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# DENR

## IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



# Ecija forest ranger dies a day after gun attack

By **STEVE A. GOSUICO**

**SAN JOSE CITY** - A day after he was shot by a still unidentified gunman, a 43-year-old forest ranger of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources died from three bullet wounds after undergoing emergency treatment at a private hospital in Cabanatuan city on Saturday night.

DENR provincial chief, Joselito Blanco said forest

ranger Ronaldo Corpuz, of Zone 6, Bgy. Villa Joson here, assigned at the DENR-CENRO Muñoz Science City office, finally succumbed from three gunshot wounds in the chest at the Premiere General Hospital on Oct. 26.

His death came a day after he was shot by an unidentified motorcycle-riding gunman while closing the gates of their house here at 7:35 p.m. Friday.

Blanco theorized that his killing was work-related. "May mga kuwento na related sa job niya ang pagk-

abaryl sa kaniya," he told this reporter, using his FB messenger yesterday.

Blanco and CENRO-Muñoz head Florencio J. Lalu visited the wake of their fallen subordinate on Sunday night here. DENR regional executive director Engr. Paquito T. Moreno Jr. is also planning to visit his wake to sympathize with his bereaved family, he said.

Prior to his death, the PENRO official said Corpuz was allegedly instrumental in the apprehension of a truckload of illegally-

sawn timber, consisting of 472 board feet of Gmelina wood specie, loaded in a mini-Elf truck with plate number XFS-834 in Bgy. Portal, Rizal.

In that operation which was conducted on October 22 or three days before the shooting, Blanco, quoting a report sent by Lalu to the DENR regional office, said that three men aboard said truck were apprehended and slapped with violation of Section P.D. 705 before the provincial prosecutor's office in Cabanatuan City.



By Julie M. Aurelio  
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President Duterte on Monday warned that he would use his "extraordinary powers" to implement the China-funded Kaliwa Dam project in Tanay, Rizal province, as a means to address the water crisis in Metro Manila.

Amid the rotational water interruptions affecting several Metro Manila households and objections to the possible effects of Kaliwa Dam, the President stressed that his primary concern was the people's welfare and that he could not let them go without water.

"You have every right to protest if it really, would place your place in jeopardy. But if the safeguards are there, and between your concerns and the crisis that we are trying to avoid, I will use the extraordinary powers of the presidency to ... I cannot just allow

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WATER CRISIS

PRESIDENT SEES  
POLICE POWER  
TO IMPLEMENT  
DAM PROJECT

# Duterte sees police power to implement dam project

FROM A1

people to go about without water, even for drinking," he said on Monday.

Mr. Duterte made the remarks when asked if he saw the need to expedite the construction of the New Centennial Water Source Kaliwa Dam as an alternate source of water for Metro Manila.

Private water concessionaires Maynilad Water Services Inc. and Manila Water Co. Inc. have recently implemented rotational water interruptions in Metro Manila to ensure that the water in Angat Dam will last until 2020.

Environmental advocates are protesting the construction of Kaliwa Dam, while others are opposing it on grounds that it will displace indigenous peoples.

The President, however, pointed out that his greater concern was the "greatest good for the greatest number," and that what was important was that safeguards were placed while implementing the dam.

"Your concern, like the local governments, it will pollute. I will just say to the one handling it, you just place the safe-

guards. It might create some danger or damage but that is not my concern. My concern is the welfare. The greatest good for the greatest number. That is democracy," he said.

### Angat Dam

Maynilad and Manila Water last week started implementing rotational water interruptions in Metro Manila after Angat Dam's water level fell to 186.23 meters, or below the normal level of 210 meters.

At 8 a.m. on Monday, the water level had dropped to 185.28 meters above sea level (masl), down 0.11 meters from the previous day.

Manila Water said the rationing was aimed at ensuring enough supply of raw water until the summer months and the rest of next year.

More than 90 percent of Metro Manila's water needs come from Angat Dam.

The dam needs between 900 and 1,000 millimeters of rainfall monthly to raise the water level to the normal high of 210 meters, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said.

Only 10 percent, or 29 mm

of the forecast 300 mm rainfall, had flowed into the Angat Dam reservoir from Oct. 1 to 25, said Ana Liza Solis, chief of Pagasa's climate monitoring and prediction section.

Metro Manila and adjacent provinces that rely mainly on Angat Dam for household water endured low supply in 1998 and 2010 as a result of El Niño, according to Sevillo D. David Jr., executive director of the National Water Resources Board.

"What is different is that demand for water has gone up since those times," David said on Monday.

The normal allocation for the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) is a flow of 46 cubic meters per second (cms). Currently, because of the situation at Angat, the allocation is 40 cms.

"If Angat stock does not reach 210 meters by year-end, below-normal allocation to the MWSS might continue until the summer months of 2020," David said.

### Fines

In March, tens of thousands of households in Metro Manila and Rizal province experienced not having water as a result of

rotational water interruptions.

The regulator, the MWSS, fined Manila Water P1.13 billion for its failure to provide customers continuous water supply in its east zone concession area.

The fine was on top of the P353 million in voluntary rebates that the listed company gave its customers in April.

Maynilad was also meted out a fine—P2,500 for every affected connection or household in portions of a barangay in Las Piñas for its failure to supply water.

In March, the President called MWSS, Maynilad and Manila Water officials to Malacañang and scolded them over the water shortage, which was a result of El Niño.

Asked on how he would use his extraordinary powers amid the looming water crisis, the Chief Executive said he might resort to using the "police power of the state."

"Expropriation, or outright police power. Straight away. You just go to court and file a case if you want. I am there, and I will start to find a way to connect the water to the people," he said. —WITH REPORTS FROM CARMELA REYES-ESTROPE AND RONNEL W. DOMINGO INQ



# PH can still rescind Kaliwa Dam project contract – Palace

By ARGYLL CYRUS B. GEDUCOS

**M**alacañang said the government can still rescind its contract with China for the New Centennial Water Source-Kaliwa Dam Project if it would be proven that the project is disadvantageous for the country.

Presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo made the statement after militant groups doubted that there was really another water crisis in Metro Manila, saying the government may have just been using it as an excuse to push for the dam project.

In his Monday press briefing, Panelo said they are still waiting for the investigation on the Kaliwa Dam project to conclude but said that if it would be proven that the project would put the country at a disadvantage, China would understand if the Philippines decides to back out.

"If the findings will show that it is indeed disadvantageous and is against the interest of the people there, then it can be rescinded," he

said.

"If the findings will show that it is against the interest of our country, I'm sure the Chinese government will understand as it would do the same if it was placed in the same situation," he added.

Over the weekend, Panelo denied claims that the looming water crisis in Metro Manila was just a front so the government can push for the said project. He said the Duterte Administration was not in the business of spreading lies.

Earlier, the Commission on Audit (COA) questioned the selection of the contractor for the Kaliwa Dam project, saying the results of its bidding was in the "guise of being a competitive procurement process."

The COA also said in its report released over the weekend that two of the three Chinese contractors, supposedly, intentionally did not comply with the qualification requirements.

Earlier, Panelo said that if found true, it will be up to President Duterte to decide whether or not to suspend

the contract.

The Kaliwa Dam project in Tanay, Rizal is facing opposition from environmental groups and local officials, saying it would displace Indigenous Peoples and will have an adverse effect on the environment.

The project, funded through a loan from China, will cost \$248 million or ₱12.2 billion to complete.

Earlier, Panelo refused to comment on the request of the parties opposing the said project, saying it was up to Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea to answer. Medialdea earlier said that Malacañang is open to making public the documents concerning the said project if it is not restricted by the Freedom of Information (EOI) rules.

Panelo also said that President Duterte could still stop the construction of the dam if it would be found that the deal is fraudulent.

The China-funded Kaliwa Dam project, aimed to address the water shortage in Metro Manila, is funded by China's Official Development Assistance (ODA) to the Philippines.



# State powers to be invoked for Kaliwa Dam project

With an acute water shortage looming, President Duterte is ready to use his "extraordinary powers" for the construction of the China-funded Kaliwa Dam, which protesting groups warn would cause floods and displace communities.

Duterte said while citizens and environment advocates have the right to criticize the P12.2-billion

project, the "greatest good for the greatest number" is more important than their concerns.

"Let me be very clear to the citizens and all. You have every right to protest if it really would place your place in jeopardy. But if the safeguards are there, and then between your concerns and the crisis that we are trying to avoid, I will use the

extraordinary powers of the presidency," Duterte told reporters yesterday.

"I cannot just allow people to go about without water even for drinking. So your concerns, the concern of the local government is it will pollute... You just place the safeguards. It might create some  
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danger or damage but that is not my concern. My concern is the welfare, the greatest good for the greatest number. That is democracy," he added.

Kaliwa Dam is intended to become a major water source for Metro Manila. Some local officials and non-government organizations are opposed to its construction, claiming it would cause floods, damage the environment and displace communities in Quezon province. Presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo said the Kaliwa Dam project may be rescinded if it is found to be disadvantageous to the Philippines.

The Commission on Human Rights for its part urged the government to be mindful of indigenous peoples (IPs)'s rights and ancestral domain as it pursues the implementation of the Kaliwa Dam project in areas covering ancestral domains of IPs in Rizal and Quezon provinces.

"While we recognize that there is a legitimate concern on water security in Metro Manila, this should not come at the expense of human rights of affected indigenous communities and their land's biodiversity," lawyer Jacqueline Ann de Guia, CHR spokesperson said in a statement issued yesterday.

## Shape up or ship out

Malacañang said Duterte is also ready to take "drastic action" if it is proven that water regulators and private concessionaires did not do anything to avert the water shortage in Metro Manila.

Presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo said it was obvious that the measures implemented by water authorities to address the shortage experienced last March were not enough.

"If they have not (undertaken actions to prevent a crisis) and the consequence of that is this looming water crisis again, then they have not done anything and that factor may compel the President to do something drastic against them," Panelo said at a press briefing.

Such drastic measures may include revoking the contracts of water concessionaires.

"Well, the message again is shape up or ship out. That's what the President has been saying. If you can't do it, then leave," the presidential spokesman said.

Areas served by water concessionaires Maynilad and Manila Water are experiencing water service interruptions due to the drop in water level of Angat and Ipo dams, which was caused by below normal rainfall.

National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr. has warned that supply issues would persist if water authorities fail to develop new water sources.

"We will ask those responsible for this particular problem if there are other solutions outside whatever they have already been doing," Panelo said.

He said it would be up to the President to decide whether to dismiss water officials over the water shortage in the metropolis.

The Duterte administration is pushing for a bill that will create a water department and institutionalize reforms designed to ensure enough water supply.



REF: State powers to be invoked for Kaliwa Dam project

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### Cloud seeding to start

Agriculture Secretary William Dar said cloud seeding operations will be done at Angat Dam to induce more rains and slowly improve the water level.

"We are part of managing this El Niño phenomenon. We are now readying the cloud seeding operations in areas that are having shortfall in rainfall during this time of the year," Dar told reporters on the sidelines of the Rural Development and Food Security Forum yesterday.

The Department of Agriculture-attached agency Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM) is tasked to conduct cloud-seeding operations.

The provincial disaster risk reduction management office of Bulacan has monitored the water elevation of Angat Dam as of 8 a.m. yesterday at 185.28 meters, only 5.28 meters above the 180 meter minimum operating level.

Crispulo Bautista, director of DA Region 3, told **The STAR** that Bulacan farmers are apprehensive that irrigation supply for the coming dry cropping season will be compromised if the water elevation in Angat Dam continues to recede.

The National Water Resources Board maintained the lesser allocation is needed to preserve the dam's water elevation so it can reach the target yearend level of 212 meters.

Because of the lesser allocation, both Maynilad and Manila Water re-implemented daily rotational water interruptions in some portions of their serviced areas since last week.

Maynilad affected areas are Navotas, Muntinlupa, Manila, Malabon, Makati, Las Piñas, Caloocan, Parañaque, Pasay, Quezon City and Valenzuela.

Also impacted are Bacoor, Kawit, Imus, Noveleta and Rosario in Cavite and Meycauayan in Bulacan.

For Manila Water, affected areas are Makati, Mandaluyong, Manila, Marikina, San Juan, Taguig, Quezon City, Pateros, Parañaque and Pasig.

Angono, Rodriguez, Cainta, Binangonan, Antipolo, San Mateo, Taytay, Teresa, Baras and Jalajala in Rizal are also included.

With its current inflow, Metro Manila's main water source may not reach its ideal 212-meter level by yearend.

- With Alexis Romero, Louise Maureen Simeon, Ramon Efren Lazaro, Elizabeth Marcelo, Rainier Allan Ronda



# 'Drastic' steps vs water concessionaires eyed

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

**P**RESIDENT Duterte may be compelled to take "drastic" measures against water concessionaires Maynilad Water Services Inc. and Manila Water Co. should it be proven that they have not undertaken necessary measures to prevent a looming water crisis in Metro Manila.

Malacañang issued the stern warning on Monday after the water concessionaires announced rotational interruptions last week due to low water levels at Angat and Ipo Dams.

"If they have not [undertaken steps] and the consequence of that is this looming water crisis again, then they have not done anything and that factor may compel the President to do something drastic against them," Presidential Spokes-

man and Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo said in a Palace briefing.

Panelo also said it is obvious that the agencies may have not done enough to address the problem considering that Metro Manila is experiencing a second water crisis in just one year.

"Obviously. Otherwise, there would not be a looming crisis," he said.

Asked what are the possible measures would the President may take,

Panelo said the Chief Executive can either scrap the contract or make the water concessionaires accountable as suggested by some senators, noting that it is also up to the President whether heads will roll.

Sen. Imee Marcos has expressed her determination to make both water supply firms answerable for any customer inconvenience as she argued that the two water concessionaires should have adequately prepared for the crisis.

For his part, Sen. Christopher "Bong" Go appealed to water concessionaires not to pass the burden to water consumers, such as the costs that the concessionaires should shoulder.

Meanwhile, the Palace also reiterated that the water crisis is not a front to push for the implementation of the controversial China-funded Kaliwa Dam project.

The Environmental Management Bureau has issued an environmental compliance certificate for the Kaliwa Dam project this month after it satisfied the requirements of the Environmental Impact Statement System.



# Duterte exploring options to pursue Kaliwa Dam project

BY JOCELYN MONTEMAYOR

PRESIDENT Duterte yesterday set aside opposition against a P12.2 billion China-funded water dam project and said he will explore his options, including the possible use of his police powers or other extraordinary powers available to the Chief Executive, to address the issue and eventually prevent a looming water crisis in Metro Manila and nearby areas.

The President, while acknowledging that the Kaliwa dam project "might create some danger or damage, but that is not my concern. My concern is the welfare, the greatest good for the greatest number. That is democracy."

In a chance interview, Duterte said he was well aware of the opposition of some sectors to the dam project but said he was more concerned with the welfare of the majority and greater good that will benefit the greatest number.

"You have every right to pro-

test if it really puts your place in jeopardy. But if the safeguards are there and between your concerns and the crisis that we are trying to avoid, I will use the extraordinary powers of the presidency," he said.

Asked to elaborate how he will use his extraordinary powers, he said he is still "taking stock of my options," including using his police power.

The project, funded through China's Official Development Assistance (ODA), aims to address the water shortage in Metro Manila but environmental, tribal and militant groups oppose it due to its alleged adverse effect on the environment and the threat to displace indigenous and tribal people in the areas of Tanay in Rizal and in Infanta and General Nakar in Quezon.

Militant groups have also claimed that the water supply shortage in Metro Manila and surrounding areas is being exploited by the government to push for the dam project.

Prior to Duterte's statement,

Chief Presidential Legal Counsel and concurrent presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo said the dam project is not yet final and the contract with the Chinese firm to construct the dam may still be rescinded if the project is "indeed disadvantageous and against the interest of the people there."

Panelo said the project is again being reviewed and "if the finding shows that it is indeed disadvantageous and against the interest of the people there, then it can be rescinded".

He expressed confidence that China will understand should the Philippines rescind the contract for the project.

"If the findings will show that it is against the interest of our country, I'm sure the Chinese government will understand, as it would do the same, if it was placed in the same situation," he said.

Duterte said his order to government officials in charge of the water supply situation was to

ensure that water concessionaires "produce water."

Duterte said he does not know how the water utility officials will do it, but he will not allow the people to have no water, especially for drinking.

Panelo warned the two firms that Duterte may undertake "drastic measures" against them should they fail to resolve the water shortage situation.

Panelo did not elaborate what these drastic measures maybe but said the failure of the water concessionaires to prevent a repeat of the water supply problem earlier this year will be a factor in the decision and actions that the President may take against Maynilad and Manila Water.

"I suppose the fact that they have not undertaken corrective measures that will prevent the evolution of this upcoming crisis again would be a factor that would make the President decide on drastic action against them," he said.





# Palace threatens 'drastic action' against water companies

PRESIDENT Rodrigo R. Duterte will take extreme action against water concessionaires that fail to address the ongoing water crisis, up to and including cancellation of their contracts, his spokesman said.

In a briefing Monday, Salvador S. Panelo said water concessionaires need to "shape up or ship out" if they prolong the water crisis in Metro Manila and the government will be compelled to act against them.

"I suppose the fact that they have not undertaken proper measures that will prevent the evolution of this upcoming crisis again would be a factor that would make the President decide on drastic action against them," Mr. Panelo said, noting that Mr. Duterte has previously considered a course of action that includes "*tanggalin yung kontrata*" (contract cancellation).

The two concessionaires responsible for providing water to the capital are Maynilad Water Services, Inc. (Maynilad) and Manila Water Co. (Manila Water).

The crisis began earlier this year when water levels in Angat Dam, the ultimate source of the capital's water, and La Mesa Dam, which is fed by Angat, fell below critical level. Water levels in Angat Dam continue to recede with the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) saying over the weekend that Angat's water level is at 185.64 meters, down 0.23 meters from the day before but still a little above the critical level of 180 meters. The weather service added that it forecasts a water crisis in the next two months.

The water shortage experienced in Metro Manila and nearby provinces has prompted both service providers to implement daily rationing as long as 12 hours.

The government is currently moving forward on the Kaliwa Dam Project as a long-term solution for Metro Manila's supply needs, supplementing Angat. The project is set to finish in 2023 and

will be built by China Energy Engineering Corp.

Asked about the Kaliwa Dam project at an oath-taking ceremony, the President told reporters in Malacañang that he is considering the use of "police power" including property confiscation to see the project through, if warranted.

The project has been opposed by legislators and non-government organizations, saying that the construction of the dam will affect the homes and livelihood of indigenous peoples in Rizal and Quezon. Some have also raised questions on the process behind the issuance of an environmental clearance certificate (ECC) by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to the Metropolitan

Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS).

An investigation into Kaliwa Dam is pending in the House.

Mr. Panelo said that if the House investigation shows that it will produce no benefits, the project could be shut down.

"If the findings show that it is against the interest of the people there, then it can be rescinded. If the findings show that it is against the interest of our country, then the Chinese government will understand as it would do the same if

they are placed in the same situation," he said.

He added that a Japanese firm has written to explain the project's drawbacks, and that he has forwarded the letter to the agencies concerned. — **Gillian M. Cortez**





## *Duterte nagbanta vs water crisis*

Nagbanta kahapon ang Malacañang na gagawa ng marahas na hakbang si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte kapag hindi nalutas ng mga water concessionaires ang panibagong banta ng water shortage sa Metro Manila, ayon kay Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo.

Sinabi kahapon ni Panelo na ang kabiguang malutas ang kakapusan sa tubig ay mag-uudyok kay Pangulong Duterte na gumawa ng marahas na hakbang laban sa mga water concessionaires.

Umaasa din ang Malacañang na ginagawa din ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) ang trabaho nito upang maiwasang maulit ang nangyaring water crisis sa Metro Manila.

Inaasahan namang ipapatawag ni Sen. Imee Marcos sa Senado ang mga may-ari ng Maynilad at Manila Water upang

pagpaliwanagin sa nangyayaring water crisis sa Metro Manila at karatig lalawigan.

Tinatayang nasa 15-milyong kustomer ng Maynilad at Manila Water ang apektado ngayon ng water shortage.

Kaugnay nito, hiningi ni Marcos ang komprehensibong master plan ng Maynilad at Manila Water para masolusyunan ang nararanasang water shortage sa Metro Manila at mga karatig probinsya.

Ayon kay Marcos, bigo ang dalawang water concessionaires na maglatag ng plano para naagapan ang krisis sa tubig na nagsimula nitong October 24.

Ipinunto ni Marcos na hindi dapat umaasa lang sa buhos ng ulan sa dam ang dalawang concessionaires dahil tiyak na mas malala pa ang mararanasang problema sa tubig kapag sumapit na ang tag-init sa taong 2020.

"Hindi pa naman summer bakit may water shortage na? Nasaan ang plano ng Maynilad at Manila Water sa nangyayaring water crisis?" tanong ni Marcos.

Samantala, sinabi kahapon ni Buhay Rep. Lito Atienza na, dahil malaki umano ang kita ng dalawang water concessionaires sa bansa, kaya hindi na ito dapat magpatupad pa ng panibagong dagdag singil sa tubig.

Giit ni Atienza, umaabot sa P138 bilyon ang kita ng Maynilad at Manila water mula 2006 hanggang 2019.

Dahil dito, giit ni Atienza hindi na dapat magpatupad ng water rate increase ang dalawang water concessionaires lalo na ang bantang 780% na dagdag singil sa tubig na ikinakatwiran na para sa pagtatayo ng sewerage at wastewater treatment facility. (*Rudy Andal, Malou Escudero at Gemma A. Garcia*)



## Duterte gagamit ng extra power sa krisis sa tubig

Hindi papayagan ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na magsakripisyo ang mga taga-Metro Manila dahil sa krisis sa tubig.

Sinabi ng Pangulo na gagamitin nito ang kanyang extra ordinary powers para hindi magsakripisyo at makunsi-mi ang publiko sa nakaambang krisis sa tubig dahil sa kakapusan umano ng supply ng tubig mula sa Angat dam.

Tinukoy dito ng Presidente ang paggamit ng police power ng estado para i-take over ang mga hindi kayang gawin ng mga taong itinalaga nito para lumutas sa problema.

"I will use the extraordinary powers of the Presidency. I could not just allow people go about without water even for drinking. Im taking stock of my options. Its oppression or outright police power of the state, ganon diretso. You just go to court and file a case if you want. And I will start to find a way how to connect the water to the people.

It has be confiscatoric. talagang aagawin mo, pabayaang walang mainom, just because of what, your environment

will be spoiled? That would not be a good answer to me. I will take over and I will direct what to do. Ganon lang 'yan, hindi n'yo kaya eh sige umalis kayo diyan," anang Pangulo.

Binigyang-diin ni Pangulong Duterte na nagtalaga siya ng mga taong inaakalang makakalutas sa problema at kung wala rin lang magiging silbi ang mga ito ay dapat na umalis ang mga ito sa puwesto.

"I have appointed enough men of equal talent to deal with the problem. I dont know kung saan sila magkuha. Basta sa akin, you produce the water," dagdag ng Pangulo.

Malaya aniya ang sinuman na magsampa ng kaso sa korte kung inaakalang madedehado ang mga ito, pero hindi niya papayagang mawalan ng mainom na tubig ang mamamayan.

"Let me be very clear to the citizens and all. You have every right to protest if it really, if it would place yourself in jeopardy. But I could not just allow people go about without water even for drinking," paliwanag pa ng pangulo. (Aileen Taliping/Prince Golez)



MATAPOS na mabigyan ng environmental compliance certificate (ECC) ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang plano ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) na magtayo ng P18.7-billion Kaliwa Dam project na sasakupin ang mga lalawigan ng Rizal at Quezon ay umani ito ng sunod-sunod na protesta mula sa mga militanteng grupo, mga makakalikasan, lokal na pamahalaan na maapektuhan ng nasabing proyekto, pati na rin ang mga kaututubong tribo na nakapaligid dito.

Sa totoo lang, ang daming isyu na bumabalot sa nasabing proyekto simula't sapul pa lamang na pinaplano ito. Unang-una, tutol ang mga katutubo at lokal na pamahalaan sa nasabing proyekto dahil sa pangamba na malubog ang kanilang komunidad kapag itinuloy ang nasa-

bing bersiyon ng MWSS sa planong Kaliwa Dam. Napakataas kasi ng sukat ng nasabing dam na mag-iipon ng tubig bilang dagdag suplay ng tubig sa Metro Manila.

Dagdag pa rito, ang national heritage na Tinipak River ay maaaring mawala rin sa mapa kapag itinuloy ang nasabing proyekto. Hindi rin daw sinasabi ang buong halaga ng proyekto. Ayon sa MWSS, gugugol daw ito ng P18.7-billion. Subalit ang pinag-uusapan lamang dito ay ang pagtatayo ng Kaliwa Dam. Hindi nila ipinagtatapat na malaki rin ang gagastusin sa sinasabing tunnel kung saan dadaloy ang suplay ng tubig mula Kaliwa Dam patungo sa isang imbakan na planong ilagay sa Tanay, Rizal na magiging treatment plant. Aabot din ng bilyon ang gastos dito. Malayo ang lugar ng Kaliwa Dam sa Gen. Nakar at Infanta, Quezon papuntang Tanay,

## BAKIT BA IPINIPILIT ANG KALIWA DAM?

Rizal kaya malaking gastos din ito.

Isa pang isyu rito ay uutangan ang gagamiting pondo para sa nasabing proyekto mula sa isang malaking bangko sa China. Ang taumbayan ang magbabayad nito sa pamamagitan ng ibinabayad nating buwis. Ang balita ay may alangan pa ang nasabing bangko dahil hindi pa rin malinaw sa kanila kung paano sila mababayaran sa kanilang ipautang dahil nga tila hindi malinaw o nakakukumbinse ang pag-uulat ng MWSS sa nasabing proyekto.

Ang isang pang mabigat na katanungan dito ay naglabas ang Commission on Audit (COA) tungkol sa ginawang proseso ng bidding ng MWSS para sa nanalong kontraktor. Ayon sa ulat ng COA, tila hindi sumunod sa wastong bidding process ang MWSS para sa Kaliwa Dam project. Tila nagkaroon ng kuntsabahan ang tatlong nagsumite ng bidding upang mapaboran umano ang nanalong bidder. Hanggang sa ngayon, wala pa ring linaw ang la-

hat ng mga isyu na bumabalot sa pagtatayo ng Kaliwa Dam.

Kaya ang tanong, eh, bakit pa nila ipinipilit ang Kaliwa Dam project? Oo, naiintindihan ko at malinaw pa sa sikat ng araw na malaki na ang kakulangan ng suplay ng tubig sa lumalaking populasyon ng Metro Manila. Katunayan, nag-anunsiyo ang Manila Water at Maynilad na medyo kapos na sila sa suplay ng tubig kaya nagsagawa na sila ng rotational water interruption sa mga lugar sa Metro Manila. Ang hindi lang natin alam ay kung kasma ito sa plano ng MWSS na maramdaman natin ang kakulangan ng suplay ng tubig upang tanggapin natin ang planong pagtatayo ng Kaliwa Dam. Sana ay mali ako.

Sa kabuuan, maganda ang hangarin ng MWSS. Hindi natin maikakaila na nagkukulang na tayo ng suplay ng tubig sa Metro Manila. Kailangan na tayong makahanap ng karagdagang mapagkukunan ng suplay ng tubig. Tama. Ang kasagutan ay ang Ka-

liwa Dam. Bukod dito may nakaabang na Kanan Dam. Subalit matagal pa ito.

Ang malaking katanungan lang ay ang uri ng dam na ilalagay nila. Huwag naman sanang isakripisyo ang kapakanan ng ating mga katutubo at mga kababayan na mawawalan ng tirahan. Pati na rin ang planong sirain ang isang national heritage site.

Natatandaan ko na may isang Hapon na nagalok ng alternatibong solusyon para sa Kaliwa Dam. Ito ay ang Weir Dam kung saan hindi gaanong mataas ang sukat at hahayaang umagos ang sobrang tubig ng Kaliwa River upang hindi masira ang natural na daloy ng tubig ng ilog. Kaya walang pangamba na malulubog ang tirahan ng mga komunidad doon. Ano na kaya ang nangyari rito? Bakit ayaw itong pag-aralan nang husto ng MWSS? Ang balita ko ay mas mabilis ang konstruksiyon nito at maaaring mabilis na solusyon sa kakulangan ng suplay ng tubig ng Metro Manila. Anyare?



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## ■ Angat Dam water level still down

The water level at Angat Dam has slightly dropped on Monday, and remained around 10 meters below its normal level this time of the year. Based on the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration's (PAGASA) monitoring as of Monday, the water level in Angat Dam has dropped slightly to 185.28 meters from 185.39 meters the previous day. PAGASA hydrologist Edgar dela Cruz said the prevailing low pressure area (LPA) inside the country's area of responsibility has not significantly contributed additional water to the Angat Dam. So far, Angat Dam's water level was still above the reservoir's 180-meter low water level but it was below the 196-meter normal level during this period, he added. He pointed out that Angat Dam still needs about 955 millimeters (mm) of accumulated rainfall to reach its 210 to 212-meter normal high water level before the end of the year. (Ellalyn de Vera-Ruiz)



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**WATER RATIONING** – Hundreds of inmates queue as water is rationed inside the New Bilibid Prison Maximum Security Compound in Muntinlupa Monday. Metro Manila is experiencing water interruptions due to the low levels of water at Angat and Ipo dams. (Jansen Romero)



## POSTSCRIPT

FEDERICO D. PASCUAL Jr.

### Water firms' failure in supply, sewerage

**T**HE TWO giant water firms serving Metro Manila have been raking in billions in profits, yet fail big-time in their basic responsibilities of ensuring a steady water supply and installing sewerage for their 14 million customers.

To top it all, Manila Water Co. and Maynilad Water Services Inc. have the temerity to scare their captive customers that water rates could skyrocket if they are forced to comply with their obligations under the Clean Water Act.



The Supreme Court upheld in August a 2009 Department of Environment and Natural Resources order penalizing the two suppliers and the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System with P1.84 billion in combined fines for violating Section 8 of the Clean Water Act.

Buhay Rep. Lito Atienza who issued the order in 2009 as DENR secretary, noted that while the two firms may be having problems delivering potable water and installing sewerage systems, "they are definitely not having difficulties producing profits for their stockholders."

"Based on our scrutiny of publicly available financial filings," Atienza said, "Manila Water Co. and Maynilad Water Services Inc. raked in an aggregate of P138 billion in net profits from 2006 to June 2019."

He added: "Both firms also rewarded their shareholders a combined P49 billion in cash dividends over the same period. They have no excuse for failing to meet their obligations, including putting up adequate sewerage networks and wastewater treatment facilities."

He assailed the firms' threat to raise rates by 780 percent, or by as much P26.70 per cubic meter, if they are forced to connect all customers to a sewage collection, treatment and disposal system, as mandated by Section 8 of the Clean Water Act.

Some of their billions in profits, he said, came from the 20 percent environmental charge and 30 percent sewer charge that the water firms have been collecting from customers.

"We don't know what they did with the money," Atienza said. "They should have invested revenue from these charges to build sewerage networks and wastewater treatment facilities, but they chose to do something else."

"Over the years, they have been invoking their obligation to provide sewerage networks and wastewater treatment facilities to borrow cheap funding from abroad for 'green' projects," he added.

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

The water firms asked the court to reconsider its order, warning that water rates could hit the roof should they be compelled to pay the fine until they complete the sewerage projects.

#### • Tapping alternative water sources

WHEN the two water providers took over, they were supremely confident that potable water supply would be sufficient, that they would make oodles of money, and could afford to spend for sewerage.

In fact, they also lobbied to compel consumers to shut down other sources of water and become their captive subscribers.

But civil engineer Willy Segovia, who is into construction and realty development, blamed what he said were the water firms' miscalculations and neglect in the last two decades for the water and sewerage crisis in their concession areas. He pointed out:

1. Population and urban growth is well documented, thus water demand could have easily been forecast. Knowing by how much demand would grow, they should have developed new sources of water years in advance.

2. The cost to sewer Metro Manila will be horrendous at today's inflated prices. But if they did their work 20 years ago, the construction cost and appurtenant issues such as traffic, would have been manageable.

Segovia suggested some measures that consumers could take independently of the two water firms, which seem not up to the job anyway:

1. Commercial establishments may set up their own emergency water supply by digging wells. Some large hospitals already have done this. Water from the ground is not potable so it needs to undergo some treatment, depending on institutional water quality requirements.

2. Residential subdivisions connected to both providers can also set up their own wells for emergency. In small subdivisions with minimal traffic, water can be delivered at rates close to what providers charge. This had been done in older subdivisions. It is done in Iloilo and Cebu.

He recalled that before the two providers took over, the MWSS (formerly the NAWASA) was already deficient in supplying water. Many establishments and buildings survived by using their own water wells.

It was government itself, through the National Water Resources Board, that restricted the construction of wells. That improved the business of the two water firms as their consumer base grew rapidly.

But with the failure of Maynilad and Manila Water to provide potable running water 24/7, there is pressure for the system to allow water wells again for domestic use.

Just like some people are partly shifting to alternative sources of electricity from sun and wind, why not with water? Rain water eventually is stored in underground aquifers that can be tapped for selective use in areas not affected by creeping salinity.

The colossal failure of the giant profit-focused concessionaires feeds the argument that supplying water can also be devolved to smaller units, local governments, subdivisions, building establishments and to homeowners.

This decentralization scenario is what the two providers fear most, because their business would be drastically affected. So they have resorted to scaring consumers that rates would soar if the suppliers are forced to comply with their obligations under the law.

\* \* \*



## FIRST PERSON

ALEX MAGNO

### Symptom

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi should not have been in Idlib province in north-western Syria. This was an area dominated by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, an Islamist group formerly linked to Al Qaeda, formerly known as the Nusra Front.



There is no love lost between al-Baghdadi and the fighters of the Nusra Front. They had fought many bloody battles before.

The rival jihadists were fearful al-Baghdadi could take away their supporters. They were responsible for the capture of some of al-Baghdadi's key aides, including the one who gave Iraqi intelligence key information about the terrorist leader's whereabouts.

But al-Baghdadi had little choice. His former base at the ancient city of Mosul has been reduced to rubble and his bastion at Raqqa has been overrun. Vulnerable as he might have been in Idlib, it was the only place he felt he was beyond the reach of American, Syrian, Iraqi and Kurdish forces out to get him dead or alive.

Donald Trump, eager to score a win in a sea of political losses, claims it took two weeks to determine al-Baghdadi's location and launch the commando operation that took him out. The leader of the Kurdish Syrian Democratic Forces, on the other hand, admitted the operation was five months in the making.

The key development appears to be the capture earlier this year of Abu Suleiman al-Khalidi by fighters of the Nusra Front. Al-Khalidi was turned over to the Turkish forces. The Turks eventually turned him over to Iraqi intelligence. From that point on, al-Baghdadi was a sitting duck, monitored by spies on the ground and surveillance equipment from the sky.

To be sure, the elimination of al-Baghdadi is something for all to celebrate. He had led a terrorist movement unmatched in its appetite for brutality. That movement drew strength not only from the fanatical fighters it once had on the ground but also from stray followers it attracted on social media that were willing to undertake violence on their own.

Al-Baghdadi designated himself the "caliph" of all Islamic communities and claimed to be a descendant of the prophet. He began an effort to rebuild the old caliphate that was the Ottoman Empire. When his group controlled territory in Iraq and Syria, they were able to commandeer oil supplies and use the revenue to fund their brand of violence. They were able to influence the actions of fellow travellers from California to Marawi, in part by dangling the possibility of extending financial support to them.

Al-Baghdadi may be dead. But what he represented for his followers is far from extinguished.

This particular terrorist was not known a particularly charismatic nor is he an organizational genius. But he was able to grow a fanatical movement in the interstices of the ethnic and sectarian patchwork of that part of the world he found himself in, using the new power of social media to achieve his goals.

That mad patchwork of ideologies and identities remain basically intact.

### Drought

We have not had a really good typhoon this year. That is the bad news.

At this time last year, the water level at Angat Dam was over 200 meters. That was followed by the brutal water shortage in the dry months that followed.

Today it is barely above the minimum operating level of 180 meters. Since last week, the two concessionaries have enforced water rationing.

No one knows when the Mega Manila area will have sufficient water again. It will probably be years. That is how long it will take to build the Kaliwa River Dam and bring its supplies online. Only new raw water sources will solve the shortage.

The Angat Dam, supplying 98 percent of Mega Manila's water needs, was built when the population it was needed to serve was only a fraction of what it is now. During the El Nino years, the water it holds is chronically short. In the La Nina years, the dam overflows, adding to the flooding problem.

Over many decades, while Mega Manila's population multiplied, no new raw water source was built. Those were the same decades where, under pressure from our debt overhang, the country spent less than half as a percentage of GDP that our neighbors were spending on new infrastructure.

The water problem we now experience was not totally unanticipated. It is pretty much like the traffic congestion we endure. In 1976, a team of urban planners including architect Jun Palafox put out a report detailing exactly what needed to be done to spare the metropolitan area from traffic congestion. Very little of the recommendations were actually done.

The water supply problem was easy to anticipate. The metropolitan population was growing rapidly. As this population became wealthier, their water needs multiplied. But it took too long for the government agencies going.

Building the Kaliwa River Dam was talked about earnestly during the Ramos years. That was a quarter of a century ago. The environmental clearance certificate for this project was issued only last week. It will take several years before Mega Manila wins water relief from this project.

Everything that besets us these days is traceable to a strange syndrome afflicting our systems of governance. Our agencies, it seems, are unable to respond until breakdown happens or a crisis strikes.

That transformer that burned, taking down services in three stations of the LRT-2 is so iconic in this regard. The oil for that transformer was supposed to have been replaced many years ago. But our procurement system appears incapable of accommodating preventive maintenance needs. The breakdown that happened multiplied economic costs and public inconvenience.





### Angat water level dips slightly

The water elevation at Angat Dam in Bulacan slightly dropped yesterday but remains around 10 meters below its normal level this time of the year. Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration monitoring as of yesterday showed the water level in Angat Dam dropped slightly to 185.28 meters from 185.39 meters the previous day. PAGASA hydrologist Edgar dela Cruz said the prevailing low-pressure area inside the country's area of responsibility has not significantly contributed additional water to the Angat Dam. So far, Angat Dam's water level is still above the reservoir's 180-meter low water level but it is below the 196-meter normal level during this period, he added. He pointed out that Angat Dam still needs about 955 millimeters of accumulated rainfall to reach its 210 to 212-meter normal high water level before the end of the year. This is to ensure that the year-end elevation is sufficient to supply multi-requirements on domestic supply, irrigation, and energy in its services areas at least until the first half of 2020. **(Elialyn Ruiz)**



# Prime Water-Villar bubulatlain

Paiimbestigahan ng mga militanteng kongresista mula sa Makabayan bloc ang mga umano'y sweet-heart deal sa pagitan ng Local Water Utilities Administration at ng Prime Water Corporation ng mag-asawang sina dating Senate President Manny Villar at Senadora Cynthia Villar.

Base sa House Resolution No. 10 ng Makabayan Bloc, nakakabahala umano ang pagsasapribado ng mga local water districts (LWD) sa iba't ibang panig ng bansa dahil napa-sa-kamay lamang ito ng monopol-yong estilo ng kompanya ng mga Villar gamit ang Joint Venture Agreement (JVA).

Ayon sa Makabayan bloc, hindi bababa sa 30 LWD na ang napasa-kamay ng Prime Water sa nakalipas na apat na taon gamit ang JVA sa kabila ng umano'y palpak na customer satisfaction sa mga lugar na kanilang sineserbisuhan.

Kabilang na umano sa mga palpak na serbisyo ng kompanya ng pamilya Villar ay ang pagkakaroon ng mabaho at maruming tubig, at tagang singil sa mga customer.

"There were complaints on the quality and supply of water provided by Prime Water, including the non-potable water, intermittent supply, and unreliable billing and meter

reading system," saad ng resolusyon.

Una nang napag-alaman sa ulat ng Commission on Audit na nakakalason umano ang isineserbisyong tubig ng Prime Water sa Guagua, Pampanga base sa 2018 annual audit report nito dahil sa mataas na level ng arsenic.

Ang maximum allowable level para sa drinking water ay 0.01 mg/L. Pero ang mga nabanggit na pumping station sa Guagua na pinapatakbo ng Prime Water ay nakapagtala ng hang-gang 0.023 mg/L - halos doble sa pinayapagan ng gobyerno.

Higit din sa 35 water district, at 100 LWD ang isinapribado ng kom-

panya ng mga Villar ayon kay Ramir Corcolon, presidente ng San Pablo Water District Employees Association, at Water Systems Employees Response (WATER).

Marami na ring empleyado umano ang nasibak sa trabaho sa pagtake-over ng operasyon ng Prime Water. Kabilang sa mga water district na isinapribado ay sa Metro Quezon; Lemery, Batangas; Los Baños, Laguna; Batangas City; Rosario, Batangas; at Daraga, Albay.

Ayon sa Makabayan bloc, napanahon na para silipin ng Kamara kung angkop pa ba na ibigay sa mga pribadong kompanya hindi lamang ang

Prime Water kung hindi maging ang dalawang malalaking water concessionaires dahil sa mga sablay na serbisyo nito sa kanilang mga nasasakupan.

"There is an increasing clamor to reverse water privatization. Many see that there is no way out of the trap of exorbitant water rates and unreliable service unless the concession and joint venture agreements with profit-driven private companies are junked," saad ng resolusyon.

"Congress must initiate legislative measures to reverse water privatization and save the public from the profiteering of big private companies." (JC Cabinhinan)



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**MINING DANCE** Residents of Didipio, Nueva Vizcaya on Monday perform a tribal dance outside the offices of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in their bid to seek for the renewal of mining permits of OceanaGold Philippines Inc. PHOTO BY RUY L. MARTINEZ



## **Pupils learn pawikan conservation at PawiCAMP**

DAVAO City schoolchildren got the chance to learn about sustainable practices and the conservation of marine biodiversity at Aboitiz PawiCAMP, a day camp dedicated to the protection and preservation of sea turtles or pawikan in the area. Situated within the eight-hectare Aboitiz Cleanergy Park (home to the critically-endangered hawksbill sea turtle or pawikan and 66 other animal species) in Punta Dumalag, Davao City, Aboitiz PawiCAMP welcomed last Oct. 11 a total of 30 student-campers from nearby Matina Central Elementary School and Diego Silang Elementary School. The student-campers (and accompanying adults) were taught sustainable community practices for the conservation of the pawikan in the area.



## Wildlife shipment seized in Tandag City

CAGAYAN de Oro City —Police manning a checkpoint in Tandag City on Sunday intercepted a shipment of wildlife bound for the lucrative markets in Manila, police said.

A cursory check on two sports utility vehicles yielded cages of parrots, exotic monitor lizards, and other endangered species at the checkpoint in Barangay Buenavista, Tandag City in Surigao del Sur on Sunday.

Lt. Col. Christian Rafols II, Caraga regional police spokesperson, said when police officers at a checkpoint in Barangay Buenavista demanded a permit to transport wildlife, the three suspects on board the vehicles could not produce any.

Rafols said the police-

men immediately detained the suspects who were identified as Dante L. Toledo, 40, of Barangay Kalumpang, General Santos City, Joel C. Demoral, 38, of Bulua, Cagayan de Oro City, and Jory C. Demoral, 51, of Bankerohan, Davao City.

He said the policemen found cages of parrot, exotic lizards and other endangered species loaded in the vehicles.

Rafols said cases for violation of Republic ACT No. 8485 (Animal Welfare Act of 1998) will be filed against the suspects.

The Asian Development Bank in its March 2019 report estimated the value of illegal wildlife trade in the Philippines at P50 billion a year. —*Inquirer*



AGRIKAS  
DEL SUR

## SURIGAO DEL SUR

### 3 smuggler ng mga ibon arestado

SWAK sa kulungan ang tatlong hinihinalang nanghuhuli ng mga endangered species tulad ng ibon at butiki sa isang checkpoint sa Barangay Buenavista, Tandag City sa Surigao del Sur kamakalawa.

Kinilala ng pulisya ang mga suspek na sina Dante L. Toledo, 40-anyos, Joel C. Demoral, 38 at Jory C. Demoral, 51.

Ayon kay Police Regional Office 13 director, Brig. Gen. Joselito T. Esquivel Jr., nakatakdang kasu-

han ang tatlong suspek ng paglabag sa RA 8485 o Animal Welfare Act of 1998.

Nakuha sa dalawang sasakyan ng mga suspek ang iba't ibang mga species ng hayop na marami ay nanganganib na, kabilang dito ang parrot at exotic monitor lizard.

Mula umano sa Mati City sa Davao Oriental ang mga hayop at patungo sana sa Pasay City nang maharang ng mga awtoridad.

Wala umano naipakitang

mga dokumento ang tatlo para sa mga dala-dalang mga hayop kaya inaresto ang mga ito.

Nakikipag-ugnayan naman ang pulisya sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources para sa paghahain ng kaso laban sa mga suspek at tamang pangangalaga sa mga nakuhang endangered species.

Nasa kustodiya ng Surigao del Sur Police Provincial Office ang mga nadakip.



# Prospects and problems of today's Nat'l Marine Summit

**A** two-day National Marine Summit opens today at the Manila Hotel, attended by leaders of government and non-government organizations concerned with the environment, the maritime industry, and national defense.

The Philippines is an island nation with so many rivers and lakes, gulfs and bays, and interisland seas. Our coastline (22,549 miles) is nearly twice longer than that of the United States (12,383 miles). Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), we have a territorial sea extending 12 miles from our shores. We also have under UNCLOS a 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), in which we have sovereign right to exploit possible gas and other resources in the land beneath the sea. The previous Aquino administration renamed to West Philippine Sea that part of the South China Sea covered by our EEZ.

National Security Adviser Hemogenes Esperon Jr. said the Marine Summit will focus on three concerns – protection of the marine environment, marine scientific research, and a credible defense posture and maritime law enforcement capability.

The Philippines has a solid reputation in marine environment conservation and protection, he said. The summit may push for the declaration of more marine protected areas in the country and look into the possibility of connecting our maritime protected areas with those of our neighbors.

The scientists are concerned with wildlife that flourishes in our waters. Scientists from various nations have been exploring the waters and the underwater features of Benham Rise, which we have renamed Philippine Rise, in the Pacific some 160 miles east of Isabela in Northern Luzon.

In all these activities – fishing, protection of endangered species, the passage of ships of various nations, etc. – it is important that we know our rights and our limitations under international law. Under UNCLOS, our territorial sea extends 12 miles from shore; beyond that are international waters, open to international navigation, open to international fishermen.

We have a 200-mile EEZ, but our rights there are only for the exploitation of resources in the seabed. Foreign ships are free to move within our EEZ; they should, however, inform our government as a matter of courtesy. Vietnamese, Taiwanese, and other Chinese fishermen often come to fish in our EEZ, and they have a right to do so as these are international waters.

When the National Marine Summit is held starting today at the Manila Hotel, it is important that these internationally established rights under the UNCLOS are recognized and respected.

Where we are likely to fall into a problem in the Marine Summit is that posed by China's claim of sovereignty over 80 percent of the South China Sea, based on a nine-dash line surrounding the sea. This claim was rejected by the Arbitral Court in The Hague in 2016, but that decision was rejected by China and there is no means of enforcing it.

The National Marine Summit should be able to accomplish a great deal in the areas of environmental protection, scientific research, and exploitation of resources in our country's many lakes, rivers, bays, and coastal areas. But any defense and law-enforcement stand that the Summit today may try to assert over some islands and waters in the South China Sea will come face to face with China's claim. That is a matter that may be decided sometime the future by international diplomacy.



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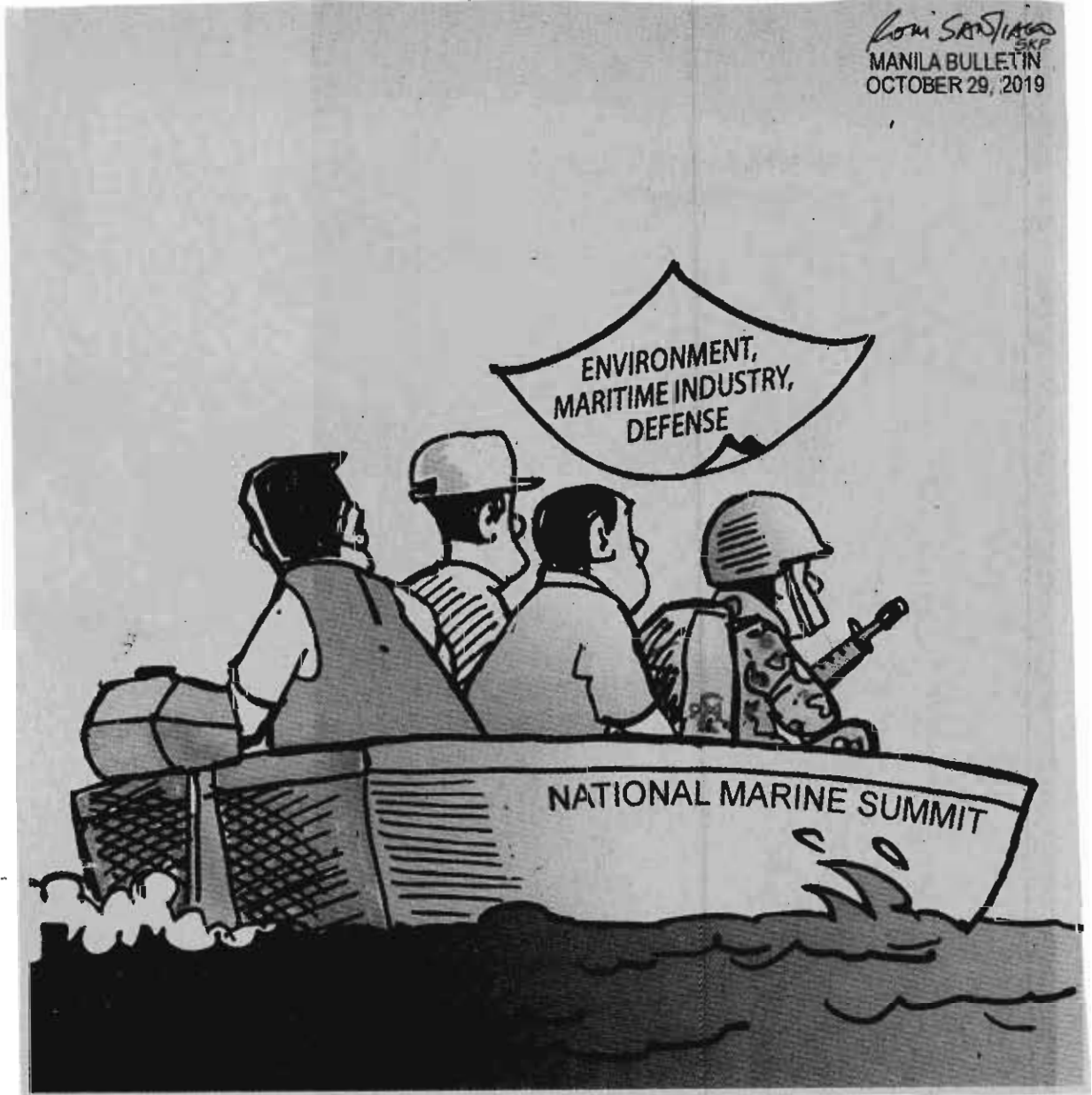
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# Oceans as an investment priority

**O** slo—The Earth's oceans face many threats, none of which have quick fixes. Still, the solutions are known, and with a sufficiently broad coalition of partners, we can get the ball rolling on a number of fronts.

A wide range of human activities—from burning fossil fuels to overfishing—have been degrading the oceans for years. By increasing the absorption of carbon dioxide, global warming is acidifying the oceans and reducing oxygen levels, harming or killing marine plants, animals and other organisms. And as the ice caps melt, rising sea levels are increasingly putting hundreds of millions of people in coastal areas at risk.

Moreover, owing to a lack of modern treatment plants in many cities, especially in Africa and Asia, sewage is being dumped into rivers and canals, where it eventually runs off into the oceans, introducing large amounts of plastic particles and toxins. The tons of trash dumped daily into streets, backyards, rivers, beaches and coastal areas also end up in the oceans. Many of these products, such as grocery bags and bottled-water containers, contain hazardous chemicals that are eaten by fish and then consumed by people, leading to a wide range of health issues.

Fixing these problems will require cooperation at all levels. It will also require new resources, and not just to repair eroded coastlines and prepare for rising seas and extreme weather. We must crack down on illegal fishing, fund research, and develop lower-carbon sea transportation and sustainable seafood production. Moreover, we urgently need to devise better methods of plastic collection and forms of reusable packaging, while improving wastewater treatment and storm-water management to keep plastics and other waste out of the waterways in the first place.

Saving the oceans should not be an af-

## WORLD VIEW

EMMA NAVARRO

terthought. More than three billion people depend on the oceans for their livelihoods. Ocean and coastal resources and industries contribute about \$3 trillion per year (5 percent of world GDP) to the global economy and offer huge potential for further growth, job creation and innovation. Oceans are also a major source of renewable energy and natural resources. Their environmental value is huge. Oceans have taken up between 20 and 30 percent of human-induced carbon dioxide emissions since the 1980s. They produce over half of the world's oxygen, and transport heat from the equator to the poles, thus regulating our climate.

From our side, fostering a sustainable "blue" economy has been one of the priorities of the European Investment Bank (EIB). We have launched several initiatives to facilitate cooperation in cleaning up the oceans and safeguarding marine-based economic activity. Through our Blue Sustainable Ocean Strategy, Blue SOS, we will invest up to 2.5 billion euros (around \$2.8 billion) over five years, while mobilizing at least another 5 billion euros for investments in projects to protect the ocean economy. Among other things, these investments will address coastal erosion, help fisheries process and preserve food, make shipping more environmentally-friendly and improve research into biotechnology products.

Moreover, in partnership with the German and French development banks, we have created the Clean Oceans Initiative, which recently welcomed Spain's development bank as a new partner. This joint initiative is pro-

viding up to 2 billion euros in financing over five years for projects that collect plastics and other waste before it reaches the ocean. Some 90 percent of all the plastic arriving in the oceans from rivers comes from just 10 countries, mainly in Africa and Asia.

Some might wonder why the EIB is pursuing development work outside Europe, or advocating for the world's oceans. The reason is that we see sustainability challenges as not just ecological, but economic. When a big institution like the EIB gets involved in an issue, it can attract private capital that would not have shown up otherwise. When our climate experts give their stamp of approval to a project, that catalyzes more financing from private investors, pension funds, sovereign wealth funds and insurance companies. And when such investors see that they can profit from green projects, the results benefit not just the ocean, but also workers and consumers.

Now, we are looking for more partners. We need leaders, governments, businesses and other institutions to take the bold steps necessary to safeguard our oceans, clean up our rivers and end the pollution of these vulnerable ecosystems. The urgency of the challenge cannot be overstated. We should protect the oceans as if our future depended on it, because it does. *Project Syndicate*

Emma Navarro is vice president of the European Investment Bank.

## NO FREE LUNCH

CIELITO F. HABITO  
IS ON LEAVE.—Ed.





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## Clean the air!

**V**icky Belo, who makes the beautiful irresistible and the not-so-beautiful hopeful, agrees that clean air retards ageing by keeping the skin glowing and the body's organs healthy, skin being the largest organ.

The US armed forces believe in keeping their soldiers strong and stronger even when they're already the planet's strongest, by giving them purified air (the better to combat germ warfare?).

Our cities are not only congested, they're dirty, not only with trash but the very air we breathe, killing us slowly. What's more, the air indoors can be just as or more polluted - sofa, mattress, carpet, paint on walls, tabletops, germs, bacteria everywhere.

Capt. Nikos Gitsis, a Greek-American pilot who founded Seair and has lived in the Philippines for 30 years, has found a new mission without giving up flying, delivering, servicing airplanes. Simultaneous with aviation, he's into clean air by cleaning the air. Philippines, best place to make a vacation last a lifetime, also the best place to clear the air, micron by micron, ion by ion or whatever it is they use to measure air quality. His product has a snooty name, Intellipure, whose inventor-founder

is an American scientist who continues to ardently pursue the holy grail from his lab in Syracuse in upstate New York.

Nick is married to a grandniece of Joker Arroyo, Trina, whose experience with their daughters, ages 3 and 6, convinced her that Nick's latest obsession is the second best thing to owning an iron lung. In the girls' shared bedroom, Trina installed the appliance and discovered that the daughter who was susceptible to catching colds has overcome the tendency while her sister is now able to sleep soundly. Dr. Belo has ordered scores of units for her clients' use during their aesthetic sessions. Nick's supply is running out and will take weeks to replenish. But the one he's about to send to the guy in Malacañang who's wearing a purifier like an ID pendant is here, under wraps.

Trina, speaking like a loyal wife and customer, is not afraid that air purifiers of different brands are already in the market. Her husband's product, she claims, "works 40x better." As Maharishi said, you don't have to understand electricity to know how to click the switch.



**MEDIUM RARE**  
JULIE Y. DAZA



## Medium Rare

Julie Y. Daza

### Clean the air!

**V**ICKY Belo, who makes the beautiful irresistible and the not-so-beautiful hopeful, agrees that clean air retards ageing by keeping the skin glowing and the body's organs healthy, skin being the largest organ.

The US armed forces believe in keeping their soldiers strong and stronger even when they're already the planet's strongest, by giving them purified air (the better to combat germ warfare?).

Our cities are not only congested, they're dirty, not only with trash but the very air we breathe, killing us slowly. What's more, the air indoors can be just as or more polluted – sofa, mattress, carpet, paint on walls, tabletops, germs, bacteria everywhere.

Capt. Nikos Gitsis, a Greek-American pilot who founded Seair and has lived in the Philippines for 30 years, has found a new mission without giving up flying, delivering, servicing airplanes. Simultaneous with aviation, he's into clean air by cleaning the air. Philippines, best place to make a vacation last a lifetime, also the best place to clear the air, micron by micron, ion by ion or whatever it is they use to measure air quality. His product has

a snooty name, Intellipure, whose inventor-founder is an American scientist who continues to ardently pursue the holy grail from his lab in Syracuse in upstate New York.

Nick is married to a grandniece of Joker Arroyo, Trina, whose experience with their daughters, ages 3 and 6, convinced her that Nick's latest obsession is the second best thing to owning an iron lung. In the girls' shared bedroom, Trina installed the appliance and discovered that the daughter who was susceptible to catching colds has overcome the tendency while her sister is now able to sleep soundly. Dr. Belo has ordered scores of units for her clients' use during their aesthetic sessions. Nick's supply is running out and will take weeks to replenish. But the one he's about to send to the guy in Malacañang who's wearing a purifier like an ID pendant is here, under wraps.

Trina, speaking like a loyal wife and customer, is not afraid that air purifiers of different brands are already in the market. Her husband's product, she claims, "works 40x better." As Maharishi said, you don't have to understand electricity to know how to click the switch.

# SBMA seizes portion of Subic theme park

Gov't takes over idle land leased by Ocean Adventure amid contract dispute

By Joanna Rose Aglibot  
@joannaglibotINQ

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—The Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) on Monday took back 100 hectares of undeveloped property that include a forest and bay area, from the company operating the marine theme park Ocean Adventure.

Lawyer Mike Quintos, head of the SBMA legal department, led the agency's takeover of the undeveloped portions that were leased to Subic Bay Marine Exploratorium Inc. (SBMEI), the company running Ocean Adventure and other tourism facilities here.

The repossession of the property came after the 30-day reckoning period for the pretermination order that the SBMA issued against the company on Sept. 27.

According to lawyer Wilma Eisma, SBMA chair and administrator, SBMEI failed to comply with its lease contract and committed violations like illegal subleasing of property, constructing without permit, improper storage of waste and closing of public roads.

## Illegal termination

Eisma said SBMEI also owed the agency about P25 million on its payment scheme as well as P7 million on its current billing.

On Oct. 18, SBMEI filed a case of illegal termination of contract against the SBMA, saying the agency had no basis to declare that SBMEI was "in



**TAKEOVER** A team from the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority posts guards and puts up notices as it takes over sections of an undeveloped area leased by the company operating Ocean Adventure at Subic Bay Freeport. —CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

default under the lease agreement and terminate the lease agreement and repossess the leased premises."

In the complaint, SBMEI also said that even if the supposed violations were true, these were "so minor as to warrant the extreme penalty of terminating the agreement."

SBMEI also asked a regional trial court in Balanga City in Bataan province to issue a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction on the SBMA's pretermination order.

In a statement, Robert Gonzaga, SBMEI president and chief executive officer, said the

SBMA takeover was "the beginning of their (SBMA officials) attempt to shut us down if we don't give in to their unreasonable demands."

Gonzaga said the SBMA was not interested in a negotiated settlement, prompting the company to challenge the foreclosure order in court.

## Offer rejected

He said SBMEI had offered to increase its minimum guaranteed rent by 56 percent and return 100 ha of its property even after the SBMA issued the pretermination notice.

"The SBMA board rejected

this offer after Eisma endorsed pretermination proceedings against the company instead," Gonzaga said.

He also asked the SBMA to refrain from giving the undeveloped portions to prospective investors while a case was pending in court.

While reacquiring a portion of the Ilanin forest and bay area, the SBMA is not immediately shutting down Ocean Adventure and other facilities that SBMEI operates, Eisma said.

She said SBMEI was given two years to slow down its activities at the marine park. INQ



## Gina Lopez Eco Park

A plan to rename La Mesa Eco Park in honor of the late Gina Lopez is a welcome news and a step in the right direction.

Since the protection of our environment was one of her priorities and goals in life, it is just fitting to rename La Mesa Eco Park after her.

For one, she was instrumental in the

reforestation and re-development of the park as it is today.

As a former Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), she fought 'tooth and nail' against the vested interest in the mining sector that led to her ouster as a cabinet secretary.

Awareness of our environment was

Gina Lopez contribution and legacy to our country, our people and future generations to come. — PEDRO V. REFUERZO JR.



# Publiko pinag-iingat LASON SA HALLOWEEN TOYS AT COSTUMES

**MAHIGPIT** na nagbabala kahapon sa publiko ang EcoWaste Coalition, isang environmental organization na mag-ingat sa pagbili ng mga costume, decoration at laruang pang-Halloween, na peligroso sa kalusugan dahil maaaring nagtataglay ito ng mga nakalalasang kemikal.

Nabatid na nagsagawa ng pag-aaral ang grupo hinggil sa mga nagkalat ngayong Halloween products habang papalapit ang Todos Los Santos.

Bumili ang grupo ng 35 Halloween products at luma-

bas na ilan sa mga ito ay hindi nakarehistro sa health authorities, kulang sa mga label, at ang iba ay wala talagang label.

Ayon kay EcoWaste Coalition chemical safety campaigner Thony Dizon, binili ang mga produkto sa halagang P25 hanggang P199 sa 26 tindahan sa Monumento, Caloocan; Quiapo, Maynila; Libertad, Pasay; at Cubao, Quezon City.

Sa pagsusuri sa mga produkto ay nakitang ginamitan ang mga ito ng pinturang

may mataas na lead content.

Siyam na Halloween decorations — partikular ang pumpkin figurine sets, 3 Jack-o'-lantern, at 2 toy animals — ang may lead content na mas mataas sa regulatory limit na 90 parts per million (ppm).

May Jack-o'-lantern ding nakitaan ng 10,000 ppm, na lubha umanong masama sa kalusugan.

Nagpaalala ang EcoWaste sa publiko na maging mapanuri sa mga binibiling produkto. **VERLIN RUIZ**



***SUOT** ang iba't ibang costume, nag-pose ang mga anak ng mga empleyado ng Senado bago magsagawa ng trick or treat sa bawat kuwarto ng mga senador sa Pasay City.*

*Kuha ni **RUSTY ROMAN***



10-29-19

DATE

TITLE:



NI BENNY ANTIPORDA

## KAMATAYAN NI BAGHDADI

SABI ni American President Donald Trump, patay na si Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi na nagtayo at pinuno ng Islamic State of Iraq and Syria.

Dahil dito, sinasabi na rin ni Trump na tapos na ang istorya ng ISIS sa kasaysayan ng mundo.

Napatay umano si Baghdadi sa bandang Syria ng US forces na gumamit ng mga helikopter, eroplano at sundalo.

Sana nga totoo na patay na si Baghdadi dahil, sa totoo lang, mga Bro, ilang beses nang napatay ito ngunit me sa pusa o higit pa yata ito.

Sinasabing may 9 buhay ang pusa.

Pero ipagpalagay na lang nating totoong patay na si Baghdadi, may dapat ipagdiwang ang mahal kong Pinas.

### MARAWI SIEGE

Itong mga pwersa ni Baghdadi ang lumusob at nagnais na itayo ang gobyernong ISIS sa Marawi nitong nagdaang panahon.

Ngunit hindi sila binigyan ng pagkakataon ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

Nagdeklara ito ng martial law at ibinuhos ang pwersa ng military at pulisya laban sa kanila.

Matapos ang ilang buwan, natapos din ang digmaang ikinamatay ng nasa 1,000 katao.

Magkagayunman, patuloy pa rin ang digmaang sinimulan ng ISIS sa Pinas at patuloy silang naghasik ng kaguluhan at lagim saan man sila madpad sa bansa.

Sa gitna ng lahat ng ito, dapat nating ipagdiwang ang sarili nating tagumpay laban sa pwersa ni Baghdadi.

At kung patay na nga siya, para sa mga biktima ng karahasan sa Marawi at iba pang lugar sa mahal kong Pinas, dapat nga tayong magdiwang lahat.

### MAY PROBLEMA

Kaya lang, may problema.

Bago dumating ang ISIS sa Pinas, may terorista na at sa ilalim ito ng Al Qaida.

Nang humiwalay si Baghdadi sa Al Qaida ni Osama bin ISIS.

Heto ngayon, medyo matagal nang napatay si Bin Laden ng mga Kano rin.

Pero buhay na buhay ang Al Qaida.

Ngayon naman, idineklarang dead na si Baghdadi.

Hindi kaya matutulad ang ISIS sa Pinas sa Qaida na buhay na buhay kahit patay na patay na ang lider nito?

Kaya, sa huli, wala pa ring dapat na ipagdiwang.

At ang pinakamarapat na gawin ay ipagpatuloy ang giyera sa mga terorista at pigilan silang mambulag sa iba para sumama sa kanilang maling ipinaglalaman.

☪

Anomang reaksyon o reklamo, maaaring iparing sa 092284-03333 o i-email sa bantiporda@yahoo.com.