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DAY : Wednesday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



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Forest ranger shot dead

By **Jhesset O. Enano**
@JhessetEnanoINQ

Another environmental worker was attacked and killed over the weekend, prompting Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu to call anew for the speedy passage of a measure creating an enforcement bureau within the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to address environmental crimes, such as illegal logging and wildlife trafficking.

Cimatu said forest ranger Ronaldo Corpuz, who was assigned to the community environment and natural resources office in the municipality of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija, became the third environmental worker killed this year.

Corpuz was shot multiple times by an unidentified gunman on Oct. 25 as he was closing the gate of his house. He was rushed to a hospital in Cabanatuan City, where he underwent surgery, but died two days later.

"[These] senseless attacks against forest defenders must come to an end," Cimatu said in a statement on Tuesday.

Three days before the attack, Corpuz, along with other members of Bantay Gubat, had seized 26 pieces of yemane lumber used in construction and carpentry work from three individuals in Rizal town. The suspects were later charged with violation of the forestry code.

Two other state environ-

mental workers were killed in separate attacks this year.

On Sept. 11, Gaudencio Arana, a DENR informant also assigned in Muñoz, was shot dead by two men on a motorcycle.

On Sept. 4, suspected illegal loggers hacked to death Bienvenido Veguilla Jr. in the jungles of Palawan province after his team seized the chainsaw they used. Five of the six suspects were arrested and charged with murder. INQ



Cimatu renews call for Enforcement Bureau

This senseless attacks against forest defenders must come to an end

Secretary Roy A. Cimatu has called for the swift passage of a measure that would establish an Enforcement Bureau within the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) as another Forest Ranger from Nueva Ecija died two days after being shot several times by an unknown assailant.

Cimatu condemned in the strongest terms the killing of Forest Ranger Ronaldo Corpuz, who was assigned at the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) in the municipality of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija.

Reports reaching the DENR central office in Quezon City showed that Corpuz was shot multiple times while he was closing the gate of their house at around 7:35 p.m. on 25 October.

Corpuz was then brought to the Premier Hospital in Cabanatuan City, where he underwent surgery to remove the bullets from his body. He, however, was declared dead on 27 October.

"This senseless attacks against forest defenders must come to an end," Cimatu said, as he called on the police to go after Corpuz's killer.

Corpuz was the third environmental worker killed this year.

Arana, a long-time DENR informant also assigned at CENRO Muñoz, was gunned down by two motorcycle-riding assailants on 11 September.

On 4 September, suspected illegal loggers stabbed DENR Forest Ranger Bienvenido Veguilla Jr. to death using a jungle bolo in El Nido, Palawan. Five of the six suspects have already been arrested and charged for murder and violation of Presidential Decree 705 or the Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines.

Cimatu said the death of these forest defenders call for the immediate passage of a measure creating the DENR Enforcement Bureau.

"The proposed bureau will primarily benefit our foresters who are exposed to various risks and dangers when they perform their tasks on the field," Cimatu pointed out.

Last 24 October, Cimatu designated Undersecretary Jim Sampulna to head the newly-created Office of the Undersecretary for Enforcement and Special Project.

Prior to his death, Corpuz – together with members of Bantay

Gubat – conducted a surveillance operation against timber poaching and illegal transport of forest products in Barangay Portal in Rizal town on 22 October.

The team had seized 26 pieces of Yemane lumber, locally known as Gmelina, with a volume of 742 board feet from three individuals, who were charged with violation of Section 77 of PD 705.

Cimatu had earlier vowed to do everything in his power to protect DENR workers from "fearless, cunning and greedy" individuals who destroy the environment for their own selfish interests.

Appearing at a budget hearing in the House of Representatives, Cimatu asked lawmakers to pass a law that would create an Enforcement Bureau in order for the agency to effectively stop environmental crimes, such as illegal logging and smuggling of wildlife species.

The DENR chief also asked Congress to come up with a legislation authorizing forest rangers to carry firearms to protect themselves against illegal logging syndicates and other environmental criminals.



Holistic approach to rehabilitate Manila Bay sought

By ERMA R. EDERA

A holistic approach should be considered for the rehabilitation of Manila Bay to sustain its marine resources. **►9**

Rhodora Azanza, president of the National Academy of Science and Technology, stressed this Tuesday during the first day of the first-ever National Marine Summit 2019 at the Manila Hotel.

"It seems that there should be more coordination and approach for the management in the Manila Bay. Because for a large marine ecosystem, there should be a well-managed ecosystem," Azanza said.

She added that there is already a management in place in the Manila Bay but it should apply a holistic approach.

"They should consider the entire bay because the current system would affect the distribution of garbage. The science behind the system is more important to consider. In the near future, we would be more holistic in planning and management of our marine environment," she emphasized.

Azanza also suggested the creation of a specific department to manage the country's marine resources.

"There is no agency focusing in relation to the development of blue economy. We should get more benefits from what we have, to protect the economic bays, which is the marine environment. We need to have a responsible department," she said.

"The Philippines has a lot of properties, natural resources in our territories valued very well in the past because we were concentrating on our man-based natural resources. We are rich in marine resource and we have to tap them for the good of the Filipinos," she added.

"A strategic archipelagic framework and a pragmatic international cooperation are needed to enhance benefits within and beyond its areas of natural jurisdiction and the evaluation and management of opportunities and

risks should be institutionalized," Azanza said.

Undersecretary Jose Luis Alano, the National Coast Watch Center (NCWC) executive director, bared that the development for sustainable use of the country's marine assets is being neglected.

He said the national marine policy needs an amendment but it is a "forward looking and landmark document."

"Indeed, the Philippines is blessed with beautiful islands. However, ironically, the development of these sustainable use and management of the country's marine assets are largely being neglected," Alano said.

On the other hand, Merlie Jimenez-San Pedro, chairperson of the Marine Summit Movement for Maritime Philippines, said her group is committed to supporting more inclusive and sustainable maritime communities in the country.

"We welcome the new inputs from experts and resource persons who can

provide new perspectives and data we need to develop and manage areas in marine resources," she said.

Meanwhile, Senior Deputy Executive Secretary Michael Ong said the Philippines should develop and embrace its "archipelagic nature" to utilize the marine resources.

"We are an archipelagic nation and this geographical fact brings us vast advantages that we have yet to fully exploit," Ong said in his speech on behalf of NCWC chairman and Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea.

"The sooner all of us embrace our archipelagic nature, the faster we can use our seas to our own advantage," he added.

The theme for the two-day national marine summit is "Harnessing Opportunities of a Blue Economy: Achieving a Sustainable Socio-Economic Growth and National Security."

The summit is attended by stakeholders from the government, non-government organizations, environmentalists, scientists and maritime industry organizations.



Duterte: Abolish Pasig River agency

By **ALEXIS ROMERO**

President Duterte yesterday called on Congress to abolish the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC), believing it no longer has a function to perform.

"If Congress is listening, abolish it. There is nothing

to clean in the Pasig River," the President said during the

oath taking of new appointees at Malacañang.

The PRRC is an inter-agency body mandated to ensure that the Pasig River is rehabilitated to its historically pristine condition to make it conducive to transport, recreation and tourism.

Last month, Duterte dismissed PRRC executive director Jose Antonio Goitia due to alleged corruption.

He later on declared that Pasig River would no longer be restored to its pristine state because of the establishment of new factories and

the booming population.

"You can't clean Pasig because we do not have zoning. People go to Pasig even during the time of (national hero Jose) Rizal and the Spaniards," the President said in a speech delivered last Sept. 18.

"Over the years, factories sprung up...how you can you clean that? So I will dissolve this commission, place it under (environment secretary) general (Roy) Cimatu, in the DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources)," he added.



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Pasig River panel up for abolition

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte has asked Congress to abolish the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission, saying there was nothing to do with the body of water since "it is already clean."

President Duterte had previously said that the river was "impossible" to revive.

"If the Congress is listening, congressmen—abolish it. There is nothing to clean in the Pasig River. It is already clean," Duterte said during the oath-taking of new government officials in Malacañang on Monday night.

"We are wasting time. You are paying people for nothing. They cannot do anything. The Congress better use the money to buy rice or medicines."

In September, Duterte said he would dissolve the PRRC and put it under the Environment department as he believed the river was "impossible" to revive.

That month, he also fired PRRC chief Jose Antonio Goitia over corruption allegations.

The PRRC is tasked to implement programs and projects to revive the polluted Pasig River that is connected to the Laguna de Bay and Manila Bay, which is undergoing a massive rehabilitation program by a special task force led by the DENR.

The commission was formed in January 1999 under an executive order signed by then President Joseph Estrada.

Duterte appointed Goitia in 2017 to lead the agency, but he said Goitia had spread word about his supposed appointment as Customs collector and asked money from the people within the agency.

In August, Duterte signed EO 90 transferring the chairmanship of the PRRC from the Budget department to the DENR.

MJ Blancaflor



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ANG TINDI NG GALIT NI P-DUTERTE KAY GOITIA AT SA PRRC — Matapos sibakin ni P-Duterte si Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) Executive Director Jose Antonio Goitia dahil sangkot

daw ito sa korupsiyon, ipinag-utos na ng pangulo sa Kongreso na buwagin na ang PRRC dahil sayang lang daw ang pondong nakalaan dito.

Siguro, ang laki ng halagang kinurakot ni Goitia sa PRRC kaya ang

tindi ng galit ni P-Duterte sa kanya at pati ang ahensiyang kanyang dating pinamumunuan ay nadamay, period!



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Pasig River commission pinabubuwan ni Digong

Pinabubuwan na sa Kongreso ni Pangulong Duterte ang Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC).

Sinabi ng Pangulo sa mensahe nito sa oath taking ng mga bagong opisyal ng gobyerno, hindi na kailangan ang PRRC. Malinis na ang Pasig River kaya hindi na kailangan ang rehabilitasyon ng ilog kaya gusto na niyang ipabuwan ito.

Noong September ay sinibak ng Pangulo ang namumuno sa PRRC na si Jose Gotia dahil sa isyu ng corruption.

Sinibak ng Pangulo si Gotia dahil pinagkakalat daw nitong lilipat siya sa Customs bilang district collector.

"He's telling people he will be appointed Customs collector, and already was collecting," wika ng Pangulo noong September speech nito. *(Rudy Andai)*



DENR chief tells public: Keep cemeteries trash-free

TWO days before the traditional "Undas" (All Saints' and Souls' Day), Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu again reminded the public of their responsibility to keep cemeteries and memorial parks free from trash.

"We can make the observance of Undas more meaningful if we keep the final resting place of our loved ones litter-free," Cimatu said.

He said showing respect for the dead also means keeping cemeteries clean.

Under the law, a person caught littering could be fined from P300 to P1,000 or render community service.

"Let us honor our departed loved ones the proper way and that is to leave them with our prayers and not

with our trash," the DENR chief said.

Meanwhile, Cimatu reminded local government units (LGUs) of their duty to enforce Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

"LGUs have the primary task of enforcing the provisions of RA 9003," he pointed out.

An estimated 30,000 tons of garbage is generated in the country every day, with 8,000 tons produced in Metro Manila alone. The volume shoots up during public events.

"The LGUs need to step up its implementation of RA 9003 as people continue to generate huge volume of garbage during Undas, practically turning graveyards into littering sites," he said.

Joel dela Torre



DENR five stays unbeaten



EMERSON Oreta (left) of the DA Food Masters goes for a basket against the PhilHealth Plus during their UNTV Cup game at the Pasig City Sports Center. The former UST star scored 18 points in the team's 88-65 win.

Games Nov. 6
(Pasig City Sports Center)
4 p.m. – NHA vs DENR
5:30 p.m. – SSS vs DA
7 p.m. – PNP vs GSIS

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) went full throttle in the final and quarter and clobbered Judiciary, 86-65, to stay unbeaten in Group B elims of the 8th UNTV Cup held over the weekend at the Pasig City Sports Center.

With the Ralph Lansang, Desiderio Ayson, Ed Rivera and Arturo Atablanca hitting their targets even from afar, the DENR Warriors steadily pulled away from a 50-50 count and won pulling away for its third straight win in as many outings.

Lansang expectedly led the Warriors with 18 points, Ayson and Rivera added 17 and 16 points, respectively, while Melvin Bangal chipped in 14 – the bulk coming in a mighty fourth quarter onslaught that saw them outscore the Magis, 36-15.

In the other Group B action, National Housing Authority demolished GSIS, 80-68, while Department of Agriculture got back on winning track with an 88-65

drubbing of PhilHealth in the lone Group B match of the event organized by UNTV president and CEO Dr. Daniel Razon.

The chosen charity of the champion team in the annual event for public servants gets P4 million (tax free) with the runner-up's charity receiving P2 million.

The NHA Builders of coach Bennett Palad drew another inspired game from Marvin Mercado to improve their record to 3-1.

Mercado finished with 15 points and seven boards while Jose Adolfo added 12 points.

The scores:

DENR 86 – Lansang 18, Ayson 17, Rivera 16, Bangal 14, Atablanca 7, Abanes 4, Gamboa 4, Mamac 3, Parreño 3.

Judiciary 65 – Tolomia 19, Bergonio 12, Dela Cruz 12, Malinao 5, Ybañez 5, Dionisio 4, Mustre 4, Litonjua 2, Roma 2.

Quarters: 18-16, 30-35, 50-50, 86-65.

NHA 80 – Mercado 15, Adolfo 12, Vitug 11, Prado 9, Lustestica 9, J. Dizon 6, Alastoy 5, M. Dizon 4, Sumayang 3, Crisostomo 3, W. Tibay 2.

GSIS 68 – Banzali 25, Laurel 8, Hernandez 8, Gementera 7, Gonzalez 6, Bunyi 4, Cacatian 4, Dorato 4, Dela Cuadra 2.

Quarters: 21-16, 40-24, 58-41, 80-68.

Agriculture 88 – Fernandez 20, Oreta 18, Dematera 17, Casaysayan 11, Mastelero 9, Mayran 5, Comercias 4, Silva 4.

PhilHealth 65 – Aldave 25, Mazo 16, Pacheco 9, Hernandez 5, Malana 3, Emata 3, Armojallas 2, Hierro 2.

Quarters: 21-18, 44-33, 62-49, 88-65.



UNTV: DENR STAYS CLEAN

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First game

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Quarterscores: 18-16, 30-35, 50-50, 86-65.

Second game

NHA (80) - Mercado 15, Adolfo 12, Vitug 11, Prado 9, Lustestica 9, J. Dizon 6, Alastoy 5, M. Dizon 4, Sumayang 3, Crisostomo 3, W. Tibay 2.

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Third Game

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PhilHealth (65) - Aldave 25, Mazo 16, Pacheco 9, Hernandez 5, Malana 3, Emata 3, Armojallas 2, Hierro 2.

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KALIWA DAM: DUMAGAT LEADER STANDS GROUND VS DUTERTE THREAT

FROM A6

Tena reminded Mr. Duterte that there was a legal process that must be met before any government project could be implemented.

"And as President of the country, you are expected to become an example and model of

every Filipino in obeying the law. But with your intransigence and threatening declaration, you are setting a bad example to all," he said.

Threat nothing new

Tena is part of the Samahan ng mga Katutubong Agta/Dumagat-Remontado na Binabaka at Ipinagtatangol ang Lupaing Ninuno.

Fr. Pete Montallana, chair of the Save Sierra Madre Network Alliance, saw "nothing new" in the President's threat to use police powers.

In an open letter, the Prelature of Infanta priest said Mr. Duterte had been using his extraordinary powers by placing retired military and police officers in government agencies to pressure the indigenous people

and local government officials who listened to those against the dam project.

"Had you respected the process established by law to protect the people and the environment we could have government agencies that really did their job well but your contract with China muddled everything," Montallana said.

China Engineering Corp.

bagged the contract for the P18.7-billion dam project, which the government earlier said would be funded with loans from China.

Communist rebels have vowed to launch attacks to stop the construction of the dam project.

"The CPP (Communist Party of the Philippines) calls on the NPA (New People's Army) to de-

fend the people against Mr. Duterte's armed minions," Marco Valbuena, CPP public information officer, said in an online interview on Tuesday.

The NPA is the CPP's armed wing.

Valbuena condemned Mr. Duterte's threats "to seize by force the people's lands and forests." —WITH A REPORT FROM

JHESSET O. ENANO INQ

'A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH FOR US'

KALIWA DAM: DUMAGAT LEADER STANDS GROUND VS DUTERTE THREAT

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
@dtmallarijrINQ

LUCENA CITY—An indigenous community leader in Sierra Madre has assailed President Duterte's threat of using "extraordinary powers" to implement the P18.7-billion Kaliwa Dam project, which is touted as the solution to the water shortage in Metro Manila and adjoining provinces.

"We will not be cowed by any threats or warnings. What we are fighting for and protecting is a matter of life and death for us," Dumagat leader Marcelino Tena said in a phone interview on Tuesday.

On Monday, the President said he would use all the powers of the presidency for the construction of the Kaliwa Dam project in Quezon

and Rizal provinces.

Environmentalists, indigenous groups and local government officials are against the project.

Tena insisted that Sierra Madre's indigenous people who would be displaced would not give free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) to the project.

The law requires that proponents of a project that would affect the ancestral land, territories and natural resources of an indigenous community must first secure their FPIC.

'Fake consultation'

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) has expressed concern over reports of fake consultation with and approval by indigenous communities of the dam project.



RIVER OF LIFE Ramil Astubesa, a Dumagat, takes a dip in Kaliwa River, where a dam will be built at the boundary of Barangay Pagsangahan, General Nakar town, and Barangay Magsaysay, Infanta town in Quezon province. Dumagat communities in the area will be inundated so that water could be supplied to Metro Manila. — RICHARD A. REYES

In a statement, the CHR urged the government to be "mindful" of its obligation in implementing development projects in areas covering an-

cestral domains of indigenous peoples in the provinces of Rizal and Quezon.

"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," said the agency's spokesperson, Jacqueline de Guia.

"Apart from displacement of local communities and the Agta-Dumagat-Remontado population, the commission warns the government of the possible irreversible damage to the biodiversity of the Sierra Madre and the Kaliwa Watershed, which is a declared forest reserve and wildlife sanctuary," De Guia said.

Once the project is implemented, she said, it would be a "direct violation" of the National Integrated Protected Areas System Act, as hundreds of species would lose their natural habitat.

At present, the FPIC process is still ongoing. Five of six clusters of indigenous communities in Quezon province have already voted against the project.

Challenge to NCIP

The CHR called on the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), which oversees the FPIC process, to ensure that genuine and rights-based processes of securing the consent of affected communities were followed.

It asked the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, which issued an environmental compliance certificate for the Kaliwa Dam project, to see to it that environmental laws and standards in human rights would be respected.



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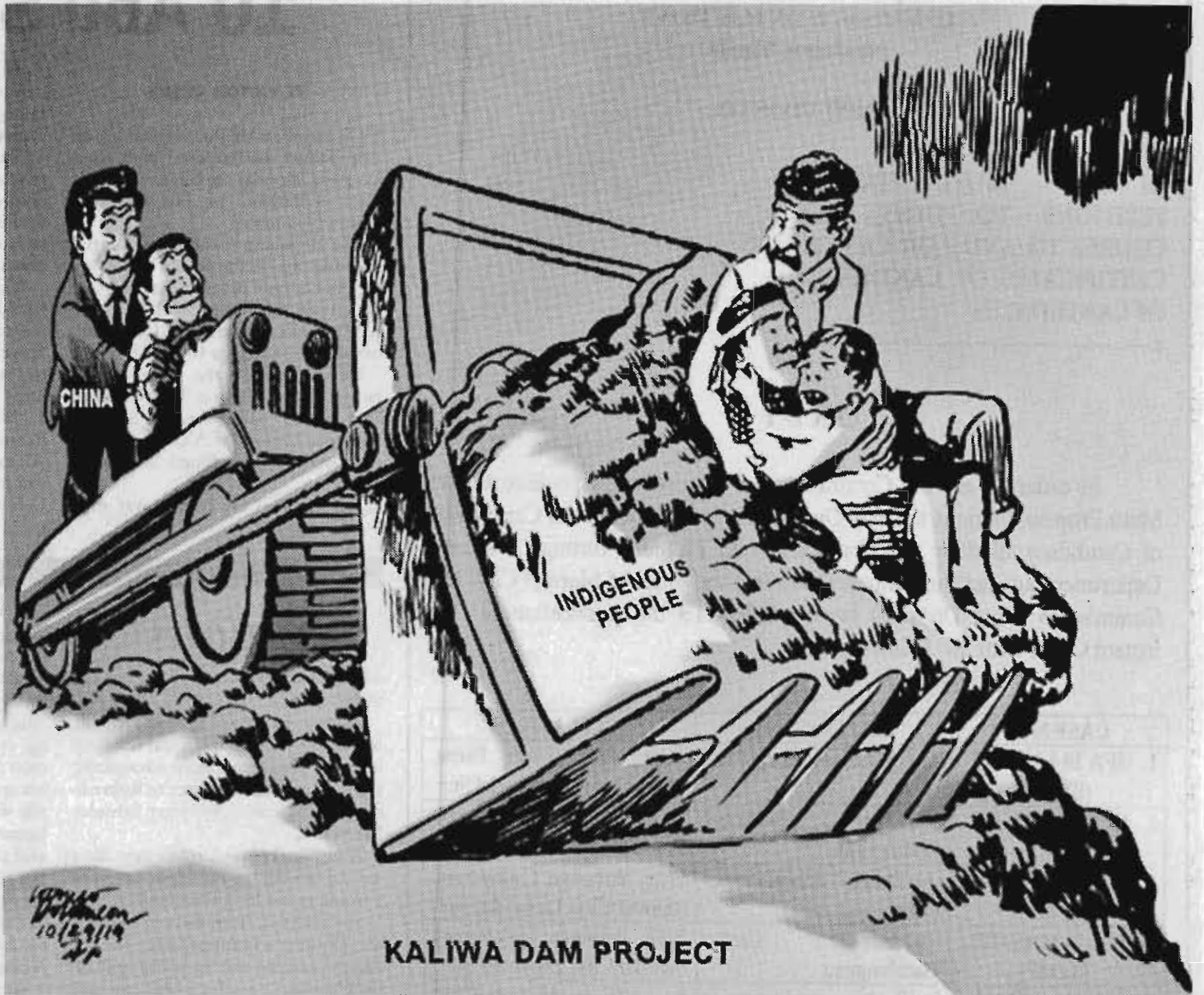
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Water and cycles

It is without doubt that the social and environmental costs of constructing any new dam will outweigh its benefits to man, but his need would take precedence over all things.

This, in capsule, is the story of the planned Kaliwa Dam, or any other dam constructed around the world.

From Zimbabwe to Russia, China and the Americas, artificial dams meant to store water for their people's use have displaced communities – not only of humans but other species as well, down to the smallest of insects, and were justified only because they helped sustain new communities which have sprouted along with so-called development.

**“
It might
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damage,
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the greatest
number.**

As it currently experiences a shortage with the summer months still away, Metro Manila is parched and pleading for water to drink and bathe with. Then talks about the construction of the Kaliwa Dam rose again.

President Rodrigo Duterte stopped just a tad of quickly giving the green light to its building. But we all know it would be built. It is just that government and the private companies involved in this future undertaking are waiting for the opposition to its construction to simmer down.

The signs are there and the Chief Executive could not be more explicit when he said on Monday that he is “taking stock of (his) options.”

“Suppression or outright police power... it has to be confiscatory,” the President clearly said.

Aside from the erstwhile reservations aired by the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) on the project, opposition to the Kaliwa Dam project had immensely influenced its stalling.

The Kaliwa Dam is not an original Duterte project. It is a spillover from the previous leadership of Benigno “Noynoy” Aquino III, who in 2013 sat on the proposal on the NEDA's advice, citing substantial viability challenges.

In six years, however, water rationing has become the norm yet again. The dry season is a scant five months away, yet Metro Manila is again experiencing an immense water shortage just seven months from the last.

The two water concessionaires could only dream about divine intervention in changing their lot. But rain in Luzon comes like a miracle does to the worst of sinners during these months. The drizzles we experience now are nothing but an entertainment from the heavens.

Without rain, one of these concessionaires raised its hands in surrender with one of its spokesmen claiming nothing more could be done.

He passed the burden to the government as expected. They distribute water, they don't build the sources where water should come from, he said.

Give him a trophy for insensitivity and for services



Aldrin Cardona



undelivered.

But the message was sent. And on the same day, President Duterte raised his concern on the water shortage and backed the construction of a new dam.

Unlike Noynoy, Mr. Duterte played it aggressively for the Kaliwa Dam.

“You have every right to protest if it really puts your place in jeopardy,” he said. “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.”

That was a tough choice to make, but the Chief Executive is playing his populist ticket to the hilt.

**“
The future
could tell what
this new dam
would bring
its people,
including those
who, along
with the birds,
insects and the
trees, consider
that stretch
from Quezon
to Rizal their
sanctuary.**

“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. Nothing could be clearer than that.

The Kaliwa Dam project, however, saw clearer light earlier. On 23 October, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources gave the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System an environmental compliance certificate.

It's one of the few papers needed before the first soil is dug.

It will remain a contentious issue for long, and it is doubtful Mr. Duterte would even see its completion while in office.

The future could tell what this new dam would bring its people, including those who, along with the birds, insects and the trees, consider that stretch from Quezon to Rizal their sanctuary.

That is until the population again outgrows its usefulness and raise the need for a new water source.



Here we are again



Dinah S. Ventura

We always seem to be catching up on ourselves, running against time, trying to stem a flow that might never have happened had we been more vigilant, careful or innovative.

Just months after the water crisis hit Metro Manila, we are back with that feeling of panic flowing out of our chest because, you know – water is life!

Having no running water even at certain hours of the day affects many citizens and businesses, but it now seems clear it will be a way of life for us for some time.

**“
Conservation
is the reason,
and not some
dastardly plan
to make our lives
more miserable
over and above
the erratic
traffic and
sometimes power
interruptions in
some parts of
the metro.**

Before we go ranting at either government or the water concessionaires, and maybe even past leaders and ways of doing things, we should try to catch as much of the issue as we can so we can do our part wholeheartedly.

First, we must accept that there is a water shortage – our existing dams simply don't have enough to sustain supply at the rate we have been using our water supply.

Recent reports reveal that “only 10 percent of the 300 millimeters of rain forecasted for the month of October came in” and this has continued the “lowering trend of the water level of not just in Angat Dam but also in other dams.”

This is why we must understand the second part: why Maynilad Water Services Inc. and Manila Water Company scheduled water interruptions. According to the Manila Water, it is “necessary to ensure raw water supply will last through and beyond the summer of 2020.”

Conservation is the reason, and not some dastardly plan to make our lives more miserable over and above the erratic traffic and sometimes

power interruptions in some parts of the metro.

The prospect of having no water even for a few hours puts many of us in a panic, but it is a measure that water companies see is necessary so that we don't run dry even as other long-term solutions are undertaken.

Unfortunately, the biggest project that hopes to address the supply issue is turning out to be quite problematic.

Following the announcement of the water interruptions, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources issued the Kaliwa Dam project with an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC), causing a deluge of opposition for a number of reasons.

One is from the Agta-Dumagat-Remontado tribes in Quezon and Rizal who are threatened with displacement.

Another complication is the “alleged violations in procedural requirements for ECC application both by its project proponent, the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, and the Environmental Management Bureau,” an online report says.

A third impediment is the fear that the Kaliwa Dam is really more of a China project than our own, giving way to more nervousness about sovereignty as the West Philippine Sea issue continues to simmer in the background.

These are road blocks for the water supply issue that seems eerily similar to the road right of way issue that is currently plaguing the government's “Build, Build, Build” goals.

After the March water crisis that caused an uproar and a half, Filipinos are wary about any mention of “no water” even for just a few hours.

Yet like the traffic problem that we continue to believe will someday improve – just be extra patient and forgiving through the massive construction projects going on – the water supply issue must be approached with similar prudence and optimism.

We must all do our part to achieve our end goals. As consumers, it is our responsibility to practice conservation – store just enough for your needs, reuse if possible for other household chores.

It is the least we can do – after all, it may feel like we have to endure one inconvenience after another, but we know that as construction booms and the problem with water supply is being addressed, something at last is being done.

**“
Just
months
after the
water crisis
hit Metro
Manila, we
are back with
that feeling
of panic
flowing out
of our chest
because, you
know – water
is life!**



Creating a Department of Water to make PHL water-secure—Neda

BY CAI U. ORDINARIO

✉ @caiorinario

THE creation of the Department of Water will help make the Philippines water-secure, according to the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda).

Neda Undersecretary for Planning and Policy Rosemarie G. Edillon said a draft bill has already been submitted to the House of Representatives.

The bill is now being discussed in a joint technical working group (TWG) of the House Committees of Government Reorganization and Public Works.

"The TWG is working toward a single bill creating the Department of Water Resources and a Water Resources Regulatory Commission," Edillon told the BUSINESSMIRROR on Tuesday.

The creation of the Department of Water aims to address the fragmented water administration in the country. Currently, several agencies are in charge of water administration and regulation.

Former Environment Secretary Elisea Gozon said the proposal to create a separate Department of Water has been around since the time of former President Fidel V. Ramos. However, it was only now under the Duterte administration, was it given serious attention.

Gozon said these developments could not have been more needed as the country's water resources are already under stress.

At the sidelines of a recent water crisis hearing at the House of Representatives, National Water Resources Board (NWRB) Executive Director Sevilla D. David Jr. said Metro Manila is not out of the water crisis yet. David said that as the city expands, the more water-stressed it becomes. He told the BUSINESSMIRROR that each Filipino uses 120 liters per day.

When this is multiplied by 14 million—the current population of Metro Manila—the total is 1.68 million cubic meters per day.

He said water supply in Metro Manila has not yet recovered months after the recent artificial water crisis, given that the level at Angat Dam was still near the minimum. The dam is currently the primary source of water for the city.

In the hearing, David said while the level of the Angat is at 181.7 meters and is above the minimum operating level of 180 meters, this does not mean the megacity is already "out of the woods."

This is because this is still far from Angat's normal high level of around 210 to 220 meters.

In fact, David said, the normal water level of Angat of 180 meters has been breached more frequently in the past five to 10 years.

David said the lowest level reached by Angat in the last 10 years was in 2010 when it reached 157.55 meters and the second-lowest was recorded this year, 157.96 meters.

Meanwhile, Gozon said majority, or around 73.05 percent of water's consumptive use is allocated to irrigation; 17.27 percent is for industrial uses; 7.79 percent are for domestic or municipal use; and 2 percent is for other uses.

In terms of nonconsumptive use, the largest allocation is for power at 57.09 percent; irrigation, 31.35 percent; industrial, 7.4 percent; domestic/municipal, 3.34 percent; and others, 0.81 percent.

She added that while 87.7 percent of Filipinos have access to water, according to data from the Philippine Statistics Authority, less than 50 percent have piped water in their premises and majority of these are located in urban areas.

Unfortunately, Gozon said some 332 municipalities nationwide continue to be "waterless" as of December 2015. Waterless, she said, means supply is below 50 percent.



Duterte can take over public utilities, but . . .

By **Leila B. Salaverria**
@LeilasINQ

Congress can give President Duterte the power to take over the operation of public utilities amid the water shortage in Metro Manila, but he would have to declare an emergency first, Sen. Panfilo Lacson said on Tuesday.

Malacañang earlier said the President may take "drastic action" after rotational water interruptions were implemented

anew this month in the metro, triggering fears that households would again experience dry taps due to the low water level in La Mesa Dam.

Lacson said the Constitution as well as prevailing jurisprudence allowed Congress to delegate to the Chief Executive the power of the state to take over the operation of public utilities.

"However, the President has to declare an emergency, and if Congress delegates that power

to him, the government must be ready to compensate whatever losses the private concessionaire/s would incur during the period of the government takeover," the senator said.

But Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian said the problem was not so much the distribution of water but the lack of supply, which was not the sole responsibility of the water concessionaires.

"The problem is in the source," Gatchalian told re-

porters, adding that to ensure a steady source of water, the government could either fast-track the completion of the Kaliwa Dam, which had been in the pipeline for the past four to five years. **(See related story on Page A6.)**

The government could also tap new technology, such as desalination or the process of removing mineral components from saline water, Gatchalian said. INQ



Gov't open to take over water operations amid shortage

The government may take over the operations of private water concessionaires when public interest requires it, Malacañang said yesterday, as Metro Manila continues to grapple with its second water shortage this year.

Presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo confirmed that President Duterte was referring to a government takeover of water utilities when he talked about assuming control of water supply operations.

"The provision of the Constitution is very clear. The President's primary duty as head of state... is to serve and to protect the people. So any situation arising that will endanger or imperil the safety of the people, then the President has to take over," Panelo said at a press briefing.

"(The President) said, 'If you cannot solve the crisis, then I will do it for you...' If he feels that there is now a need for that, then he will do it," he added.

Duterte will carry out the takeover if people no longer have access to water, according to Panelo.

"If the water crisis becomes serious, if we no longer have water to drink, he said last night, 'I will not allow people not drinking water,'" the presidential spokesman said.

"If we no longer have drinking water or we don't have water for bathing, then we really have a problem," he added.

Article XII, Section 17 of the 1987 Constitution states that in times of national emergency, when the public interest so requires, the State may temporarily take over or direct the operation of any privately owned public utility or business affected with public interest.

Panelo said the President may

also implement a revamp in the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) if he deems it necessary to do so.

"If the government institution also fails to solve the problem, that means there should be changes from within," Panelo said.

"If they have violated the law, they will be prosecuted," he added.

Panelo could not say when the President would decide on whether to take charge of the operations of water utilities.

"It depends on the situation. If we lose access to water tomorrow, why wait for another week to decide?" he said.

'Matter of survival'

Last Monday, Duterte floated the possibility of taking over water-related operations to solve the water shortage in Metro Manila, which was caused by the drop in the water levels in Angat and Ipo dams.

The President said he was considering different options, including the possible use of police power and expropriation.

"I'm taking stock of my options... expropriation or outright police power... 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," the President told reporters at Malacañang.

"I will go there and operate it myself. I will take over and I will direct what to do. That's how it is. You can't do it? I will do it myself. You ship out. Where is the remaining water?" he added.

Duterte admitted that police power could be confiscatory, but he was ready to consider the option to ensure the public's access to water.

The President has also ex-

pressed readiness to use his "extraordinary powers" to implement the China-funded Kaliwa Dam, which some groups claimed would displace communities and damage the environment.

The P12.2-billion Kaliwa Dam is envisioned to become a major water source for Metro Manila and is one of the government projects funded by Chinese loans.

In an interview with ABS-CBN News last Monday, Duterte said solving the water shortage is "a matter of survival."

"I'm sure that they would try to stop (the) project... I am called upon to solve a problem and do not make it hard for me to do it. I do not want to be the bully, but if it comes to that, then, it should be. We can't do anything, people need water," the President said.

"Stop making it hard for the people there because it's a question of survival of the nation, water. No civilization, you know, early civilization, and even now, it's always near a river or a water, whatever body or lake something. Whenever there's water, the population (is) always there because water is very important," he added.

Duterte said Kaliwa Dam and other water reservoirs should be completed despite the opposition of some sectors.

"If it's a question of a dam, well, complete it and if there's a strong opposition, let me know because it's either we accommodate them with their objections and suffer the shortage or just maybe try out something that is workable for them, but with that we are allowed to do the projects that would give us order in the days to come," he added.

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Gov't open From Page 2

Easier said than done

The Constitution as well as jurisprudence allow the government to take over utilities, but such is easier said than done and could end up more costly to the country, senators warned yesterday.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson cited Article XII, Section 17 of the Constitution and existing

jurisprudence (David vs Arroyo, GR No. 171396 on May 3, 2006) could be invoked, given a looming - if not already existing - water crisis. - Alexis Romero, Paolo Romero, Rhodina Villanueva, Janvic Mateo



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Duterte floats plan to take over water

By MJ Blancaflor

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte called on water concessionaires on Tuesday to "stop making it hard for the people" and help government address the water crisis in Metro Manila.

This, as Malacañang said he might declare a national emergency and take over Maynilad and Manila Water in a bid to address the water shortage in

Metro Manila and its nearby provinces.

"All of them, stop making it hard for the people there because it's a question of survival of the nation, water," Duterte told ABS-CBN News in an interview.

"I do not want to be the bully but if it comes to that, then it should be. We cannot do anything since our people need water," he added.

Scheduled rotational water interruptions have been implemented by water

concessionaires Maynilad and Manila Water to manage dwindling supply from the Angat and Ipo dams.

Maynilad handles of the west concession zone while Manila Water operations serve the east concession zone of Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

Panelo, who is also Duterte's chief legal counsel, said the takeover plan is constitutional.

"The provision of the Constitution

is very clear—the President's primary duty as the head of state of the government is to serve and to protect the people," he said.

"So in any situation arising that will endanger, imperil the safety of the people, then the President has to take over," he added.

A provision in the 1987 Constitution also states that in times of a national

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concessionaires

Duterte...

From A1

emergency, the government can temporarily take over or direct the operation of any privately-owned public utility or business affected with public interest.

He said that Duterte will invoke this power if the current water crisis worsens and "we won't have water to drink."

Panelo also said the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System could face charges if found to be in violation of the law.

"If they have violated the law, they will be prosecuted," he said, adding that a revamp at the water regulator is possible.

In March, President Duterte threatened to scrap the concession agreements of water concessionaires Manila Water and Maynilad after millions of their customers were left waterless.

For at least a week, its 1.2 million customers had no water supply or low water pressure due to low water levels at the La Mesa reservoir in Quezon City because of the dry spell.

Duterte also warned MWSS officials that they would get fired if he was not satisfied with their actions to address the water shortage.

Senator Panfilo Lacson on Tuesday said Congress may delegate to the President the power of the state to take over the operation of public utilities, particularly water services, amid a looming water crisis in Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

Lacson, however, noted that the President must declare an emergency first before Congress could delegate such power to him.

"Given a looming if not already existing water crisis, under Sec. 17, Art VII of the 1987 Constitution and existing jurisprudence (David vs Arroyo, GR No 171396 on May 3, 2006), Congress may delegate to the President the power of the state to take over the operation of public utilities," Lacson said.

Lacson's statement came after President Duterte said he is considering the use of "extraordinary powers of the presidency" to speed up the construction of the New Centennial Water Source-Kaliwa Dam project to prevent another water crisis in Metro Manila.

"I will use the extraordinary powers of the presidency. I could not just allow people to go about without water even for drinking," the President said Monday.

With PNA



MWSS revamp, Congress grant of emergency powers to solve water crisis eyed

By BERNADETTE D. NICOLAS

✉ @BNicolasBM

& BUTCH FERNANDEZ

✉ @butchfBM

AMID the looming water crisis, Malacañang said on Tuesday that President Duterte may also revamp the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) aside from the possible government takeover of the two private water concessionaires—Maynilad and Manila Water.

Presidential Spokesman and Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador S. Panelo described the possible government takeover of the water concessionaires as legal, but stressed that there should first be a declaration of a national emergency.

The grant of emergency powers to the President for the purpose of addressing the water crisis, according to Sen. Panfilo Lacson, is feasible.

“The legal basis is always when, you know, the provision of the Constitution is very clear. The President’s primary duty as head of state of the government is to serve and to protect the people. [In] any situation arising that will endanger, imperil the safety of the people, the President has to take over,” Panelo said.

Article XII Section 17 of the 1987 Constitution states that: “In times of national emergency, when

the public interest so requires, the State may, during the emergency and under reasonable terms prescribed by it, temporarily take over or direct the operation of any privately owned public utility or business affected with public interest.

At the Senate, meanwhile, Lacson said on Tuesday he sees no problem in Congress, dominated by Palace allies, granting Duterte extraordinary powers to quickly address an “already existing water supply crisis.”

Lacson, however, stressed that Malacañang must first “declare an emergency” for Congress to empower Duterte to “take over public utilities” providing water supply.

The senator cited specific provisions of the Constitution the President may invoke to quickly and effectively address the supply shortage.

“Given a looming, if not already, existing water crisis,” Lacson said Section 17, Article VII of the Constitution and existing jurisprudence (*David vs Arroyo*, GR171396 on May 3, 2006) may apply.

He said the President has to “declare an emergency, and if Congress delegates that power to him, the government must be ready to compensate whatever losses the private concessionaire/s would incur during the period of the government takeover.”

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MWSS...

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Consider other options

IN a separate interview, Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian confirmed, for instance, that his constituents in Valenzuela had been suffering four to six hours of no water supply almost daily, prompting him to prod government authorities concerned to fast-track consideration of “many unsolicited proposals, like tapping water source from Kaliwa Dam.”

Gatchalian also cited signals that Singapore “wants to share [its] desalination technology” where water supply is purified. “They [Singapore] have been doing this eight years now”

Gatchalian pointed out that “the problem is not in distribution [of water supply], but the source is only La Mesa Dam. We have to find another source.”

President Duterte warned on Monday that he will use his “extraordinary powers of the presidency” should the situation worsen. He also said he could not allow people to go about without water even for drinking.

“I will go and operate it myself. I will take over and I will direct what to do. *Ganoon lang ‘yan. Hindi niyo kaya? Oh sige ako. Umalis kayo diyen* [That’s it, simply. You can’t do it? Okay, get out],” Duterte said in an ambush interview.

While the President did not cite any specific timeline as to when the government takeover could take place, Panelo said this could be prompted by the gravity of the situation.

“*Dahil depende nga sa sitwasyon, eh kung bukas wala nang tubig, bakit ka pa maghihintay ng* another week to decide. [It depends on the situation. If tomorrow there is already no water, why should we wait for another week to decide?],” he said.

Maynilad and Manila Water Co. announced rotational interruptions last week due to the low water levels at Annat and Ilog dams



Duterte threatens to take over operations of water firms

BY JOCELYN MONTEMAYOR

PRESIDENT Duterte will take over the operations of the private water concessionaires and the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) if the water situation has turned into a crisis and a national emergency is declared, his legal counsel and spokesman said yesterday.

Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo, concurrent presidential spokesman, said the President has mentioned that he was willing to "assume control" if the water utility concessionaires are still unable to address the supply problem.

Panelo said a state of national emergency would first be declared

before the President assumes control of the water utility that he said means "government take-over."

"He (President Duterte) said if you will not solve the crisis, then I will do it for you," he added.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson, reacting to Duterte's threat, said the President has to first declare an emergency before government can take over the operations of public utilities, such as water concessionaires.

The President last March told water concessionaires Maynilad and Manila Water to shape out or ship out over the water supply problem that resulted in the rationing of water in Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

Last week, Maynilad and Manila Water again implemented daily

water rationing to conserve water at the Angat and Ipo dams that continue to go south due to lack of rains.

Panelo said under the Constitution, the national government can take over the operation of privately-owned utilities or businesses "in times of national emergency" and "when the public interest so requires."

He said if the water supply problem worsens to the point that there is no more drinking water or the public has no more access to enough water for their daily use like bathing, the national government can take over not just the operations of water concessionaires but

See DUTERTE > Page B5

DUTERTE

also implement a revamp at the MWSS.

Asked who would decide whether it is time for the government to take over, Panelo said it would be the President.

He said Duterte receives a lot of briefers and reports from those who are concerned or involved in the situation that could help him decide.

The President on Monday night said he was weighing his options, including using police powers and the President's extraordinary powers to address the delayed Kaliwa dam construction project following continued opposition from militants, environmentalists and tribal groups.

Those who oppose the Kaliwa Dam project raised concerns that pursuing it would damage the environment and submerge part of the Sierra Madre in Rizal and Quezon. The Dumagat people also claim the project would destroy their ancestral domain.

Duterte said while some may say that the 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."

"Given a looming if not already existing water crisis, under Section 17, Article VII of the 1987 Constitution and existing jurisprudence, Congress may delegate to the President the power of the state to take over the operation of public utilities," Lacson said.

However, the President has to declare an emergency, he added.

He said that if Congress delegates that power to Duterte, then "the government must be ready to compensate whatever losses the private concessionaires would incur during the period of the government takeover." - *With Ashzel Hachero*



'Moderate your greed'

THE details provided recently to the media and to the House of Representatives by Buhay party-list Rep. Lito Atienza, a former mayor of Manila and secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, about the enormous profits being raked in by the two water concessionaires in Luzon for 13 years are awesome in a sad sort of way.

Amid the current water shortage in the National Capital Region, forcing Maynila and Manila Water to ration the precious commodity and plead to consumers to conserve water, Atienza announced that between them, the two firms earned P138 billion in the past several years.

Atienza said, "They may be having problems meeting their twin obligations to deliver round-the-clock running water to their 14 million customers and establish sewerage systems, but Metro Manila's two water concessionaires are definitely not having any difficulties producing profits for their stockholders."

'It is a weakness in our judicial system that individual and corporate violators are given the opportunity to exhaust all legal remedies even if caught "in flagrante delicto," and they have the wherewithal to pursue all options precisely because they have lined their pockets.'

The party-list representative said based on their scrutiny of publicly available financial filings, they gathered that Manila Water and Maynila Water Services amassed an aggregate of P138 billion in net profits from 2006 to June 2019. He added that both firms also rewarded their shareholders a combined P49 billion in cash dividends over the same period.

This excessively rewarding business occurred while the two firms were remiss in providing a sewage collection, water treatment and disposal system as mandated by Section 8 of the Clean Water Act. A big chunk of their profits came from the 20 percent environmental charge and the 30 percent sewer charge that were collected from consumers who never received such service.

In August, the Supreme Court upheld a 2009 DENR order penalizing the two water suppliers and the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) with P1.84 billion in combined fines for violations of the law. Atienza himself issued that order when he was DENR secretary.

Even the harsh Supreme Court order has failed to goad the two firms to comply with the law. The High Tribunal said Manila Water, Maynila and the MWSS will have to continue to pay a P322,102 daily fine that escalates by 10 percent in two years, plus legal interest of 6 percent per annum.

It is a weakness in our judicial system that individual and corporate violators are given the opportunity to exhaust all legal remedies even if caught "in flagrante delicto," and they have the wherewithal to pursue all options precisely because they have lined their pockets.

Not too long ago, a top government official advised a group of well-connected contract proponents to "moderate your greed." It is worthwhile to heed this call, this time seriously.



Sa oposisyon vs Kaliwa dam

'EXTRAORDINARY POWERS' IWINASIWAS NI DIGONG

MAAARING i-takeover ng gobyerno ang operasyon ng ng tubig mula sa Maynilad at Manila Water kapag idinekla ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang state of emergency bunsod ng krisis sa tubig.

Ipinaliwanag ni Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo, kung sa

tingin ng Pangulo ay kailangan mag-takeover ay gagampanan niya ang pangunahing tungkulin ng Pangulo na pagsilbihan at protektahan ang mga mamamayan mula sa

ni **ROSE NOVENARIO**

mga sitwasyong mapanganib.

Nakasaad sa Section 17, Article XII sa 1987 Constitution "the state, in times of national emergency may temporarily takeover or direct the operation of any privately-owned public utility or business affected with public interest."

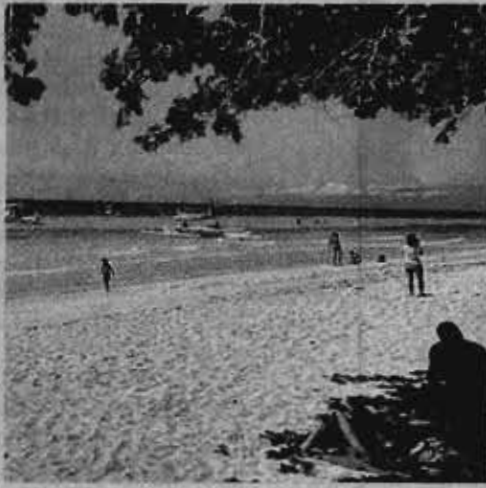
Kamakalawa, iniha-

yag ng Pangulo na gagamit siya ng 'extraordinary powers' para matugunan ang water shortage sa Kalakhang Maynila at mga karatig lalawigan.

Sinabi ito ng Pangulo bilang tugon sa pagtutol ng iba't ibang grupo sa pagtatayo ng China-funded Kaliwa Dam project sa Rizal at Quezon.



#nationataglance



CENTRAL VISAYAS: PANGLAO, BOHOL

MRII to build sewage treatment plant in Panglao

MANDAUE CITY-based Mactan Rock Industries Inc., (MRII) has submitted its proposal to the Panglao local government for the construction of a sewage treatment plant (STP) on the popular tourist island. MRII Chairman Antonio Tompar said they have already given the technical design and financial plan for the STP, which will be undertaken as a joint venture with the local government. He said the Panglao government has already identified a property for the STP and construction is targeted to start before the end of the year. MRII, a firm that specializes in water and wastewater treatment as well as supplies bulk water to the Metro Cebu Water District, will fund the STP construction through a loan from the Development Bank of the Philippines. Mr. Tompar said the STP will mainly serve small- and medium-sized establishments such as restaurants as the big resorts and hotels on Panglao have already set up their individual treatment facilities. — *The Freeman*



WATER SHORTAGE

QC MAYOR WANTS CITY TO HARVEST RAINWATER

By Mariejo S. Ramos
@MariejoRamosINQ

As part of Quezon City's water conservation measures, Mayor Joy Belmonte has ordered an inventory of all schools and city-owned buildings with a view to fitting them with rainwater harvesting systems and water tanks.

The order mandates the general services department and the city engineering department to record baseline data on water consumption for every office, building and barangay.

Those who will be able to reduce their water consumption each month will receive incentives, Belmonte said.

Conserving water

The mayor said she also planned to ask the City Council to pass a resolution urging business owners to conserve and recycle water and to mandate rainwater harvesting for non-potable use.

Belmonte also directed barangays to fix leaks and illegal connections.

Water concessionaires have committed to provide the city with treated wastewater that can be used to douse fire and water plants in public parks, Belmonte said. INQ



PHL nickel miners seen to get a boost from Indonesia export ban

By Vincent Mariel P. Galang
Reporter

NICKEL ore producers in the Philippines are expected to get a boost, after Indonesia announced that it will suspend nickel ore exports for the rest of the year.

Mining stocks got a lift at the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), where the mining and oil subsector was up 143.91 points or 1.57% to close at 9,285.91 on Tuesday. The PSE index closed 44.66 points or 0.56% higher at 7,991.19 on Tuesday, while the broader all shares index added 12.92 points or 0.27% to 4,787.17.

Nickel Asia Corp., the Philippines' top nickel ore producer, rose 5.15% or 20 centavos to close at P4.08 each. Global Ferronickel Holdings, Inc., another nickel ore

miner, also jumped 3.57% or 6 centavos to close at P1.74 each.

Bloomberg reported on Monday that Indonesia suspended nickel ore exports immediately, as the country aims to become a processor of its mineral resources.

Indonesia was the top nickel producer in 2018 with 560,000 tons, followed by the Philippines, with 340,000 tons. Both Indonesia and the Philippines' top export market for the mineral is China.

Timson Securities, Inc. Equity Trader Jervin S. de Celis said Indonesia's nickel ore export ban will benefit Philippine nickel ore miners.

"The move of Indonesian government in the ban of nickel exports will cause the price of the metal rise in the world market and that may translate to higher revenues for Nickel Asia, Global Ferronickel and other nickel-exporting firms from the Philippines," he said in a text message.

Meanwhile, the Philippine Stock Exchange, Inc. (PSE) has lined up proposed amendments for the Philippine Mineral Reporting Code (PMRC) 2007.

"*Yung process namin na 'to* [This process] is really to benchmark and see where appropriate... revisions or upgrades in our reporting framework for mining companies would have to be introduced," PSE Chief Operating Officer Roel A. Refran told *BusinessWorld* via phone.

"It's been a long time. It's been more than ten years... and the world is changing," he added.

The code was adopted by the PSE and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in August 2008, which sets minimum standards, recommendations, and guidelines for public reporting of listed mining companies.

At that time it was compatible with the Australasian Joint Ore

Reserves Committee Code 2004 and the Committee for Mineral Reserves International Reporting Standards International Reporting Template 2006. The implementing rules and regulations of PMRC 2007 was issued by the SEC and the PSE in October 2010.

The PSE said that a Philippine Mineral Reporting Code Committee (PMRCC) was formed November 2018 to lead the process of revising the PMRC 2007 which started February this year.

The PMRCC members include the Philippine Society of Mining Engineers, Geology Society of the Philippines, and the Society of the Metallurgical Engineers of the Philippines, along with the PSE and other minerals-industry stakeholders.

A public hearing on the amendments to the PMRC will be held the Mines and Geosciences Bureau Central Office in Quezon City on November 9.

Good maternal health and good air quality

One would think, given the declaration by no less than Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Ernesto Pernia that early pregnancies constitute a “national emergency,” that authorities, especially education officials, would be tripping over themselves to provide sexuality education as early as possible to students.

But in a conference, Education Secretary Leonor Briones defined menstruation as the “expression of the frustration of the uterus at not getting pregnant.”

Perhaps it's this belief that pregnancy should be the “natural” condition of women that fuels the reluctance of adults to face head-on the reality that young people are not only having sex but also getting pregnant, or having children long before they're ready for it.

But, to the thinking of Dr. Marilen Dañguilan who spoke together with Dr. Junice Melgar at a recent “Kuwentong Kabaro” on the Reproductive Health Act, the focus on teenage pregnancy seems unwarranted. While Dañguilan's concern focused mainly on the budgetary implications of primarily addressing early pregnancy, Melgar noted that maternal mortality as a whole has fallen from the Department of Health's priorities. There are even plans, Melgar said, to make the RH implementation team that was formed shortly after the passage of the RH law into a mere “advisory” body.

A major problem, said Dañguilan, is the focus on family planning or the provision of contraceptives of the entire RH program, when RH includes a broad range of concerns including reproductive cancers, HIV/AIDS, domestic violence and adolescent sexuality. Melgar, executive director of the reproductive health NGO Likhaan, pointed out that even as the struggle continues for the full and proper implementa-



AT LARGE

RINA JIMENEZ-DAVID

tion of the RH law five years after its enactment, “there are lessons (to learn) from the RH struggle: if we persist, we can win.” She likewise warned that “comprehensive sexuality education is the next battlefield before the Supreme Court.” “Teenage sexuality is not the problem,” Melgar pointed out. “Unwanted pregnancy mainly due to lack of services is the root cause.”

Nick and Trina Gitsis say that their involvement in Air Intellipure, a business providing clean air solutions to indoor environments, is rooted in their concern as parents for their two girls' health.

“Ever since I had children, I've always been concerned about their health and the quality of the air they breathe,” says Nick. “Mention a brand of air purifier and I must have bought it.” His concerns were heightened when the older girl began to go to school and would come home with sniffles or worse. “And inevitably,” adds Trina, “her sister would end up getting sick, too.”

But a couple of years ago, Nick met the makers of Air Intellipure and was

convinced that he had found the solution to his children's health concerns, as well as a business that he was sure had a ready market in the Philippines.

“The Philippines still enjoys one of the best air quality in the world,” says Nick, “but in the cities, where a good number of Filipinos live and work, air quality is so poor that the WHO estimates it is approximately 80 percent higher than safe levels.” And the catch is that “health organizations say that indoor air quality is three to five times worse than outside air.”

This is where Air Intellipure comes in. Though there are quite a number of air filters and purifiers in the market, the Gitsis couple claims that “not all air purifiers are created equal.” Not only do Air Intellipure's purifiers screen and remove more harmful matter and organisms from the air, it also offers a service that not just cleans the environment, but also protects against pollutants and other harmful stuff.

At a recent media presentation, one of the invited endorsers was Dr. Vicki Belo with her daughter Cristalle. The Belo Medical Group chain is one of the first institutional customers of Air Intellipure, with Dr. Belo testifying how she herself felt the difference when she stepped out of the firm's “sealed” room.

But to Trina, the best testimony is that of a mother of three whose children all suffered from asthma. When they installed an Air Intellipure purifier in their home months ago, the mother reported that not once has any of the children been afflicted with the ailment. That's news that warms the heart of the mother in Trina.

rdavid@inquirer.com.ph



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Sustainability today, tomorrow



“
*Recognizing the
reality that trying to
control climate change
will require massive
financial resources.*”

The Eagle's Nest

Bing Matoto

COMMENTARY

Sustainability is derived from the Latin word “sustinere,” which means to maintain, support or endure, or pretty much the ability to exist constantly.

In the context of today's headlines regarding climate change and the consequent nightmare scenarios resulting from global warming, sustainability essentially translates to the planet earth's ability to sustain human life as we know it today, and tomorrow. Why is this a hot-button issue for the world?

Well, most of us probably remember Al Gore's popular documentary on climate change of a decade ago called “An Inconvenient Truth,” which graphically triggered into our consciousness the dangers of global warming.

Can you recall the images of polar bears gingerly trying to balance itself on melting icebergs or glaciers exploding into tons of water gushing into the Antarctica as temperatures rise in the North Pole? Or try visualizing the massive snowstorms in New York, the runaway wildfires in California or the devastating typhoons and flood waters of the Philippines.

Those are all the effects of global warming that naysayers like Donald Trump continue to sneer at but which we are now seeing for ourselves, first-hand.

Of course, it wasn't just Al Gore who all of a sudden discovered the dangers and risks to humanity of climate change because these concerns have been around for a while but have largely been ignored. But certainly, being a high-profile ex-wannabe President of the US, producing and starring in an Oscar award-winning movie, and being a recipient of a Nobel Peace Prize because of

his environmental advocacy, have made millions of people sit up and listen to what Al Gore had to say about climate change.

In any event, this heightened consciousness about global warming have led to the convening of the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2015 which commits 195 UNFCCC member countries to collectively attempt to reduce greenhouse gas emissions caused primarily by the activities of humans.

Ironically, it is mankind's never-ending quest for development and comfort over the years such as the use of fossil fuels for energy, deforestation and modern transportation that have produced this hazardous greenhouse effect which is the main culprit behind global warming.

The long-term goal of the Paris Agreement is to keep the irreversible rising of global average temperature to at least below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

Recognizing the reality that trying to control climate change will require massive financial resources, the agreement also calls for the mobilization by the developed countries of \$100 billion in climate finance annually to assist developing countries for the various actions on climate change and mitigation.

These actions include activities like climate risk insurance, and climate risk and early warning systems. The different state authorities, however, who are committed to this effort know fully well that the private sector with its commercial motivations are really the main drivers that could make the difference for this global effort to work.

In this regard, this is where the Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG) factors in measuring the sustainability and ethical impact of an investment comes into play.

Investments are traditionally, and cold-bloodedly, usually measured in terms of rates of return and payback periods. But the growing awareness particularly among the developed countries about ESG has compelled businesses to now look more seriously at the impact of sustainability considerations in investment proposals.

In this regard, the United Nations has promoted the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI), which is an international network of investors working together to instill various principles in their investment decisions.

These principles include: fostering of ESG within the investment community; consideration of ESG issues in investment decisions; incorporating ESG in ownership practices and policies; appropriate disclosures on ESG concerns from investee companies; and, requiring monitoring and regular reporting on ESG compliance activities.

The thinking is premised on convincing business on the merits of the principles not just on the basis of the esoteric and ethical considerations of ESG but also the very practical consideration of protecting the commercial assets whose values could be at risk because of climate change.

To illustrate, think of insurance companies which underwrite property, life and casualty protection or banks which finance businesses impacted by environmental concerns such as public utilities, and minerals dependent companies.

On our home front, the market regulators, notably the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) have actively promoted ESG through regulatory circulars and information campaigns. For instance, the SEC now requires listed firms to comply and annually report on their adherence to ESG, or to explain their non-adherence. Another is the recent 6th SEC-PSE Corporate Governance Forum which I attended last week, an annual forum for directors and officers of listed corporations and other corporate governance practitioners. The theme was “Sustainable Businesses: Taking the Lead in Achieving Sustainable Development Goals.”

Among the speakers, Federico Lopez, Chairman and CEO of First Gen Corporation, admirably stood out with his firm and unwavering staunch support for sustainability. With CEOs like Lopez, there is hope after all for sustainability to be a reality today, and tomorrow.

Until next week... One Big Fight!

For comments, please email bing_matoto@yahoo.com



HABANG tinitipa natin natin ito, mga Bro., may lima nang patay sa malakas na lindol sa buong Mindanao.

Grabe ang pinsala dahil yung mga binitak lang ng lindol na gusali, kalsada at tulay ng magnitude 6.3 at isa pang lindol noong Oktubre 15, 2019, eh, tuluyan nang winasak o iginuho ng magnitude 6.6 kahapon ng umaga.

Hindi lang iyon.

May gusali, tulay at kalsadang hindi nakayang bitakin ng naunang dalawang lindol ang binitak at sinira ng huling lindol.

At napakasamang balita na ang bitak ng lupa na sanhi ng lindol sa Tulunan, North Cotabato ay siya ring gumalaw kahapon.

Bagama't parehong lugar ang pinagmulan ng lindol, mas malawak ang tinamaan ng huli dahil nga mas malakas ito.

OSPITAL, ESKWELA

Kabilang sa mga iginuho nang tuluyan ng magnitude 6.6 na lindol ang mga dalawa-tatlong palapag na mga eskwelahan at dumami rin ang sira ng mga naunan nang mga ospital.

Marami ring mga tahanan, pribadong gusali at ibang gusaling pampamahalaan ang nasira.

Maging ang ilang simbahan ay nasira rin.

Pasado alas-9:00 ng umaga naganap ang lindol.

May nagmimisa rin kaya tulad noong gabi ng Oktubre 15?

Ang klaro may pesok sa mga paaralan at may namatay ngang bata habang tumatakbo tungo sa ligtas na lugar.

"Yung lindol noong Oktubre 15 na naganap sa takipsilim, nilindol nito maging ang mga dumadako ng misa.

At marami rin ang mga taong nasa mall na bumibili at nararamasyal.

WALANG SUNOG

Wala pa namang naiulat na sunog at hindi katulad noong nakaraan na makaraan lang ng lindol, nagkaroon ng dalawang sunog: isang tahanan at isang mall.

Magdamag ang sunog na naganap sa Gaisano Mall.

Demi mabilis na dumating ang gabi sa buong bansa at mga nalindol na lugar, masasabing sinubukan ng mga kompanyang kuryente aring magbigay ng kuryente sa



NI BENNY ANTIPORDA

LINDOL, UMULIT NANG MAS MALAKAS; PINSALA GRABE

mga hindi nasiraan ng mga poste, transformer at kawad.

Sana, paglabas ng ating diaryo mula kagabi hanggang ngayong araw, walang sunog.

PANAHONG MAG-ARAL

Dahil sa resulta ng lindol na marami ang nasirang gusali, tulay kalsada at iba pa, panahon ngayon ng dapat na malalimang pag-aaral sa mga ito.

May tatlong eskwela na sinasabing lubos na gumuho dahil sa tatlong lindol na naganap. Dumami rin ang iba pang gusali ng pamahalaang nasyunal at lokal na bumitak at nasira.

Gayundin ang mga tahanan, komersyal na gusali, tulay at kalsada.

Ang isang mahalagang tanong: dumaan ba ang mga ito sa tamang inspeksyon ng pamahalaan?

Sumunod ba ang mga ito sa batas sa paggawa ng gusali o building code.

Ang mga imprastruktura, dumaan din ba sa tamang mga lakas at sukat?

KORAPSYON

Ang isang mahalagang usapin dito ay ang korapsyon.

Hindi kaya gumuho ang mga gusaling pribado at publiko dahil sa korapsyon?

Para sa mga tahanan, kasama ang mga socialized housing ng mga lokal at pambansang pamahalaan, hindi kaya inaprubahan lang ang mga ito dahil may suhulan sa pag-apruba o switik na paggawa sa mga ito?

Para sa mga gusali ng mga gohyerno gaya ng mga eskwela, barangay hall, municipal hall, city hall, provincial capitol, public hospitals at iba, hindi kaya marami sa mga ito ang substandard dahil sa korapsyon?

Hindi rin ba puno ng korapsyon ang mga paggawa ng mga tulay, kalsada at iba pa?

Dapat kasali sa pag-aaral ang mga paglabag sa batas sa gusali at paggawa ng istruktura, korapsyon, suhulan at iba pa. Kung hindi gagawin ang mga pag-aaral na ito, magulit at mauulit ang mga pinsala ng

lahat kung may lindol.

HABULIN SILA

Kung may mga paglabag sa mga batas sa gusali at imprastruktura, dapat na habulin ang mga building official, ang mga building at project inspector, ang mga kapitan, mayor, gobernador, kongresman, senador at taga-Palasyo na may gawa ng mga paglabag.

Dapat na habulin ang mga magnanakaw, korap, mandarambong at iba pang gumagawa ng kabulastugan upang maging marupok ang mga proyekto nila, at maging ang mga tahanan ng mga mamamayan.

Karaniwang nagtubunga ang lahat ng mga maling gawaing ito ng kalamidad kung may lindol at iba pang pwera ng kalikasan.

Ang isang masakit pa, eh, kung kokorapin din ang mga tulong na ihahatid ng hindi nasiraan, mga pilantropo, dayuhan at iba pa.

Alalahanin, mga Bro, na sa nakaraang mga kalamidad, gaya ng sa Yolanda, kinurap maging ang mga tulong para sa mga biktima.

Hanggang ngayong nga, ang mga nakakalamidad ay naghihirap pa, gaya ng mga biktima ni bagyong Yolanda.

TUTULONG PA RIN

Sa gitna ng lahat ng mga nabanggit natin, nandiryan pa rin ang kagyat na pangangailangan ng mga biktima.

Pagkain, gamot, tubig, ilaw, kumot, tahananang ter... at marami pang iba.

Magtulong-tulong po tayo at maaari tayong mag-simula sa piso.

Ang isang milyong Pinoy na magbigay ng kahit piso ay nangangahulugan din ng milyong piso at kahit papaano, makatutulong ito sa mga nagugutom, nauuhaw, nasusugatan, nagkakaksakit, nawalang tahanan at iba pa.

Samahan po natin ng dasal ang ating tulong.

Anomang reaksiyon o reklamo, iparating sa 092281-0833 o Email sa bantiporda@yahoo.com.



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT BUREAU
DENR Compound, Visayas Avenue, Diliman Quezon City 1116
Telephone Nos.: (632) 927-1517, 928-3725; Fax No.: (632) 920-2258
Website: <http://www.emb.gov.ph>

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

On the ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS) of the proposed EXPANSION OF THE SILICA QUARRY of the HEIRS OF ARTURO ZAYCO (HAZ) located in BARANGAY MAASLUM, MUNICIPALITY OF AYUNGON, PROVINCE OF NEGROS ORIENTAL.

Notice is hereby given to all parties who wish to give their opinion regarding the implementation of the proposed EXPANSION OF THE SILICA QUARRY PROJECT to attend a Public Hearing on 07 NOVEMBER 2019 (THURSDAY) at 9:00 AM (registration starts at 08:00 am) to be held in the AYUNGON GYMNASIUM, MUNICIPALITY OF AYUNGON, PROVINCE OF NEGROS ORIENTAL.

The Public Hearing is being conducted in connection with HAZ's application for the amendment of its Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC). The EIS of the aforementioned project is being reviewed by the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The Proposed Expansion of the Silica Quarry of the Heirs of Arturo Zayco (HAZ) under Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) No. 218-2005-VII was initiated to contribute in the country's nation building program through mining of silica for the cement industry. Without cement, vertical and horizontal infrastructure and superstructure and superstructure would not be possible

Basic Project Information:

Proponent	Heirs of Arturo Zayco (HAZ)
Project Name	Expansion of the Silica Quarry Project
Project Location	Brgy. Maaslum, Municipality of Ayungon, Province of Negros Oriental
Existing ECC Coverage	10 hectares
Existing Production Capacity	125,316.84 MTPY of silica
Proposed ECC Coverage	50 hectares
Proposed Production Capacity	625,000 MTPY of silica

All interested parties who wish to attend or participate in this Public Hearing should preferably confirm their attendance/ participation and may give their opinion(s) in a concise position paper to the ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION (EIAMD) of this Office through mail or through email at eiamd.emb.co@gmail.com, three (3) days before the Public Hearing schedule. Those who will not be able to register or submit written positions may be given the opportunity to share their issues on the day of the hearing itself.

The project's EIS and Executive Summary for the Public are downloadable at our website: www.eia.emb.gov.ph (kindly access the Notice of Public Hearing/ Consultation link found in our website) while copies will be available in this Office and in the following offices:

- 1.) EMB Region VII
Address: Mandaue City, Cebu
Telephone Nos.: (032) 345 3905
- 2.) Ayungon Municipal Planning and Development Office – Municipality of Ayungon

For more details, please contact the EIAMD Division at this Office at telephone number (02) 920- 2240 to 41 and look for the project case handler Mr. Xairus Rey Guzman and Mr. Carl Louie Santiago.

Protect the environment... Protect life...