan sa smog-check kapag nag-renew sila ng kanilang rehistrasyon at ang mga hindi papasa ay lalagyan ng tanda na sila ay mga gross polluter, ayon kay Land Transport Department director-general Chirute Visalachitra.

Ang totoo, nauna na rito ang Filipinas sa pagsasagawa ng smoke emission test bago marehistro ang alinmang sasakyan. Ang katanungan nga lang ay kung ito nga ba'y talagang naipatutupad.

PARA sa inyong komento o suhestiyon, reklamo o kahilingan, magpadala ng mensahe o impormasyon sa email na filespolice@yahoo.com.ph o i-text sa cellphone numbers na 09054292382 para sa Globe at 09391252568 para sa Smart. Salamat po!



Meralco bans single-use plastic

Manila Electric Company ("Meralco" or the "Company") (PSE: MER) announced that to help save the country's environment, it has banned single-use plastic ("SUP"), polystyrene foam and similar products from all of its premises, activities, and corporate events effective October 1, 2019.

In a statement, **Meralco President and Chief Executive Officer ATTY. RAY C. ESPINOSA** said, "The protection of the environment is a collective obligation that we not only owe to the communities we serve, but more importantly, the future generation. It is, therefore, incumbent upon us to ensure that we integrate sustainability in all areas of our operations and in our workplace to create a positive impact to the environment."

The ban applies to the Meralco Industrial Engineering Services Corporation ("Miescor") Group, CIS Bayad Center, Inc. ("Bayad Center") Group, Meralco Energy, Inc. ("Mserv"), Radius Telecoms, Inc. ("Radius"), MSpectrum, Inc. ("Spectrum"), MRAIL, Inc. ("MRAIL"), Meralco Powergen Corporation ("MGen") Group, and eSakay, Inc. ("eSakay") as well as affiliated companies, Comstech Integration Alliance, Inc. ("Comstech"), Clark Electric Distribution Corporation ("CEDC"), and Shin Clark Power Group effective November 1, 2019.

Meralco's supply chain partners have also been told to ensure full compliance with the ban effective January 1, 2020.

Aside from reducing its contribution of plastic to landfills and marine pollution,

Meralco also aims to educate employees and business partners on the responsible use of plastic for proper disposal for a sustainable economy, and help pave the way for a lifestyle change.

According to a report published by the United Nations Environment Program, the world's ability to cope with plastic waste is already overwhelmed. Only nine per cent (9%) of the nine trillion kilos of plastic the world has ever produced has been recycled. Most end up in landfills, dumps or in the environment. If current consumption patterns and waste management practices continue, then by 2050 there will be around 12 trillion kilos of plastic litter in landfills and the environment.

As the first of many sustainability initiatives, the use of SUP, including polystyrene foam and similar products, is banned from all offices, premises and facilities of Meralco, including operations centers, business centers, subsidiaries, affiliates, and in company events and activities effective October 1, 2019. SUPs covered by the ban include plastic grocery bags, beverage bottles, food service utensils (cutlery, plates, cups, lids, straws, stirrers) and dispensing containers for cleaning fluids.

"Everyone in Meralco is committed to do their part in ensuring that we embrace sustainability as a way of life by greatly reducing our contribution to the million tons of plastics waste that are used and dumped in our water ways, rivers and oceans every day," said Espinosa.



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BSP joins climate change fight in green banking agenda

By Daxim L. Lucas
@daxINQ

The Philippines' top banking regulator on Thursday urged financial institutions to embrace sustainable innovation through the use of technology and so-called green banking initiatives in their lending activities.

Speaking at The Asian Banker's Finance Philippines 2019 forum in Taguig City,

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Governor Benjamin Diokno said the regulator had taken the lead by recognizing the crucial role it played in driving investments that promote climate-resilient, green and sustainable growth.

To this end, he explained the BSP had a two-pronged approach to promoting sustainable finance: capacity-building and awareness campaigns and

enabling regulations.

In capacity-building, the BSP takes part in several domestic and international fora on sustainability, while in enabling regulations, the BSP has come up with a proposed policy framework for sustainable finance.

Some of the highlights of the proposed regulatory framework include requiring banks to integrate environmental and social governance and sustainability

principles in their strategic direction, as well as in their corporate governance and risk management frameworks.

Banks will be required to conduct scenario analysis and stress testing of its business exposures to assess their vulnerabilities over several environmental and social governance scenarios, and results shall be taken into account in their capital planning and business strategies.

Banks will also be required to disclose their sustainability agenda in their annual reports, including risk appetites in the environmental and social governance field.

"Meantime, some banks are already embarking on green finance while regulations on these are under way," Diokno said, explaining that a number of banks had put up sustainable energy finance desks, which served as a point of contact in evaluating and monitoring sustainable energy projects.

"While all these developments in sustainable financing are encouraging, the world is at the beginning of mass extinction due to climate change, and so much more needs to be done," the BSP chief said. "I challenge everyone in the financial services industry, including us regulators, to do more." INQ



Binay bats for 'coastal greenbelts'

SEN. Maria Lourdes Nancy Binay has filed Senate Bill (SB) 1082 or an "Act Establishing the National Coastal Greenbelt Action Plan" to reduce the impact of cyclones on coastal communities.

Citing a report by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the senator noted that an average of 22 cyclones enter the Philippines annually, of which six to seven caused significant damage.

"Thus, coastal communities become vulnerable to such tropical storms due to their natural exposure and lack of resources for preparation and recovery," Binay said.

She cited studies from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization showing that coastal forests and mangroves are more affordable and effective in mitigating damages than artificial sea defenses.

Under SB 1082, the Climate Change Commis-

sion shall bring together all concerned agencies in preparing for an integrated National Coastal Greenbelt Action Plan (NCGAP).

The NCGAP shall identify and designate a coastal greenbelt in priority areas where trees can be planted to prevent coastal erosion.

Local officials in these areas shall prepare their own version of the action plan to facilitate the implementation of greenbelt action plan. **JAVIER JOE ISMAEL**



Ocean warming



IF YOU want to slow the rise in ocean temperature and sea levels, you should probably stop using plastics immediately and cut down on eating meat and agricultural products that consume plenty of water to produce, like rice. And you might have to reduce your travels too.

The use of plastics, meat consumption, and travel contribute to the production of greenhouse gases—the main reason why the world's temperature is rising.

The burning of fossil fuels for energy and animal agriculture are two of the biggest contributors to global warming, along with deforestation.

Globally, fossil fuel-based energy is responsible for about 64 percent of human greenhouse gas emissions, with deforestation at about 18 percent, and animal agriculture between 13 percent and 18 percent (estimates from the World Resources Institute, UN Food and Agriculture Organization, and Pitesky et al. 2009).

According to CarbonBrief, tourism accounts for 8 percent of total greenhouse gas emissions.

The ocean is warming more rapidly, becoming more acidic, and losing oxygen. These trends harm living things under the sea and will impact adversely on food, water, and other benefits from the ocean. Global warming is to blame.

The seas now absorb much of human-generated carbon dioxide, which then affects temperature change. The oceans store 93 percent of that energy which helps keep the planet livable by moderating temperatures.

A higher amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere leads to higher global temperatures, which then results in thermal expansion of seawater and melting of glaciers and ice sheets, says Wikipedia.

The rise in sea levels will affect more than two billion people who live on shorelines, about 800 million of whom live on land that is less than ten meters above sea level. That includes majority of 100-million Filipinos.

Showing a rapid rise in sea level during the past two decades are the western tropical Pacific and the United States northeastern seaboard. The Philippines is in the Pacific Ocean. With a sea level rise within the next

century of 50 cm (20 inches), the US would lose 38 percent to 61 percent of its existing coastal wetlands.

A rise in sea level will have a negative impact not only on coastal property and economy but on mankind's supply of fresh water.

According to the US EPA, "rising sea level increases the salinity of both surface water and ground water through salt water intrusion."

“Here's what it looks like.”

An increase in salinity would threaten aquatic animals and plants that cannot tolerate high levels of salinity.

The *New York Times* report of Sept. 25 points out that “for decades, the oceans have served as a crucial buffer against global warming, soaking up roughly a quarter of the carbon dioxide that humans emit from power plants, factories and cars, and absorbing more than 90 percent of the excess heat trapped on Earth by carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. Without that protection, the land would be heating much more rapidly.”

“Climate change is heating the oceans and altering their chemistry so dramatically that it is threatening seafood supplies, fueling cyclones and floods and posing profound risks to the hundreds of millions of people living along the coasts,” reports the *Times*.

NYT quoted the UN report as concluding: “The world's oceans and ice sheets are under such severe stress that the fallout could prove difficult for humans to contain without steep reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Fish populations are already declining in many regions as warming waters throw marine ecosystems into disarray.”

The September 2019 UN report on warming ocean was prepared by a panel of 100 experts under the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

IPCC's Fifth Assessment Report estimates that the upper ocean (surface to 750 m deep) has warmed by 0.09 to 0.13 degrees Celsius per decade over the past 40 years.

Other processes important in influencing global sea level include

changes to groundwater storage including dams and reservoirs.

Global warming also has an enormous impact with respect to melting glaciers and ice sheets. Higher global temperatures melt glaciers such as the one in Greenland, which flow into the oceans, adding to the amount of seawater.

Meanwhile, billions of pounds of plastic can be found in swirling convergences that make up about 40 percent of the world's ocean surfaces. At current rates, plastic is expected to outweigh all the fish in the sea by 2050, warns the Center for Biological Diversity.

“In the first decade of this century, we made more plastic than all the plastic in history up to the year 2000. And every year, billions of pounds of more plastic end up in the world's oceans. There are now 15 to 51 trillion pieces of plastic in the world's oceans. Not one square mile of surface ocean anywhere on earth is free of plastic pollution,” says the Center for Biological Diversity. Thousands of animals, from small finches to blue whales, die grisly deaths from eating and getting caught in plastic.

When exposed to sunlight, common plastics produce greenhouse gases methane and ethylene.

Fish in the North Pacific ingest 12,000 to 24,000 tons of plastic each year, which can cause intestinal injury and death and transfers plastic up the food chain to bigger fish, marine mammals and human seafood eaters. A recent study found that a quarter of fish at markets in California contained plastic in their guts, mostly in the form of plastic microfibers.

Temperature analysis by scientists at NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies shows that the average global temperature on Earth has increased by about 0.8° Celsius (1.4° Fahrenheit) since 1880. Two-thirds of the warming has occurred since 1975, at a rate of roughly 0.15-0.20°C per decade.

“A one-degree global change is significant because it takes a vast amount of heat to warm all the oceans, atmosphere, and land by that much. In the past, a one- to two-degree drop was all it took to plunge the Earth into the Little Ice Age. A five-degree drop was enough to bury a large part of North America under a towering mass of ice 20,000 years ago,” according to NASA.



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Global warming: A life and death warning

By Johannes Uriel C. Lapat

Who would have thought that a slightly warmer global temperature could cause so much trouble

Experts for decades have warned about our ecosystem being disrupted as Earth's temperature goes up the scale. Weather patterns will change and people will experience the extremes—unusually strong typhoons will get frequent, periods of drought will get longer, a month's worth of rainfall will come in a matter of hours. Water supply and food production will definitely suffer.

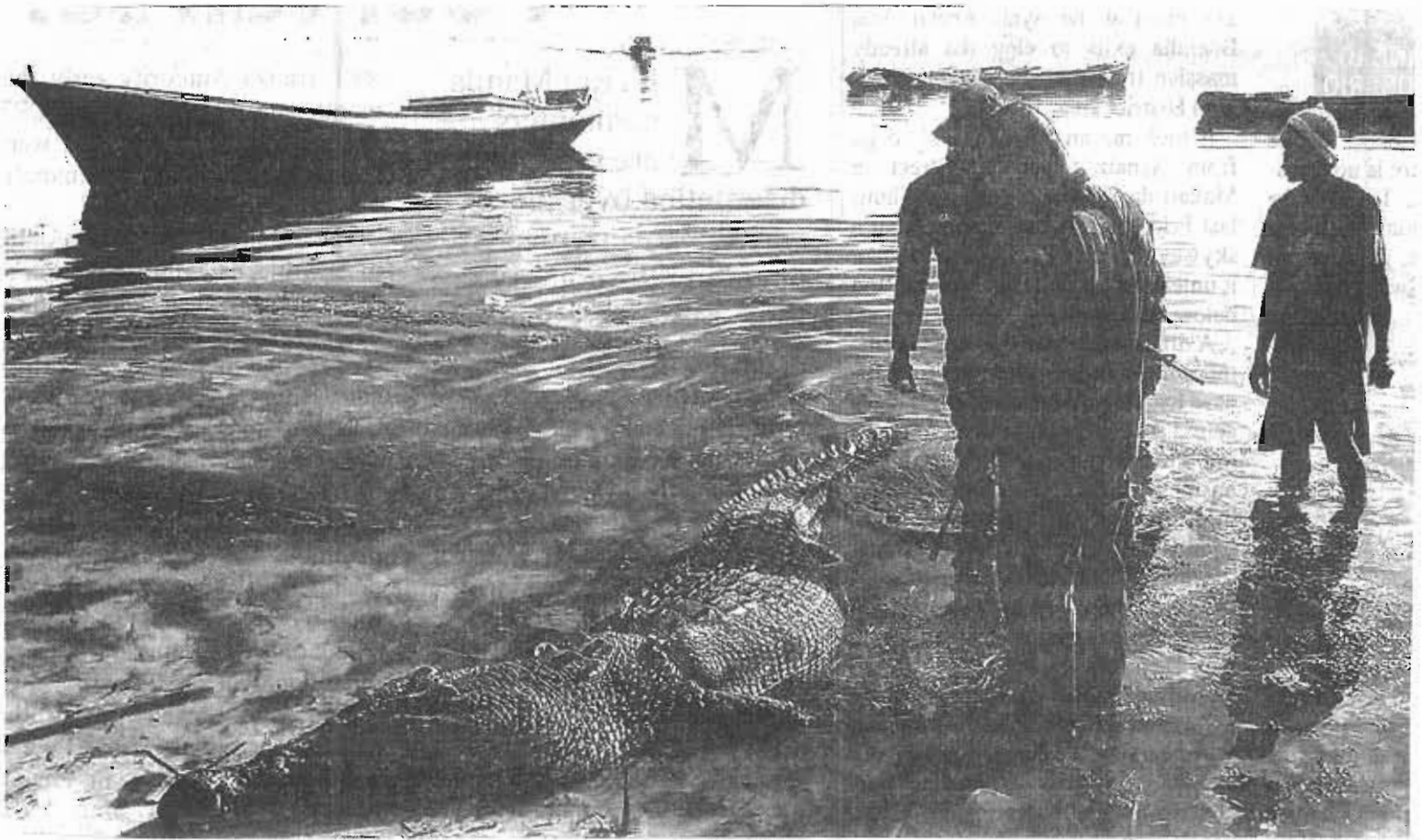
Sea levels will rise as glaciers and polar ice caps melt, endangering the lives of people living in coastal areas. Marine species may face extinction as the warming oceans become more acidic, or the levels of its dissolved oxygen decrease.

All living things therefore, at risk.

The earth's weather and ecosystems would be in better shape if the world's leaders could somehow limit human activities that contribute to the warming—by half a degree Celsius from now, instead of the globally agreed-upon goal of one degree Celsius, according to the Nobel Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Limiting the warning to half a degree Celsius from now means the world can keep a 'semblance' of the ecosystems that we have.

We are facing a dire situation. What we need to heat up is the collective resolve of people all over the world to adopt drastic measures in order to save our home planet.



SALTWATER CROCODILE.

This undated handout photo received on Oct. 10, from the Mimaropa regional police shows police inspecting a 4.9-meter saltwater crocodile after it was killed on the remote island of Balabac. The crocodile killed a fisherman after snatching him from his boat, local authorities said, the latest in a series of attacks terrorizing a remote southern island. **AFP/ MIMAROPA Police**

Recognizing HR management practices

LAST October 7, 2019, Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) President Manny Herbosa invited a group of senior officers to join a recognition event from the Sustainable Business Awards Philippines 2019. We knew we were finalist in one of the awards, but we were delighted when it was all over. We won in a category that gave recognition to our people, Best Workforce.

The Sustainable Business Awards was initiated "to validate and celebrate the companies which are leading the way in sustainable business and have truly instilled this objective into their long-term business strategy. It also aims to inspire all businesses, large and small, to make sustainability the foundation of their corporate mission and brand," I quote Tony



FINEX FILES

BENEL LAGUA

Gourlay, chief executive officer of Global Initiatives.

The awards are open to companies of all sizes from start-ups to multinational enterprises and currently covers six countries in Asia.

The last time such awards were given in the Philippines was five years ago. Initiated by Global Initiatives, the vetting process is through the Philippine Business for the Environment and Price Waterhouse Cooper, with a distinguished academe-industry-government panel.

In 2014, the bank received two special recognition. First is in Land use, Biodiversity and Environment in relation to DBP's Corporate Social Responsibility Forest Program, a non-credit program that aims to stop denudation

► Finex B3

and restore the country's forest cover through organized collaboration with government and non-government organizations, state universities and colleges, people's organization, and other qualified forest partners.

The second recognition received in that same year is in Energy Management. DBP is the first Philippine bank to receive an international certification for its Environmental Management System (EMS) under the ISO 14001 standard. It finances not only clean energy projects, regardless of scale, but also to ensure their potential partners' commitment to the environment by requiring its borrowers to submit environmental compliance documents. DBP is also transparent regarding its environmental policy, energy management monitoring and analysis, as evidenced by its sustainability reports. Furthermore, energy man-

agement initiatives are embedded in the company's day-to-day operations..

This year's award is truly special because it recognized the men and women of DBP. It validated the bank human resource management practices to be at its finest, despite the limitation of the strict guidelines of being part of government.

What made HR in DBP to be one of the best are the guidelines and policies enacted in behalf of the common good among all its employees. For example, the Merit Selection Plan is devised to apply Equal Employment Opportunity Principle (EEOP) in the recruitment and selection of potential candidates as well as in promotion. As of June 2019, the bank's manpower is dominated by 65-percent female, almost 50 percent are millennials and 1 percent of total employees belong to ethnic groups such as Cuyunon, Igorot, Ibanag and Tausug, to name a few. The diversity of beliefs exercised in DBP is also imminent with 30 percent belonging to denominations other than Roman Catholic.

The bank's policy on diversity and inclusion is translated into good practice.

In order to ensure that employees' needs are met, and key personnel are retained, the bank conducts an Employee Climate Survey to measure the degree of satisfaction of the employees on variety of issues that affects them. It also provides an avenue for open feedback and identification of issues and potential problems. With regards to the employee's union, a regular general assembly are held with them in order to properly address issues and get inputs to policy enhancements and recommendations. The recent survey yielded positive results.

Aside from that, the bank also supports career progression of the employees by providing continuous training and development opportunities for employees across all levels. This includes certification program, licensure for specialized roles, scholarship grants both local and abroad, implementation of coaching and mentoring programs, educational support

schemes for professional advancement and continuing education.

In terms of health and well-being, the bank consistently holds events on various health topics. There is also a dedicated team that focuses on the welfare of the employees. An annual physical exam is scheduled to ensure that everyone is fit to work. This has also become an avenue to identify ailing employees who are assisted to get medical intervention right away. The bank has also organized sports activities, gym and physical fitness classes to help employees maintain their health and fitness.

The bank adapted a flexi-time working policy to relieve employees from stress brought about by traffic and provide ample time for them to spend with their families. We have mechanisms for employee grievance. Leadership continuity is addressed through succession planning. As we say in our Credo, "we belong to the DBP family," We try to instill a sense of belonging for all.

It is of course a consolidated effort. While DBP has pro-active Human Resources (HR) Management

Group, we believe HR is everyone's responsibility and we engage all sectors. As our tagline states it, "we build possibilities" not only in terms of prospects for our clients to achieve financial inclusion and to finance major development projects. More importantly, we take care of our employees who serve as the lifeblood of DBP.

We realize there are many things we need to further enhance in the HR field so that we can serve best our constituency as a development finance institution. We still have flaws to correct. But to be recognized this way, especially in the light of the competition that joined the awards, provides with more motivation to better empower our people.

Benel D. Lagua is Executive Vice President at the Development Bank of the Philippines. He is an active FINEX member and a long time advocate of risk-based lending for SMEs. The views expressed herein are his own and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of his office as well as FINEX.

Rehab made Boracay Asia's best island, says DOT

By TARA YAP

ILOILO CITY – The six-month closure was worth it, after all.

Department of Tourism (DOT) Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat said Boracay island's six-month closure and rehabilitation last year has helped catapult it to being voted as Asia's best island by a luxury travel magazine.

"Boracay's rehab is worth it. We are getting high-valued clients," Puyat said Thursday on the sidelines of the launching of Iloilo City as a destination for meetings, incentives, conferences/conventions, and exhibitions (MICE).

"Based on social media, the hashtag for Boracay is generating good news,"

Puyat added.

The resort island in Malay town, Aklan province re-emerged on the Reader's Choice list of Condé Nast Traveler a year after welcoming back tourists.

It can be recalled that no less than President Rodrigo Duterte ordered the six-month closure of Boracay in 2018, even referring to the popular tourist destination as a "cesspool" due to a host of environmental problems.

But a lot has changed in the island since then, with Condé Nast describing Boracay in Western Philippines as "as close to a tropical idyll as you'll find in Southeast Asia, with gentle coastlines and made-for-Instagram

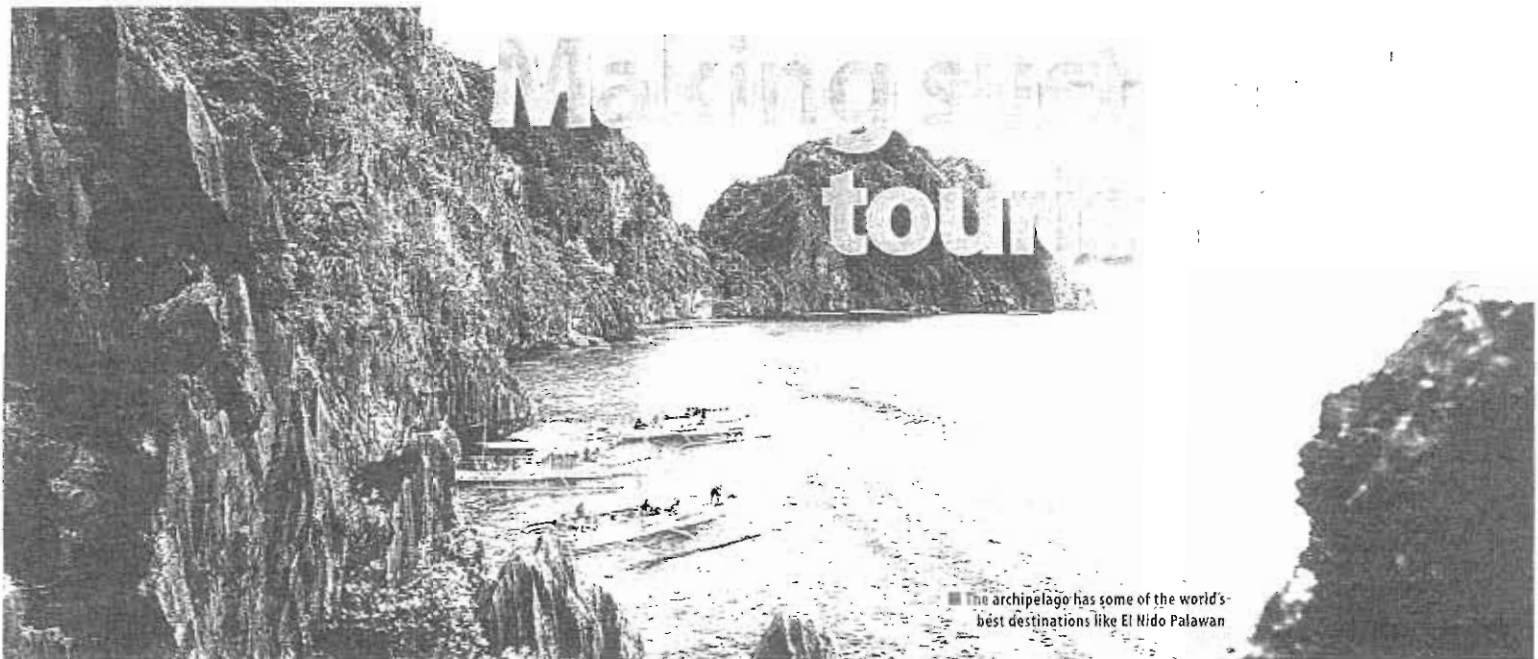
sunsets."

The magazine adds that "the aptly named White Beach is Boracay's main draw, with powdery white sand and shallow azure water ideal for swimming and snorkeling."

While Condé Nast's citation has put Boracay back on the world tourism map, Puyat stressed that the country's other island destinations should also be given due credit.

"We're always happy, but Boracay is already popular and well-known. We also want to highlight other destinations. We have 7,641 islands," Puyat added.

Also in Condé Nast's list are Palawan and Cebu.



BY GAB MEJIA

THE Philippines is a tropical paradise with verdant rice terraces, vast blue oceans, white sand beaches, coves, dive sites and surfers' havens, which last year brought in an estimated 7.1 million visitors from around the world.

The archipelago has some of the world's best destinations rightfully garnering awards from publications such as Conde Nast Traveler, which voted Siargao as the "2019 Best Island in the World." Boracay and El Nido meanwhile, were listed among the top 25 best beaches in Asia in TripAdvisor's 2019 Traveler's Choice Awards.

Tourism has opened numerous opportunities for the Philippines and contributed substantially to

the economy

Measured in terms of Tourism Direct Gross Value Added, it contributed about P2.2 trillion or 12.7 percent to gross domestic product last year.

The boom has been supported by the rise of digital technology and accessibility of travel and tourism is expected to continue growing significantly for the foreseeable future.

Last year, tourist arrivals rose by 7.7 percent based on government data. The sector provided an

estimated 5.4 million jobs. Tourism is now considered the "third leg" supporting the economy after overseas Filipino worker remittances and the business process outsourcing sector.

There is, however, another face to the coin. Environmental concerns have long been aired and last year the government stepped in by dramatically ordering the temporary closure of Boracay. Left unaddressed, environmental issues could make this "third leg" the economy's weakest pillar.

Two questions need to be answered: What is the Philippines' main tourism "product"? Where is the added socioeconomic value of tourism going? It is easy enough to reply "natural and cultural heritage" but without the white beaches of Boracay, the surfers' paradises of Siargao and La Union, the karst limestone landscapes of Palawan,

the beautiful Tubbataha reefs, Banawe rice terraces and perfect cone of Mayon Volcano, there may not be much else to lure people.

Growing demand will see a greater influx of visitors but this should be thoroughly studied in terms of geographic distribution. Where are majority of tourists going and do these destinations have the capacity to host such a volume of visitors?

Planning and preparation to cope will have to include the provision of efficient facilities. Note that inadequate waste management caused algal blooms and led President Rodrigo Duterte to brand Boracay as a cesspool.

Strict protocols and regulations should be implemented monitored and geographic distribution and the carrying capacity of the environment must be primary considerations. One way to do this is by putting in place a centralized

online booking system similar to that used by the National Park System of the United States, where it is mandatory for tourists to sign up before heading to a nature reserve.

More so, a centralized system would make it easier for authorities to monitor the state of a certain destination, and to readily enforce environmental laws if any of the tourists commit any acts inimical to the environment: laws that are hardly enforced in the Philippines.

Masungi Georeserve, an international award-winning geotourism park found just outside Metro Manila, is one successful case of sustainable tourism. It recently won an award from the United Nations World Tourism Organization for its modeling of the tourism enterprise into a three-pronged approach anchored on protection of the site, education of the local population and visitors, and

sustainable development through geotourism.

According to one of Masungi's founders, "you have to know concretely what you are trying to sustain or conserve in the first place. It has to be localized and be built on the resources and biodiversity of the tourist destination around which your enterprise revolves. You can't just rely on general water catchment systems and energy savings to truly call it sustainable, but all efforts have to be grounded on what the destination has and its specific conservation needs."

In order to make tourism a sustainable enterprise, it should be focused on the destination and the locals living in these places, the communities, wildlife and indigenous people. Has last year's P2.2 trillion pesos and 5.4 million jobs really benefited the Philippines and Filipinos?



Boracay dubbed Asia's best island

Iloilo City – No less than Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat of the Department of Tourism (DoT) considered the rehabilitation to have catapulted Boracay Island being voted as Asia's best island by a luxury travel magazine.

"Boracay's rehab is worth it. We are getting high-valued clients," Puyat said Thursday at the sidelight of the launching of Iloilo City as a destination for meetings, incentives, conferences/conventions, and exhibitions (MICE).

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The resort island in Malay town, Aklan province re-emerged on the Reader's Choice list of Condé Nast Traveler a year after welcoming back tourists as it closed down for a six-month period.

Condé Nast describes Boracay as an "itty-bitty island (just under four square miles) in the Western Philippines is as close to a tropical idyll as you'll find in Southeast Asia, with gentle coastlines and made-for-Instagram sunsets."

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racay's main draw, with powdery white sand and shallow azure water ideal for swimming and snorkeling."

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Also in Condé Nast's list are Palawan and Cebu. **(Tara Yap)**



TITLE

DATE

MATRAPIK talaga kahit saan sa Metro Manila at nadadamay ang mga lalawigan sa paligid nito.

Kung titingnan ang kabuuang problema, nauugat ito sa isang banda sa nakaraang mga administrasyon at panahon.

Mayroon ding saring kontribusyon ang kasalukuyang administrasyon at kalagayan ngayon.

Magkagayunman, hindi tayo dapat na lumihis sa pagsisikap ng kasalukuyang administrasyon na pagaanin o lutasin ang problema sa ating panahon at sa susunod pang mga taon o dekada.

ANG NAKARAAN

Isa sa pangunahing pinabayaan ng mga nakaraang administrasyon ang pag-okupa ng mga mamamayan at awtoridad mismo sa mga bangketa at kalsada para sa kanilang negosyo, ekstensyon ng mga bahay, kawalan ng edukasyon sa batas-trapiko, pag-iral ng pulitika at marami pang iba.

Para malinaw at bilang halimbawa, hindi kaila sa lahat na mismong mga awtoridad gaya ng mga kapitan, mayor, kongresman, pulis at sibilyang malakas ang koneksyon sa mga nakaupo sa gobyerno ang malalakas ang loob na gawing ekstensyon ng kanilang mga bahay o negosyo o parking lot ang mga bangketa at lansangan.

Patil nga ang Simbahang Katoliko, may nakatayong bahay ng mga santo at kapilya sa mga bangketa at kalsada, kasabay ng mga barangay hall, health center, police station at iba pa na umookupa rin sa mga ito.

Kapag kinanti ng mga makatwirang politiko ang mga ito, malamang na hindi sibak sila sa halalan kaya sa halip na ipatupad ang batas, pinababayaan na lang ang lahat na angkinin ang mga bangketa at kalsada.

Dito kinakitaan ang mga nakaraang administrasyon ng labis na pagkakamali at pagkukulang laban sa trapik na minana at pinoproblerma na natin.

BAWIIN LAHAT

Pagdating ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte, pinasisibak ang lahat ng omookupa sa mga kalsada at bangketa.

Sakop man ang mga ito ng mga pamahalaang barangay, bayan, lungsod, lalawigan, rehiyon at nasyunal.

Makaraan ng 60 araw na deadline, ma-



ULTIMATUM

Ni BENNY ANTIPORDA

TRAPIK MALULUTAS AT MALULUTAS KUNG...

raming kalsada at bangketa ang nalinis.

Kaya, ngayon lang natin nararanasan ang pagluwag ng mga ito para sa mga motorista at pedestrian.

Kung meron mang mga lokal na pamahalaan na nagtagumpay at hindi natakot sa resbak bago pa man dumating sa eksena si Pangulong Digong, isa na rito ang Marikina City sa panahon ni noo'y Mayor Bayani Fernando.

Tingnan ninyo, ang Marikina lamang ang nakaabot ng 100 porsyentong pagkamit ng zero "bara" sa loob ng 60 araw na deadline ng clearing operations.

Kung nagawa lang kahit noon pa ang Mayor Fernando style at Mayor Digong style sa pagsasaayos sa problema kahit sino ang masagasaan, malaki sanang puntos ang mga ito laban sa trapik.

ALAMIN

Ang totoo, kung matiyaga lang ang mga motorista sa pag-alam sa mga kalsada sa mga looban na lumaya na kahit papaano sa mga bara at dumaan sa mga ito, malaki na ang ikagiginhawa nila laban sa trapik.

Halimbawa, ang galing sa North Luzon Expressway ay magaan nang daraan sa ilang kalsada sa looban ng Bagong Barrio papasok sa Caloocan hanggang Maynila na marami na ring napalayang kalsada sa mga bara.

Hindi nila kailangang magpatali sa NLEX-Bonifacio Avenue na talagang masikip dahil sa ginagawang Skyway.

DAGDAG NA PROBLEMA

Malaki na rin ang ikinaiiba noon at ngayon dahil sa pagdami ng mga sasakyan, malalaki man o maliliit.

Halimbawa, panay ang pag-apruba ng Land Transportation and Franchising Regulation board ng mga sasakyan para sa Grab, taxi at iba pa at libo-libo ang mga ito.

Mayroon na ngang mga kompanya ng sasakyan na nag-aalok ng "No Downpayment" lalo na sa 4-wheel vehicle kaya bumabaha ang mga sasakyan sa kalsada ngayon.

Lumaki at humabang na rin ang mga malaking trak. Yun bang umaabot na sa 28 wheeler ang mga cargo truck ngayon na bumibiyaha at napakabagal kung tumakbo at bawal sa mga maliit na kalsada at tumawid sa mga 10-20 tons na bridge lang kaya katabi na ng mga maliit na sasakyan.

MGA REMEDYO

Ang maganda ngayon, malaki ang ibinawas ng giyera sa droga sa disiplina ng mga tsuper.

Malaki ang ibinawas ng mga tsuper na nag-sa-shabu sa kanilang biyahe at dahilan ng mga aksidente at kawalan ng disiplina sa mga tsuper na nagbubunga ng trapik.

Napakarami rin ang mga ginagawang bago at nire-repair nang mabilis na kalsada at tulay na magpapaluwag ng trapik sa kalaunan.

Noon, ang paggawa at pag-repair ay kinokorap ang mga pondo na nagbubunga, halimbawa, ng napakahabang panahon ng paggawa at taunang pag-repair sa mga nagawa na dahil pawang mga standard at nagbubunga lahat ng matagal na trapik.

May mga nadatnan at may mga bagong ginagawang imprastraktura at dahil malaki ang ibinawas ng korapsyon, inaasahang magaganda na ang mga ito, matatapos pa ng maaga kaysa inaasahan.

Pansamantala, natutunan na rin ng mga mamamayan ang gumamit ng motorsiklo at bisikleta, kahit delikado, upang nasa oras ang kanilang biyahe.

Kumplikado, sa totoo lang, ang problema pero kung pailralin lang ng gobyerno ang kamay na bakal para timplahin ang galaw ng mga mamamayan at opisyal ng gobyerno, may kalutasan sa problema ng trapik ngayon at sa susunod na mga dekada.

Labis na napakahalaga rin dito ang kooperasyon at pag-unawa ng mga mamamayan.

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