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IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



Informal settlers are main pollutants of Manila Bay – solon

By ELLSON QUISMORIO

The chairman of the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources told the Manila Bay Task Force to rid the Manila Bay coast of illegal structures built by informal settlers, or else it will never complete its objective of cleaning it.

This, after Cavite 4th district Rep. Elpidio Barzaga learned during a public hearing held by his panel Monday that the informal settlers mostly contribute to the pollution in Manila Bay.

"The big part of the problem lies with the NHA (National Housing Authority). We cannot clean the Bay unless we remove the illegal settlers," Barzaga told

representatives of the task force that attended the hearing.

"We will monitor your activities. Our main concern here is the ordinary people and the environment. It's as simple as that," said the returning congressman and former Dasmariñas City mayor.

The task force, which also includes the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and Department of Tourism (DOT), was created last February via Administrative Order (AO) No.16.

The Palace directive calls for faster rehabilitation and restoration of the coastal and marine ecosystem of the Manila Bay, which is known for its breathtak-

ing sunset.

"We have discovered that 80 percent of the pollution in Manila Bay comes from informal – settler families," DILG Undersecretary Epimaco Densing told the Environment and Natural Resources panel during Monday's proceedings, wherein Barzaga asked for a status update.

Attending resource persons from the DOH and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) affirmed the task force's findings, noting that huge volumes of garbage, fecal and sewage waste have worsened pollution in the Manila Bay as per their laboratory findings.

"Based on our laboratory analysis, the level of salt oxygen is very low while the ammonia levels are very high," the BFAR representative told Barzaga, who conducted an ocular inspection in the area beforehand.

Barzaga said local residents told him that the growth of fish there has been stunted.

The DOH informed the committee that they have already put in place sewerage "dislodgers" and installed toilet facilities around the area.

The Manila Bay Task Force has a supplemental budget of P2.1 billion, which it can utilize until June 2020. Another P1.4 billion has been allocated for the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Plan for fiscal year 2020.

"We have to know your expenses and accomplishments on a quarterly basis. You have to submit quarterly reports because we are reverting back to the cash-based budgeting system," Barzaga told the agency officials.

The NHA has been allotted a total of P8.6 billion for relocation purposes this year, P6.1 billion of which has already been released by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

The panel hearing was initiated by Barzaga's House Resolution (HR) No. 247, which called for an inquiry on the continued degradation of the Roxas Boulevard, which runs along the shores of Manila Bay.



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Squatters pollute Manila Bay

—DILG

By Maricel V. Cruz

A SENIOR official of the Department of the Interior and Local Government on Monday blamed squatters for the degradation of Manila Bay.

"We have discovered that 80 percent of the pollution in Manila Bay comes from informal-settler families," Undersecretary Epimaco Densing of the DILG informed lawmakers from the House of Representatives.

Densing made the statement at the hearing conducted by the House of Representatives' Committee Natural Resources, chaired by Dasmariñas City Rep. Elpidio Barzaga Jr. on the status of Manila Bay rehabilitation that is be-

ing undertaken by several government agencies headed by the Environment and Tourism departments.

Barzaga earlier filed House Resolution 247 directing the natural resources panel to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the status of Manila Bay rehabilitation and the cleanup of water tributaries leading to it, as ordered by President Rodrigo Duterte and by the continuing writ of mandamus of the Supreme Court.

A writ of mandamus is an order from a

court to a government agency or agencies to do something, in this case, to cleanup Manila Bay.

The continuous pollution of Manila Bay had impacted the health and livelihood of the coastal communities and produced deleterious effects on the marine life and resources in Manila Bay and contingent waters and tributaries leading to the said bay," Barzaga noted in his resolution.

During the Monday hearing, representatives from the Health department and Bureau of Fisheries affirmed the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Task Force where Densing is a member that massive garbage, fecal and waste sewage have worsened the pollution.



No surprise: 80% of pollution in Manila Bay comes from squatters

BY WENDELL VIGILIA

AS much as 80 percent of pollution in Manila Bay, which includes human waste, are from illegal settlers living along the shoreline and nearby areas, an official of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) said yesterday.

Interior Undersecretary Epimaco Dansing told the committee on environment that thousands of families who have built illegal residential structures are mostly the ones polluting the bay.

"We have discovered that 80 percent of the pollution in Manila Bay comes from informal-settler families," he told the House committee on environment and natural resources chaired by Cavite Rep. Elpidio Barzaga Jr.

The briefing was made on the status of the rehabilitation being undertaken by the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Tourism (DOT).

The three departments compose the Manila Bay Task Force that President Duterte created to clean up Manila Bay and restore some of its old glory.

The Task Force has a budget of P2.1 billion that it can utilize until June 2020 on top of another P1.4 billion for the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Plan under the 2020 budget which has yet to be approved by the Senate.

For this year, the National Housing Authority (NHA) has a budget of P8.6 billion to relocate the illegal settlers, of which P6.1 billion has been released by the Department of Budget and Management.

Representatives from the Department of Health and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources have likewise affirmed the Task Force's findings, noting that laboratory analysis yielded results that massive garbage, fecal and waste sewage have worsened the pollution.

Department of Health and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources representatives said laboratory analysis showed that massive garbage, fecal and waste sewage have contributed to the problem.

A BFAR official told Barzaga, who visited the area recently, that the level of salt oxygen is very low while the ammonia levels are very high which prompted the DOH to set up sewerage "dislodgers" and toilet facilities in the area.



SOLON, ANTI-POOR?

Informal settlers sa Manila Bay, pinaaalis

Pinabubuwan ang mga informal settler sa paligid ng Manila Bay dahil sila umano ang nagiging dahilan ng pagdumi ng lugar.

Ito ang ipinunto ni House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources chairman Cavite 4th District Rep. Elpidio Barzaga nang dumalo sa public hearing, kahapon.

Inatasan ni Barzaga ang Manila Bay Task Force na gibain ang mga barung-barong ng mga residente upang magtagumpay umano ang layunin ng pamahalaan na malinis ang nasabing lawa.

Ipinaliwanag ng kongresista, ang mga ito (informal settlers) aniya ang pangunahing dahilan ng polusyon sa Manila Bay.

"The big part of the problem lies with the NHA (National Housing Authority). We cannot clean the Bay unless we

remove the illegal settlers," ang bilin nito sa mga kinatawan ng task force na dumalo sa pagdinig.

"We will monitor your activities. Our main concern here is the ordinary people and the environment. It's as simple as that," sabi nito.

Ang nasabing task force na itinatag noong nakaraang Pebrero sa bisa ng Administrative Order No. 16 ay kinabibilangan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) at Department of Tourism.

Nakapaloob sa nabanggit na direktiba ang panawagang apurahin ang rehabilitasyon at pagbabalik-balik sa dating anyo ng lawa at ng marine ecosystem nito na nakilala sa breathtaking sunset nito.

Elison A. Quismorio



Manila Bay rehab: 70K iskwater napaalis

UMABOT na sa 70,165 informal settlers ang natanggal dahil sa isinasagawang rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay.

Sa pagdinig ng House committee on natural resources, sinabi ni Interior and Local Government Undersecretary Epimaco Densing na ang mga naalis sa gilid ng Manila Bay ay nasa bahagi ng Metro Manila, Central Luzon, at Calabarzon regions.

Pero ito ay 24 porsyento lamang ng 190,655 informal settler families.

Sinabi ni Densing na 80 porsyento ng polusyon sa Manila Bay ay galing sa mga informal settlers.

Sinabi ng chairman ng komite na si Dasmarinas Rep. Pidi Barzaga na dapat madaliin ang paglilipat sa mga informal settlers upang mapabilis din ang paglinis ng Manila Bay.

"The big part of the problem lies with the

NHA (National Housing Authority). We cannot clean the Bay unless we remove the illegal settlers. We will monitor your activities. Our main concern here is the ordinary people and the environment. It's as simple as that," ani Barzaga.

Hiningi ni Barzaga sa Task Force ang ginastos at accomplishment report nito upang malaman kung anong kanilang ginagawa. —Leifbilly Bégas



Probe into Kaliwa dam project pressed

WHILE the water crisis should be resolved immediately, it should be done according to or consistent with the law.

In this light Rizal Rep. Fidel Nograles filed House Resolution No. 309 which seeks to investigate the proposed construction of the Kaliwa Dam.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has given the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System and China Energy Engineering Corp. the green light to proceed with the construction of the P18.7-

billion Kaliwa Dam project.

The news comes in the wake of advisories from water concessionaires Manila Water Company Inc. and Maynilad Water Services, Inc. of rotational water service interruptions starting this month.

"We are not denying that we have a water crisis. But we must ensure that our response is in line with the law. Dapat masiguro nating hindi maa-agrabyado ang kalikasan, pati na ang mga indigenous peoples at iba pang kababayan natin," the lawmaker said.

The member of Lakas CMD is urging the proper committee of the House of Representatives to conduct an investigation in aid of legislation into the New Centennial Water Source-Kaliwa Dam Project (NCWS-KDP) and its alleged anomalous

award to China Energy Engineering Co. Limited.

The solon reiterated the need to investigate the dam project even though the DENR, through the Environment Management Bureau, has put safeguards in the environmental clearance certificate it has granted to MWSS.

Nograles had cried foul over the anomalous awarding of the KDP to the Chinese firm despite it lacking pre-qualification requirements.

A provision in the ECC says that the MWSS should "implement the measures presented in the environmental impact statements intended to protect and mitigate the project's adverse impacts on community health, welfare and the environment.

Nograles also took issue with a non-compliance clause of the ECC.

Jester P. Manalastas



EDITORIAL

Scorched-earth threat

President Duterte had a bold message for his fellow leaders at the recent Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) summit in Thailand. "Asean should not sacrifice the environment and the region's rich biodiversity, particularly in the maritime domain, in its quest for progress," he said. Rather, he added, it needs to "ensure environmental sustainability and protect biodiversity in the region's pursuit for development."

Strong and timely words. If only the President would be able to remember them once he's back home, and apply them in his own backyard. Because, just days before he offered that reminder to foreign leaders, he made it "very clear" to his own citizens, in yet another chilling order, that he will use his "extraordinary powers" to force the construction of the controversial Kaliwa Dam, and opposition to it be damned.

The problem with that scorched-earth threat is that the main "opposition" comes from those who have the birthright to the land—the indigenous peoples whose lives and identity are tied to the Sierra Madre countryside they have inhabited for ages, but which, under the Kaliwa Dam project, is set to be inundated and lost for good.

Mr. Duterte appears to be undeterred by such concerns. "You have every right to protest if it really would place your place in jeopardy," he said. "But if the safeguards are there, then between your concerns and the crisis that we are trying to avoid, I will use the extraordinary powers of the presidency."

"The crisis we are trying to avoid" is the increasingly inadequate water supply for the 12 million or so residents of Metro Manila, a primordial need to sustain economic life in the nation's capital. For the second time this year, Metro Manila inhabitants face a new round of debilitating six to 10 hours of rotational water supply, after the two water concessionaires said their demand of 2,400 million liters per day (for Maynilad) and 1,600 MLD for (Manila Water) could no longer be met, as water from rain-dependent Angat Dam in Bulacan, accounting for 96 percent of the metro's water supply, continues to drop steadily. A full-blown water crisis, they warned, is looming next year.

"I cannot just allow people to go about without water even for drinking," declared Mr. Duterte. "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.

The solution his administration has seized upon to address the crisis is the New Centennial Water Source-Kaliwa Dam Project, an P18.7-billion megadeal awarded to China Energy Engineering Corporation Limited that will be financed through a loan from the Export-Import Bank of China. The dam will straddle Quezon and Rizal, deep in the Sierra Madre, with about 291 hectares inside the Reina Natural Park, Wildlife Sanctuary and Game Preserve to be "inundated" (according to the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System).

That area, however, is not unpopulated; it forms part of the ancestral domain of at least 10,000 families of the Agta-Dumagat-Remontado indigenous peoples of Quezon and Rizal, and they are the ones who are set to pay the price for Mr. Duterte's iron plan to railroad the dam through to quench Metro Manilans' thirst.

Not surprisingly, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources has issued an environmental compliance certificate despite overwhelming objections from the affected communities. Questions have been raised about the validity of the Free, Prior and Informed Consent the government has supposedly obtained—just the latest red flag in a project that has been riddled with controversy from the start.

For the Dumagat, facing the prospect of losing their lands and way of life, and for the country that might see irreversible damage to the biodiversity in the Sierra Madre, the President has words of advice far different from what he had told the Asean: "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."

But the Dumagat are people, too, aren't they? And part of democracy is addressing their concerns, in compliance with the law requiring consultations with and consent by local communities. What safeguards have been put in place for them? And must progress mean sacrificing peoples and the environment, a zero-sum game, or is there a less harmful alternative to be found—if only the government were to exert more honest and exhaustive effort to look for one? As Dumagat leader Henry Borreo lamented: "We have a right to our ancestral domains. But instead of protecting our rights, the President and the government are the first to violate them."



Build the dam now

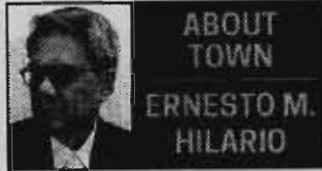
DAMN the torpedoes, go full speed ahead.

That's our unsolicited advice to the Duterte administration as it seriously considers the construction of the long-delayed Kaliwa Dam project to respond to the water supply crisis in Metro Manila.

The two water concessionaires in the city have resorted to rationing of scarce supply to some 1.4 million city residents because of the dwindling supply in Angat Dam, our main water source. That, in turn, is the result of not enough rains this year. We usually have 20 or more typhoons barreling in from the Pacific Ocean every year, but the El Niño weather phenomenon and climate change/global warming seem to have influenced a different weather pattern this year.

It is in this context that we must situate President Rodrigo Duterte's recent warning that he would use his "extraordinary powers" to implement the China-funded Kaliwa Dam project in Tanay, Rizal province, to solve the water crisis in Metro Manila.

The President stressed that his primary concern was the people's welfare: "You have every right to protest if it



"The interests of the many should prevail over the interests of the few."

would really put (your welfare) 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 (ensure that people would have water)." He pointed out that his concern was the "greatest good for the greatest number...that is democracy," and that what is important is for safeguards to be put in place while building the dam.

The interests of the many should prevail over the interests of the few. That is a key principle of our democratic system.

But that does not mean imposing the will of the majority on the minority without any democratic discussion or consultation. Here, the indigenous peoples who stand to be adversely affected by the dam project should be given the opportunity to ventilate their views on the dam issue.

While we recognize that the President can invoke extraordinary powers to cope with the water crisis, the government should also protect the rights of indigenous peoples. The Commission on Human Rights is correct in pointing out that the water shortage remedy should not violate IP rights: "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."

While we're at this, it seems that critics of the dam project are barking up the wrong tree when they single out the two concessionaires—Maynilad Water Services Inc. (MWSI) and Manila Water Co. (MWC)—for failing to build a new water source to prevent recurring shortfalls.

The job of the water concessionaires is

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Build...

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to mainly to distribute water to consumers. It is the government, through the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System that should find alternative water sources, such as the Kaliwa Dam-New Centennial Water Source project.

Maynilad has said it fully supports the construction of Kaliwa Dam as a "viable long-term solution" to the recurring shortage in Metro Manila. The project is expected to commence soon as this it has already secured an environmental compliance certificate (ECC) from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

"As a water distributor, Maynilad can only distribute the water volume that it receives from existing raw water sources. The government has claimed responsibility for the development of raw water sources, but we have been working with them to expedite the process because we understand the urgency of meeting the supply needs of our customers," it said recently.

The two water concessionaires have also been raked over the coals for their supposed failure to install sewerage systems and wastewater treatment facilities. There's also the allegation that the fees Maynilad and MWC have been charging their customers to build these facilities were not being spent for the

purpose. Maynilad clarifies that it has spent P46.7 billion on wastewater treatment facilities since 1997 even if it has collected only P38.07 billion in sewage fees over same period, which means it still has to recover P8.6 billion of its investments in wastewater projects. The concessionaire is also allocating P200 billion to build 26 new STPs and install 425 kilometers of new sewer lines from 2019 to 2037. These investments, it said, are in fulfillment of its responsibilities under Republic Act (RA) No. 9275 or the Clean Water Act (CWA).

The two water concessionaires insist that they should not be singled out for the lack of enough sewage treatment plants and wastewater treatment facilities as mandated under the CWA because there are 17 government agencies, including the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of the Interior and Local Government and the Department of Public Works and Highways that have failed to do their jobs as mandated by the Clean Water Act.

The current water crisis in Metro Manila needs an immediate solution, and it's not by inundating the water distributors with what they feel are totally unfounded and baseless accusations. Perhaps the government should start rolling up its sleeves and picking up shovels so that the dam project can finally get off the ground.

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Why the Kaliwa Dam ECC must be revoked



EAGLE
EYES
TONY
LA VINA

AS I have written in this column before, I believe that the Kaliwa River Dam should not be built. Like the Chico River irrigation project, this is development aggression at its worst. I said these projects are bad for nature and for our people, and will result in social conflict. They will damn our environment and peoples. They are also economically disadvantageous as Chinese-funded projects.

In that column last May, I wrote how the Dumagat, the indigenous people who live in the area, will largely be affected by the construction of the Kaliwa Dam. I pointed out how a part of the area where the Kaliwa Dam will be erected is considered sacred land and is a burial ground for the departed Dumagat. This has caused the Dumagat to double efforts in ensuring that the construction does not take place. Even church leaders, particularly the Catholic Church, are staunch advocates of the movement against the construction of the Kaliwa Dam.

Environmentalists have also expressed their opposition to the building of the dam, which will straddle the Rizal and Quezon province. This will have an enormous impact on the Sierra Madre—not just home to a wide array of indigenous groups, but also of rich biodiversity. Even the already critically endangered Philippine Eagle in the area might be facing extinction because of the alterations in the landscape that creating a dam would entail.

In sum, the Kaliwa Dam project is controversial, not just because of the exorbitant amount needed for its construction, but also because of its negative environmental and socio-cultural consequences.

Unfortunately and inexplicably, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources has issued an Environ-

mental Compliance Certificate that will allow for the construction and operation of the dam.

As my colleague Joy Reyes and I wrote in another article, the issuance of the Kaliwa Dam ECC is a travesty; it is illegal and immoral. The DENR should revoke the ECC.

The ECC, which was issued in haste and did not comprehensively answer the most important procedural and substantial concerns on the FPIC process and the environmental effects, should not have been granted at all.

“The government will never obtain that free, prior and informed consent.”

Joy and I pointed out what the Supreme Court has provided as guidance to the government on how environmental impact assessment (EIA) is to be conducted. In *Boracay Foundation, Inc. vs. The Province of Aklan*, decided in 2012, the Supreme Court clarified the basic ECC requirements and laid the responsibility of implementing the EIA process on the DENR which must strictly comply with its procedures.

Quoting the Local Government Code, the Court said that there should have been prior consultations before the project's implementation. It also said that the conduct of a public hearing is mandatory and should be done early on so that concerns of stakeholders are taken into consideration in the EIA study. This lack of prior public consultation is not corrected by subsequent resolutions and endorsements by the LGU.

Sadly, the DENR completely disregarded these requirements in issuing the ECC for the Kaliwa Dam.

Among others, the ECC was issued without the Free, Prior, and Informed

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Why...

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Consent (FPIC) of indigenous peoples as required by law. FPIC can only be certified after the conduct of two community assemblies and a consensus-building period where the indigenous peoples affected can have the ability, employing their own traditional consensus-building processes, to "further understand and discern the merits/advantages and demerits/

disadvantages of the proposal in order to intelligently arrive at a consensus."

Joy and I pointed out how during consultations with the indigenous communities, concerns have been raised regarding the lack of such compliance with the law in many of the areas which will be affected by the construction of the dam. It is thus interesting to note that the MWSS issued an affidavit of no complaint, which is required for the grant of the ECC, when there were in fact many complaints lodged against the project.

The government will never obtain that FPIC. The construction of the dam and its subsequent operation will require the relocation of the indigenous communities whose livelihoods will be affected. Many of the indigenous peoples are farmers and serve as guides for hikers who climb the surrounding Sierra Madre mountains. Resettling them will result to a loss of their livelihoods and their separation from their sacred sites and burial grounds.

In addition to the lack of FPIC, the Kaliwa River Dam will cause serious

damage to the environment which is a "protected" area according to the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Law. Submerging a huge portion of the Kaliwa watershed is not acceptable as the consequences of that are unimaginable.

What makes the issuance of the ECC even more unacceptable is that the EIA process, if properly done, would have shown that there are other alternatives that can address the Manila water crisis. These other options are not as destructive to the environment, such as the pro-

posal by a Japanese firm to construct a weir, which is a 7-meter high wall as compared to China's 60-meter high dam, for a much lower cost.

The Kaliwa Dam violates the Filipino people's right to a sound environment and disregards the rights of affected indigenous peoples and local communities. The DENR clearly abdicated its duty under the law when it issued the ECC. Revocation is the only option.

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Wawa project proponents lament MWSS delay

By JAMES A. LOYOLA

The development work to ensure water supply delivery of 80 million liters per day (MLD) in 2021 and over 500 MLD in 2025 to address the ongoing water crisis in Metro Manila may not push through as planned.

In a statement, Prime Infra of Enrique Razon Jr. said this is because the project proponent of the Wawa Bulk Water Supply Project - WawaJVCo, the joint venture between Prime Infra and businessman Oscar Violago's San Lorenzo Ruiz Builders Group - continues to wait for the final approval of the project from the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS).

Over seven months ago, Manila Water Company (MWC) disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange that they entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Prime Infra for the development of the Wawa Bulk Water Supply Project, a new water source development at no cost to the government.

After a series of technical workshops and review by MWSS and the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel, the Offtake Agreement was signed by MWSS, MWC and WawaJVCo last August 6, 2019.

This was then followed by a series of public consultations all over East Zone from September 3 to 9, 2019 led by the MWSS Regulatory Office. Project details

were presented to the public alongside the tariff impact.

"The presentation was well received by the public because it was clear that this project is the most efficient and fastest solution to the ongoing water crisis. Subsequently, the MWSS board approved the tariff," Prime Infra said.

It noted though that, while WawaJVCo on its side continues to move forward with the project on the basis that the August agreement signing was the takeoff point, at the moment, the MWSS continues to sit on the remaining approvals to finally move the project forward.

"We are ready to move forward and have been proactively working with all stakeholders, public and private, to progress this project since 2018. Wawa is the fastest and least expensive water source development and comes at no cost to the government," said Razon.

He added that, "we are hopeful that the final steps will be taken in the coming days to finally deliver a project of critical importance to the residents of Metro Manila."

WawaJVCo maintains that MWSS, along with the other government regulatory bodies, must act quickly to avert the recurring water crisis. At the moment, the 80 MLD milestone for 2021 is likely to face a year of delay given that over seven months was wasted waiting for the final MWSS approvals.



'Wawa project delay to worsen water crisis'

By IRIS GONZALES

Ports tycoon Enrique Razon, who is making his foray into the water business, has warned that the water crisis in Metro Manila could worsen if the approval of his proposed Wawa Bulk Water Supply project would be delayed further.

Razon's Prime Infra partnered with businessman Oscar Violago's San Lorenzo Ruiz Builders Group to form the WawaJVCo, the company behind the project.

The joint venture plans to utilize water from Wawa Dam to

supply 80 million liters per day in 2021 and over 500 MLD in 2025.

However, Razon said the plan may not push through as scheduled because MWSS has yet to give its final approval to the project.

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Wawa... From B7

"We are ready to move forward and have been proactively working with all stakeholders, public and private, to progress this project since 2018. Wawa is the fastest and least expensive water source development and comes at no cost to the government. We are hopeful that the final steps will be taken in the coming days to finally deliver a project of critical importance to the residents of Metro Manila,"

Razon said. Last August, the Razon-led WawaJVCO and Ayala-led Manila Water signed an offtake agreement, but MWSS has yet to give the final go-signal for the project. Proponents also conducted a series of public consultations regarding the project. WawaJVco said MWSS continues to sit on the remaining approvals to finally move the project forward.

It maintains that MWSS, along with the other government regulatory bodies, must act quickly to avert the recurring water crisis.

"Curiously the government seems to be desperate for new water sources, yet MWSS continues to drag its feet," Razon said.

At the moment, the 80 MLD milestone for 2021 is likely to face a year of delay given that over seven months was wasted waiting for the final MWSS approvals.

WawaJVCo further ex-

pressed fears that, if not addressed immediately, the delivery of a new water source of this size would be unlikely in 2021.

Just last Oct. 24, both Metro Manila water concessionaires started to ration water again because Angat Dam, continues to be below ideal level.

Razon said while the government is seeking to develop new water sources, MWSS' final approval for the Wawa project continues to be delayed.



MWSS sitting on Wawa water option

By Jenniffer B. Austria and Othel V. Campos

The development of Wawa Bulk Water Supply Project in Rizal province could be delayed by a year as the project proponent—WawaJVCo, a joint venture between Enrique Razon’s Prime Infra and Oscar Violago’s San Lorenzo Ruiz Builders Group—is still awaiting final approval by state-run Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System.

WawaJVCo said while it continued to push for the project aimed to avert the water crisis in Metro Manila, the MWSS was allegedly sitting on the remaining approvals to finally move the project forward.

WawaJVCo said in a statement the development works to ensure water supply delivery of 80 million liters per day

in 2021 and more than 500 MLD in 2025 that would address the ongoing water crisis in Metro Manila might not push through as planned.

The joint venture said it continued to wait for the final approval of the project from the MWSS, more than seven months after Manila Water Company Inc. dis-

closed to the Philippine Stock Exchange that it signed an agreement with Prime Infra over the development of the Wawa Bulk Water Supply Project—a new water source development at no cost to the government.

“After a series of technical workshops and review by MWSS and the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel, the offtake agreement was signed by MWSS, MWC and WawaJVCO last August 6, 2019,” WawaJVCo said.

This was followed by a series of public consultations all over the East Zone from Sept. 3 to 9, 2019 led by the MWSS Regulatory Office.

“Project details were presented to the public alongside the tariff impact. The presentation was well-received by the public because it was clear that this project is the most efficient and fastest solution to the

ongoing water crisis. Subsequently, the MWSS board approved the tariff,” the joint venture said.

“While WawaJVCo on its side continues to move forward with the project on the basis that the August agreement signing was the takeoff point, at the moment, the MWSS continues to sit on the remaining approvals to finally move the project forward,” it said.

“We are ready to move forward and have been proactively working with all stakeholders, public and private, to progress this project since 2018. Wawa is the fastest and least expensive water source development and comes at no cost to the government. We are hopeful that the final steps will be taken in the coming days to finally deliver a project of critical importance to the residents of Metro Manila,” said Razon.



Wawa dam water supply for Metro Manila could face delay — proponent

RAZON-LED Prime Metroline Infrastructure Holdings, Inc. (Prime Infra) warned on Monday that it might not be able to deliver water to Metro Manila as scheduled in 2021 from Wawa dam in Rizal, citing the delay in government approval of the project.

"The development work to ensure water supply delivery of 80 million liters per day (MLD) in 2021 and over 500 MLD in 2025 that will address the ongoing water crisis in Metro Manila may not push through as planned," the company said in a statement.

The company said it "continues to wait for the final approval of the project from the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS)."

The Wawa bulk water supply project is a joint venture between Prime Infra of businessman Enrique K. Razon Jr. and San Lorenzo Ruiz Builders and Developers Corp. of Oscar I. Violago.

"We are ready to move forward and have been proactively working with all stakeholders, public and private, to progress this project since 2018. Wawa is the fastest and least expensive water source development and comes at no cost to the government. We are hopeful that the final steps will be taken in the coming days to finally deliver a project of critical importance to the residents of Metro Manila," Mr. Razon said in a statement.

"Curiously the government seems to be desperate for new water sources, yet MWSS continues to drag its feet."

Prime Infra said that in the past seven months, Manila Water Co., Inc. had entered into a memorandum of understanding with Mr. Razon's group for the development of the Wawa bulk water supply project, which is supposed to be a new water source for Metro Manila at no cost to the government.

But it said after a series of technical workshops and review by MWSS and the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel, the offtake agreement was signed by MWSS, Manila Water and the joint venture on Aug. 6, 2019.

The agreement was followed by a series of public consultations in Manila Water's east zone concession from Sept. 3 to 9, 2019 led by the MWSS Regulatory Office.

"Project details were presented to the public alongside the tariff impact. The presentation was well received by the public because it was clear that this project is the most efficient and fastest solution to the on-going water crisis. Subsequently, the MWSS board approved the tariff," Prime Infra said.

It said that while the joint venture continues to move forward with the project on the basis that the August agreement signing was the takeoff point, "at the moment, the MWSS continues to sit on the remaining approvals to finally move the project forward."

MWSS officials were not immediately available for comment. — **Victor V. Saulon**



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MWSS chokes water deal

Instead of offering a solution to the ongoing water crisis, state regulator Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) has become the problem itself as it is now blamed for impeding the progress of a major project to augment supply.

The development work to ensure the delivery of 80 million liters per day (MLD) of water by 2021 that will augment supply and over 500 MLD in 2025 that will address the ongoing water crisis in Metro Manila may not push through as planned, according to the Enrique Razon-led developer Prime Infra.

The Palace earlier raised the possibility of asking Congress for extraordinary powers to address the water crisis

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MWSS chokes water deal

WawaJVCo, the joint venture between Enrique Razon's Prime Infra and businessman Oscar Violago's San Lorenzo Ruiz Builders Group, continues to wait for the final approval of the project from the MWSS

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that included the option of a takeover of water concessionaires.

Chief Presidential Legal Counsel and presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo said a declaration of a national emergency could be raised if the problem in water supply worsens.

The two concessionaires, Manila Water Company Inc. and Maynilad Water Services Inc., recently implemented rotational supply interruptions in Metro Manila that last anywhere from four to 18 hours, which will be in effect up to the dry season next year.

The project proponent of the Wawa Bulk Water Supply Project - WawaJVCo, the joint venture between Enrique Razon's Prime Infra and businessman Oscar Violago's San Lorenzo Ruiz Builders Group - continues to wait for the final approval of the project from the MWSS despite the urgent need for a solution to the water crisis.

Slow-mo process

Over seven months ago, Manila Water Co. (MWC) reported to the Philippine Stock Exchange that it entered into a memorandum of understanding with Prime Infra for the development of the Wawa Bulk Water Supply Project as a new water source development at no cost to the government.

After a series of technical workshops and review by the

MWSS and the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel, the offtake agreement was signed by MWSS, MWC and WawaJVCo last 6 August 2019.

This was then followed by a series of public consultations all over the East Zone from 3 to 9 September 2019 led by the MWSS Regulatory Office. Project details were presented to the public alongside the tariff impact. The presentation was well received by the public because it was clear that this project is the most efficient and fastest solution to the present problem. Subsequently, the MWSS board approved the tariff.

WawaJVCo continues to pursue the project based on the August agreement signing which it considered the takeoff point, but the MWSS continues to sit on authorizations needed to move the project forward.

Costly delay

"We are ready to move forward and have been proactively working with all stakeholders, public and private, to progress this project since 2018. Wawa is the fastest and least expensive water source development and comes at no cost to the government. We are hopeful that the final steps will be taken in the coming days to finally deliver a project of critical importance to the residents of Metro Manila," Razon stressed.

"Curiously, the government

seems to be desperate for new water sources, yet MWSS continues to drag its feet," the industrialist noted.

WawaJVCo maintained that MWSS, along with the other regulatory bodies, must act quickly to avert the recurring water crisis. At the moment, the 50 MLD milestone for 2021 is likely to face a year of delay given that over seven months were wasted waiting for the final MWSS approvals.

WawaJVCo further expressed

fears that, if not addressed immediately, the delivery of a new water source of this size in 2021 will be unlikely.

Razon said the Wawa Dam project is not an immediate fix, but a medium- to long-term solution that would be the fastest and most sustainable way to solve the water crisis.

"If we don't act now, this will be a recurring problem," he noted.

Available options

Presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo said the government is proceeding with the construction of the China-funded Kaliwa Dam to solve the

recurring problem, but the Palace said another option being considered is special powers for the government to take over operations of water concessionaires.

"Yes, he said 'I will assume control.' So, that means it's government takeover to solve the crisis, because he said, 'If you cannot solve the crisis, then I will do it for you,'" Panelo quoted the President as saying.

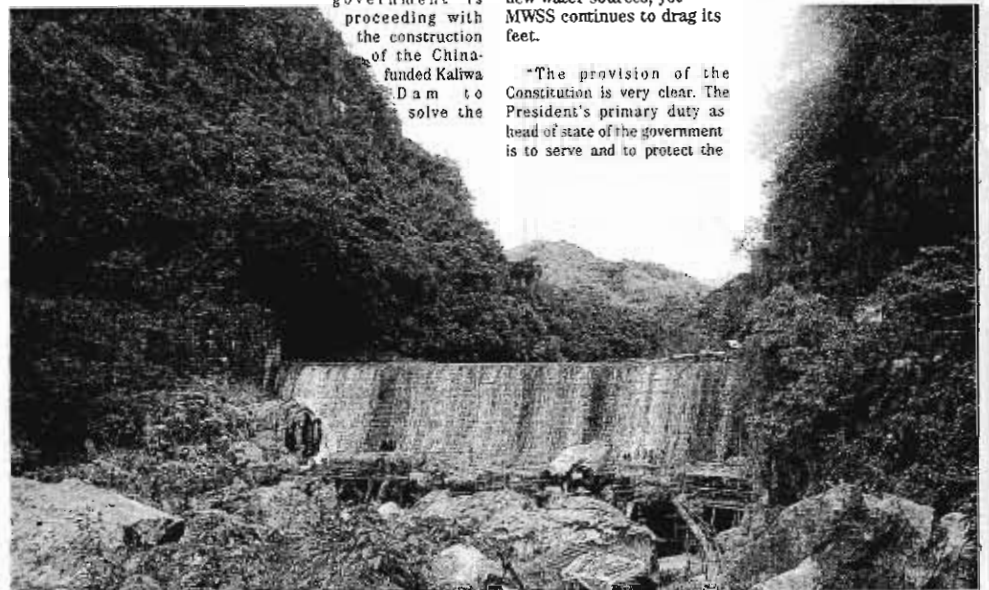
Curiously the government seems to be desperate for new water sources, yet MWSS continues to drag its feet.

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

Panelo was referring to Article 12, Section 17 of the Constitution, which 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."

CL



WAWA Dam in Rodriguez, Rizal has a huge potential in putting an end to the perennial water shortage during the dry season if only government moves fast.



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Wawa bulk water supply project faces further delay

The Wawa Bulk Water Supply Project, a new water source development at no cost to the government, continues to wait for the final approval of the project by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS). The project, which is projected to deliver 80 million liters per day (MLD) in 2021 and over 500 MLD in 2025 to address the ongoing water crisis in Metro Manila, was proposed by WawaJVCo, a joint venture between Enrique Razon's Prime Infra and businessman Oscar Violago's San Lorenzo Ruiz Builders Group. More than seven months ago, Manila Water Co. (MWC) entered into a memorandum of understanding with Prime Infra for the development of the water project. After a series of technical workshops and review by MWSS and the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel, the off-take agreement was signed by MWSS, MWC and WawaJVCO on Aug. 6. The WawaJVco, however, noted that MWSS continues to sit on the remaining approvals to finally move the project forward. "Curiously the government seems to be desperate for new water sources, yet MWSS continues to drag its feet," Razon said. "We are hopeful that the final steps will be taken in the coming days to finally deliver a project of critical importance to the residents of Metro Manila."



BULONG AT SIGAW

Ric Valmonte

Magiging larangan ang Kaliwa dam

"HINDI kami natatakot sa anumang banta at babala. Buhay at kamatayan ang aming ipinaglalaman at pinoproteskyunan, wika ng pinuno ng Dumagat na si Marcelino Tena sa pakikipanayam sa kanya nitong Lunes. Sila kasi ang mga katutubong mapapalayas sa kanilang kinalalagyan sa bahagi ng bundok Sierra Madre kapag tuluyan nang gawin ang Kaliwa dam. Eh, nagbabala si Pangulong Duterte na gagamitin niya ang kanyang hindi pangkaraniwang kapangyarihan sa pagpapairal ng proyekto na nagkakahalaga ng P18.7 bilyon. Iginiiit ni Tena ang mga katutubo ng Sierra

Madre na maitataboy ng proyekto ay hindi magbibigay ng kanilang malayang pagsang-ayon dito. Ang pagsang-ayon ng mga naninirahan sa ancestral land na maapektuhan ng anumang proyekto ay kinakailangan kunin muna ng magpapagawa nito. Ayon kay Tena, hanggang ngayon ay hindi pa tinutupad ito ng gobyerno. Pekeng konsultasyon at pagkatibay ng proyekto ng mga katutubong komunidad ang naganap na siya namang nais imbestigahan ng Commission on Human Rights. "Ginoong Pangulo, may prosesong legal na dapat sundin bago ang anumang proyekto ng gobyerno ay magawa. Kayo, bilang Pangulo ng bansa ay inaasahang maging ehemplo at modelo ng mga Pilipino sa pagsunod sa batas. Pero, dahil sa katigasan ninyo at pananakot, nagbibigay kayo ng masamang ehemplo sa lahat," wika pa ni Tena. Si Tena ay bahagi ng Samahan ng mga Katutubong Agta/Dumagat-Remontado na Binabaka at Ipinagtatangol ang Lupaing Ninuno.

Ayon naman kay Catholic priest Pete Montallana, chair ng Save Sierra Madre Network Alliance, wala siyang nakikitang bago sa pananakot ng Pangulo.

"Ginagamit na ng Pangulo ang kanyang extraordinary power sa paglalagay ng mga retiradong pulis at sundalo sa mga ahensiya ng gobyerno para mag-pressure sa mga katutubo at mga lokal na opisyal na nakikinig sa mga laban sa dam. Kung iginalang lang ang proseso ng batas na nangangalaga ng mamamayan at kapaligiran, mayroon tayong mga ahensiya na talagang ginampanan ang kanilang tungkulin. Iyong kontrata ninyo sa China ang gumulo ng lahat," sabi ng pari sa kanyang bukas na liham. Ang kontratang tinutukoy ng pari ay iyong pinasok ng Pangulo sa China na umutang ito ng P18.7 bilyon para sa proyekto na ang gagawa nito ay ang China Engineering Corp.

Dahil ganap nang kasunduan itong pinasok ng Pangulo bago pa lang konsultahin ang mga mamamayan sa pagpapagawa ng dam, ang remedyo niya ay brasuhin ito. Umaasa siya sa kanyang kapangyarihan na mapapairal ito nang pasuking niya ang kontrata sa China. Kaya, dito magkakasubukan kung saan uubra ang kanyang banta at pananakot. Matnudi ang pagtutol sa proyekto dahil sa napakagrabeng pinsalang idudulot

nito sa taumbayan at kapaligiran. Mas grabe ang magiging problema kapag natuloy ang proyekto kaysa problemang lututasin nito. Ang kinakaos ng supply ng tubig sa Kamaynilaan at karatig pook ay puwedeng ihanap pa ng lunas sa ibang paraan na hindi mapamunsala.

Magiging magulo kapag ipinuwertsang ang Kaliwa dam dahil gagamitin ng pulis o sundalo ang Pangulo. Eh may armadong grupo rin ang naninirahan sa proyekto. Ang komunistang rebelde ay nangakong paglulunsad ng pag-atake para matigil ang pagpapagawa nito. Kinokondena ng Communist party of the Philippines ang pananakot ng Pangulo na kunin sa puwersahan ang lupa at gubat ng taumbayan, ayon kay CPP public information officer Marco Valbuena. Nanawagan ito sa New People's Army na ipagtanggol ang taumbayan sa mga kapanalig ng Pangulo. Ganito inumpisahang putulin ang mapaniil na pag-gogobyerno ng diktadura. Humugot ng lakas ang taumbayan sa Simbahang nangangalaga ng kanyang kawan at sa armadong grupo na ang taumbayan rin mismo ang nagpalakas.



FIRST PERSON

ALEX MAGNO

Salty

There are two proposals on the policy table. Both of them are unpalatable.

The first proposal involves imposing excise taxes on salty food. This was put forward by the Department of Health (not by the Department of Finance) as a means to reduce consumption of salty food. Excessive consumption of salt contributes to clogged arteries and kidney problems.

The proposal comes on the heels of the highly successful imposition of an excise tax on sugary drinks. This excise tax was praised by the World Health Organization and touted as a model for other countries to follow.

In terms of revenues, the sugary drinks tax contributes only minimally to the national coffers. It is largely the health benefits that make this measure exemplary. The DOH now wants to replicate this achievement by taxing salty food.

You know what they say: When the only tool you have is a hammer, you will tend to see every problem as a nail.

The DOH seems fixated with excise taxation as a tool for health policy. But salty food is an entirely different matter.

In the case of the sugary drinks tax, the excise taxes are collected from the major beverage manufacturers. The items subject to taxation have acutely measurable amounts of sugar per liter. While the tax is borne by all consumers, it is actually collected from a few companies. Therefore this is a manageable revenue measure.

This is not so in the case of salty food. It is difficult to standardize the amount of salt in industrial products such as instant noodles and processed meat. Small backyard enterprises produce much of the deadliest (and most delicious) salty food such as fish sauce, fermented shrimp and others. Many of them are not even covered by the VAT net.

At first blush, this is an unenforceable tax measure. It will hurt the poor mostly. It could hit the big manufacturers of condiments while exempting the backyard producers — thereby creating an uneven playing field.

It is the big producers that are better regulated for quality and product safety. Taking down the big producers while allowing the unregulated backyard producers flourish does not seem like the best way to protect public health.

If the DOH wants the public to consume less salt, including purine and sodium, the agency will be better off mounting a public education campaign.

As our population becomes more urban, our diet worsens. Urban Filipinos consume more industrial food and less fresh goods. Poorer Filipinos consume less vegetables and more instant noodles. This will soon produce a health disaster.

An annoying television ad just caught my attention: a fetching young mother expressing love for her children by frying meat loaf. That is basically a diet of lard, salt and preservatives.



Distributors

The other bad idea is the proposal to nationalize the water concessions. That will simply bring us back to the miserable days when NAWASA distributed water with utmost inefficiency.

In those days, there was ample water in Angat Dam and a much smaller urban population. But there was no water coming out of our taps. There were leaks everywhere and non-revenue water must have run at 70 percent.

Today, there is little water in Angat Dam and urban demand for water is spiraling. But outside the hours when water is cut off and rationed, there is ample water in our taps. The leaks have largely been fixed and non-revenue water is at about 15%.

The concessions distribute water. The problem we face today is not about distribution but about the available supply of raw water.

Somewhere along the way, our bureaucrats decided it was government's responsibility to develop new raw water sources. The concessionaires were told to concentrate on upgrading the distribution system.

Since water distribution was privatized, service quality improved. The water delivered is cleaner. The old pipes have been replaced with new ones. Small pipes were replaced with bigger ones.

It is to the interest of the water concessionaires to improve the delivery of water, fix the leaks and bring down non-revenue water. The more water they deliver, the better they earn.

It was never in the interest of bureaucrats, when they operated the water distribution system to fix the leaks, increase the connections, install bigger pipes and bring down the level of non-revenue water. They were paid the same even if the distribution system was run to the ground. The inefficiency was simply covered by public subsidy — just as the utter failure of our rice production systems was covered up for many decades by humungous subsidies to the NFA.

Since the MWSS is merely a regulatory agency, it does not retain an army of civil works engineers capable of maintaining the water distribution system. If we hand over the concessions back to government, there will be no one to run it.

Since they took over, the two water concessionaires borrowed money from commercial sources and invested hundreds of billions in improving the distribution system to its present state. If the distribution system is taken from them on a whim, the money could not be repaid. Our sovereign credit rating will fall through the floor.

If the comprehensive service contracts covering the water concessions are imperiously abrogated, this will send the worst signal to the international investment community. New investments will be withheld or redirected. Unemployment will spiral.

Our water privatization process is emulated globally. All this talk about re-nationalizing them distracts from the real problem: the shortage of raw water supplies.



Long-term solution needed for Cebu's water woes

By MINERVA BC NEWMAN

CEBU CITY – Cebu's water crisis needs long term solution as this issue is a regular recurrence and various sectors have expressed concern over the intrusion of politics in its water woes.

The past months, Cebu and its neighboring towns and cities experienced massive water shortage due to the low water production from wells, from the Mananga river and the Buhisan Dam and from other water facilities all over Metro Cebu.

Politics has also crept into the Metro Cebu Water District (MCWD) water issue. Last month, Cebu City mayor Edgardo Labella fired five members of the MCWD board of directors which prompted MCWD general manager Eugencio Singson Jr. to resign effective November 1. The assistant GM Stephen Yee was named acting general manager.

The Visayas Association of Water Districts and Central Visayas Association of Water Districts issued statements of support to MCWD amid the so-called "illegal firing of its BOD." The groups questioned the lack of due process and expressed concern over its effect on the morale of water district employees.

They also hoped the Local Water Utilities Administration (LUWA) would resolve the issue immediately to avoid precedence for other mayors to fire BOD members in other water districts in the country.

Meanwhile, low water supply, shortage and interruptions in Metro Cebu continue to hound MCWD and its clients clamor for more water and long-term solutions to this problem.

According to MCWD spokesperson Charmain Kara, population growth, business opportunities and in-migration are factors that contributed greatly to the increase in the water demand in Metro Cebu and MCWD cannot cope with this demand.

While the demand increased, over extraction, nitrate contamination and saltwater intrusion contributed to the depletion and shut down of MCWD's several water sources, Kara noted. The water demand in Metro Cebu is estimated at 500,000 cu. m. per day in 2019 but its production is only about 238,000 cu.m. per day.

Kara added that MCWD is committed to find small to long-term solutions to the water scarcity problem and it is inviting proposals from property owners with available water supply and those who have technologies to provide solutions to Metro Cebu's water shortage problem.

MCWD water sources

According to Kara, MCWD's Buhisan Dam's current production is only at 3,000 cu. m. per day which is less than 50 percent of its normal yield during the rainy season.

Historically, Buhisan Dam's production is at 7,000 cu. m. per day, except during the summer months. At the height of the dry spell this year, Buhisan Dam had zero production in

March and recovered only in July. Its production continued to decrease in August until it reached the 3,000 cubic meters per day-level in September due to the lack of rain that feed directly to Buhisan Watershed, Kara said.

"MCWD is relying on the increased yield from the Jaclupan Facility which is sourced from the Mananga River to serve the areas that were supposed to be getting the supply from Buhisan Dam which include parts of Cebu City," she added.

To serve MCWD-clients, it accepted Pilipinas Water Resources, Inc.'s (PWRI) proposal to increase its bulk supply in the Mambaling injection point by 5,000 cu. m. per day tentatively within the year which means its contracted volume will increase to 10,000 cu. m. per day.

This will benefit MCWD consumers in Mambaling, Inayawan, Cogon Pardo, Pardo, Quiot, Kinasang-an, Basak Pardo, Basak San Nicolas, Duljo-Fatima, Sawang Calero, Suba and Pasil in Cebu City, Kara added.

In August, MCWD reported a production deficit of 13,000 cu. m. per day due to the shutdown of one of its private supplier's wells due to saltwater intrusion and two other wells reported to have reduced yields.

The shutdown of the well in Consolacion and the lowering of the daily production from Cebu Manila Water Development Inc. by 3,000 cu. m. per day affected the water services to MCWD consumers in Compostela, Liloan, Consolacion, parts of Mandaue and the



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whole of Mactan island, Kara said.

The reduction in the production of one of MCWD's wells in Talamban affected the water supply for consumers in Barangays Banilad, Luz, parts of Lahug, Kamputhaw and Apas and for two months, MCWD already lost a total volume of close to 20,000 cu. m. per day.

Agreements

According to Kara, MCWD and the Girl Scouts of the Philippines (GSP) signed a 10-year agreement for the use portions of GSP's properties in Barangay Kalunasan, Cebu City for two new wells to benefit consumers from Barangay Capitol Site and Barangay Kalunasan and eventually solve the water supply problems of the Cebu City Jail.

Apart from the GSP wells, MCWD also awarded a bulk water supply contract to Mactan Rock Industries, Inc. for a 3,000-cubic-meter per day supply for Barangay Capitol Site and Kalunasan, Kara said these barangays are among the areas with inadequate supply since 2016, Kara said.

MCWD Board of Directors also identified the Mananga and Lusaran dams and a desalination plant as its long-term solutions while small-scale desalination plants and bulk supply projects as medium-term measures to address the water scarcity.

Kara bared that in November, MCWD commissioned two wells with a combined volume of over 2,000 cubic meters per day and MCWD will develop 30 wells as part of its short-term solu-

tions to the water supply shortage.

She added that MCWD commissioned a new well in Barangay Lahug, Cebu City on November 2 and "this well site is one of over 20 areas in Cebu City where MCWD develops. This well is located on a Cebu City owned lot and is expected to yield about 900 cubic meters per day and will improve the supply for consumers along Salinas Drive and parts of Barangays Lahug and Apas."

According to Kara this is the first successful result of the partnership of MCWD and the Cebu City Government in addressing the water supply shortage.

For over a year now, MCWD has been in talks with local government units, national government agencies and non-government organizations to develop wells in city or barangay owned lots, school and church properties.

MCWD currently has over 120 wells in its service area and is regularly monitoring them to ensure the Groundwater Balance is managed and protect them from damage from over-extraction, saltwater intrusion and other contaminants, Kara said.

MCWD's data show that Metro Cebu's groundwater is already severely compromised due to unregulated extraction by private well owners, saltwater intrusion and nitrate contamination.

"The water district relies heavily on groundwater sources which comprises 70 percent of its daily supply, some 26 percent come from private bulk water suppliers and four percent is from its lone dam, the 107-year-old Buhisan Dam," Kara added.



Paradise Boracay



BRIEFING ROOM
Harry Roque

“ Given that its rehabilitation proved to be successful in restoring Boracay into the paradise that it was and remains to be, I’m sure tourists from all over will continue to marvel at its beauty.

I had the chance to visit Boracay for the first time since PRRD (President Rodrigo Roa Duterte) ordered its closure and clean up this long weekend. And boy, was it amazing!

This is coming from literally a son of Boracay. I was among the first to discover the island way back in 1988 when my current law partner and I went there by land as backpackers from Bacolod. We stayed in a hut with no electricity and air-conditioning called Naro’s Place. And because we were students then, we subsisted on *monay* and Cheez Whiz. But the food and accommodations really did not matter. What was important was the powder white sand and the pristine blue waters of the ocean.

Thirty years later and after much political will to restore it to its former glory, Boracay is back to the paradise that it was. The algal bloom that became the downside to Boracay is absolutely gone. The hotel chairs which effectively barred non-hotel guests from the beach are all gone. The people, the rightful owners to the most beautiful beach on earth, have reclaimed its world-famous sand as theirs.

And yes, the noisy parties and live bands that served as nuisances are things of the past. So are the stray dogs and the litter bugs with enforcement agencies effectively maintaining the cleanliness of the area.

Probably the most incredible achievement

of government on the island was to get rid of all structures that encroached on the 30-meter public easement from the beach. I never thought that those permanent structures could one day be removed. But PRRD did what I thought was impossible. He literally caused those protruding structures to be literally sawed off. And my, was it a great accomplishment.

“ Thirty years later and after much political will to restore it to its former glory, Boracay is back to the paradise that it was.

Even the roads now are much improved. They are now all made of concrete with their corresponding sidewalks. Gone too are structures that used to encroach on the road easement.

Truth to tell, like Sec Sonny Dominguez, I was skeptical about PRRD’s

decision to completely close Boracay to the public. Having built my legal career catering to the resort owners of the island, I believed in Sec Sonny’s advice that the better mode was to partially close the island and do the rehabilitation phase by phase. He said, this was borne of his experience as a hotel owner that renovations are never done completely but in phases as it was difficult to recover lost patronage during a complete closure. From all indications, this did not happen to Boracay since it is still teeming with tourists, both local and foreign. And given that its rehabilitation proved to be successful in restoring Boracay into the paradise that it was and remains to be, I’m sure tourists from all over will continue to marvel at its beauty.

Thank you PRRD for restoring our tourism crown jewel!



Panawagang pagsisikap laban sa climate change

PATULOY na nahuhuli ang paglaban sa climate change sa patuloy na pagkasira ng kalikasan na nagbibigay ng banta sa buhay ng mas maraming mga tao, pahayag ng United Nations (UN) chief nitong Linggo.

Sa isang briefing matapos ang Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) - UN Summit sa Thailand, sinabi ni UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, na batid ng mga lider ng rehiyon ang epekto ng climate change sa kani-kanilang ekonomiya.

Sinabi ng UN chief na "[climate change is] the most dramatic threat to sustainability today."

"There's a major concern for us all. Indeed, we are still losing the race. Climate change is running faster than what we are," aniya.

Ayon sa UN chief, ang epekto ng climate change ay nagresulta na sa matinding tagtuyot, pagkatunaw ng mga glaciers, at pagbabago ng kulay ng mga corals.

Aniya, ang mga pagbabagong ito sa kapaligiran ay nagresulta na sa mga kalamidad na nakaapekto sa buhay ng mga tao sa mundo.

Kasabay ng pagbanggit sa resulta ng isang pag-aaral na inilabas kamakailan, sinabi ni Guterres na ang bilis ng pagtaas ng lebel ng tubig sa dagat ay higit na mas mabilis kumpara sa dating inaasahan.

"It is now foreseen that if we are not able to defeat climate change we will have, in 2050, an impact on the sea level rise over 300 million people," aniya.

Dahil dito, muli niyang nabanggit ang panawagan para sa pangangailangan na masiguro na mapigil ang pagtaas ng temperature sa 1.5 degrees bago matapos ang siglo, na maging carbon neutral pagsapit ng 2050 habang mababawasan ang emission ng 45 percent.

"In the next decades, if we miss these objectives the situation will be catastrophic with dramatic impact around the world," aniya.

Ipinanawagan din ni Guterres ang implementasyon ng carbon tax, sa pagsasabing ang subsidiya sa fossil fuels na ibinibigay ng pamahalaan sa mga negosyante ay nagmumula naman sa buwis ng mga tao.

Nabanggit din niya ang pangangailangan na mapigilan ang pagtatayo ng mga bagong coal-fired power plants mula 2020 at sa halip ay isulong ang produksiyon ng mas maraming renewable energy.

Binigyang-diin niya na maraming bilang ng mga coal-fired power plants ang nasa pipeline para sa konstruksiyon sa East, South, at Southeast Asia sa mga susunod na taon.

"It is very important to recognize that the addiction to coal can undermine our efforts to defeat climate change," pagbabahagi pa ng UN chief.

Nabanggit niya na nakipag-usap na siya sa mga lider bansa kung saan napipintong itayo ang mga bagong coal-fired power plants upang muling pag-isipan ang plano.

"My appeal is for an emphasis to be put on renewables and to be able to stop the construction of new power plants, coal power plants, because, as I have said, the addiction to coal can undermine, because of its impact in terms of CO2 (carbon dioxide), can undermine our efforts to defeat climate change," paliwanag pa niya.

Ipinunto ng UN chief na "today it is clear that renewable energy is the cheapest one."

"Technology has evolved in such a way that today renewables are the most effective form to produce electricity," giit niya.

PNA



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

Discipline, vendor ban reduce cemetery trash

EcoWaste Coalition: 14 truckloads collected from Oct. 28-Nov. 3, down from 2018

By Dexter Cabalza
@dexcabalzaINQ

The volume of trash collected from 27 Metro Manila cemeteries during the All Saints' Day break went down this year, a trend that an environmental watchdog attributed to visitors who practiced discipline and a ban on vendors.

From Oct. 28 to Nov. 3, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority's metro parkway clearing group hauled away from 27 cemeteries a total of 47.65 tons of garbage—equivalent to 14 truckloads—consisting mostly of single-use paper and plastic packaging from food concessionaires.

The volume was 10 tons lower compared to last year's 57.95 tons of garbage.

Green advocacy group EcoWaste Coalition attributed the decrease to the "cooperation of disciplined visitors" and a ban on vendors inside cemeteries that was imposed by some local government units (LGUs).

"We laud caring Filipinos for leaving flowers and prayers—not trash—at the graves of their dearly departed relatives and friends," EcoWaste's Zero Waste campaigner Jove Benosa said in a statement.

"This should be the rule



TOXIC PLASTIC Most of the trash collected were single-use paper and plastic packaging from food concessionaires.

rather than the exception as millions gather every year in cemeteries to remember and pray for them," he added.

Minimal to intense

There was "minimal" to "intense" littering at 17 cemeteries in Caloocan, Makati, Mandaluyong, Manila, Marikina, Parañaque, Pasay, Quezon City and San Juan, based on field re-

ports from the group's "Basura Patrollers."

Some cemeteries, on the other hand, were declared "litter-free" by the group. These were St. John Memorial Park in San Juan, Aglipay Cemetery in Marikina, Garden of Life Cemetery in Mandaluyong and Loyola Memorial Park in Parañaque.

The "most littered" burial

place was Bagbag Public Cemetery in Quezon City, where, according to EcoWaste, "visitors [were] literally walking over or sitting next to garbage."

With the Manila City government's implementing a total ban on vendor and illegal settlers inside the Manila North and South cemeteries, the group observed a visible reduction in food packaging waste.

But the Manila Department of Public Services said that from Oct. 10 to Nov. 2, a total of 121 truckloads of garbage and other materials were collected from the two cemeteries.

Preventive measures

"The garbage situation in all cemeteries will further improve next year if preventive measures are effectively carried out," EcoWaste said, as it called on LGUs and cemetery administrators to enforce their respective ecological solid waste management plans.

The group also urged visitors to bring home their trash as it declared cemeteries plastic-free zones.

This would place at zero the amount of single-use plastics such as carry bags, eating utensils, drinking bottles and Styrofoam containers to be disposed of, it said. —WITH A REPORT FROM

NIKKA G. VALENZUELA INQ

PHOTO COURTESY OF ECOWASTE COALITION



MMDA collects 47 tons-plus of garbage after 'Undas'

By Joel E. Zurbano

THE Metro Manila Development Authority collected more than 47 tons of trash left by visitors in various cemeteries in the National Capital Region during the observance of All Saints' and All Souls' Day.

This despite the appeal of Church leaders and various environmental groups to the people to avoid dumping and abandon waste inside and near cemeteries during the solemn occasion annually observed on Nov. 1 and 2.

MMDA spokesperson Assistant Secretary Pircelyn Pialago said the agency's Environmental Management Unit collected a total of 167.84 cubic meter (14 truckloads) of garbage from 27 cemeteries in 16 cities and one municipality in Metro Manila from Oct. 28 to Nov. 3.

Pialago said the trash collected this year was lower than the 57 tons of garbage the MMDA collected in 2018.

"The number is lesser compared to *Undas* last year when 202.61 cubic meter or 17 truckloads of garbage were collected," she added.

Pialago said the major cemeteries under the MMDA's watch include the Manila North in the City of Manila, Manila South in Makati City, Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina City, Bagbag Public Cemetery in Quezon City, and Manila Memorial Park in Paranaque City.

Environmental group Ecowaste Coalition lamented the throw-away culture that again typified the annual observance of *Undas*.

Based on the group's monitoring, 'minimal to intense' littering was observed in 17 cemeteries in various cities in Metro Manila.



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'Casabwatch' anti-trash group formed

THE Calabarzon Regional Agencies of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of the Interior and Local Government have introduced the First Calabarzon Sanitasyon Basura Watch Program in a recent Regional Support and Catalyst Group Meeting.

Casabwatch is a program in support of the Manila Bay Clean-Up and Rehabilitation Program, Manila Bayanihan para sa Kalikasan Advocacy, and Tayo ang Kalikasan.

It aims to reduce the solid waste flowing in the waterways of Calabarzon and in Manila Bay through strict implementation of no littering and no illegal dumping of waste in the region.

According to the report of the Environmental Management Bureau IVA, only two out of the 14 monitored bathing beaches connected to Manila Bay are within the standard fecal coliform level of 100 MPN/100 mL. **Rey Tumandao**



Cagdianao Mining, Surigao Rotary connect with 1 million trees



IT'S becoming a challenge to find open areas in a highly-urbanized metropolis like Surigao City where one can plant trees. But the Rotarians in the City led by the Rotary Club of Metro Surigao Foundation, Inc., committed to plant 1M trees and their initial experience had them wanting for more.

Together with family members and friends – with the theme “Rotary Connects the World” – Rotarians from Surigao City, travelled recently to the adjacent Dinagat Islands to a tree-planting adventure in a mined-out area at Cagdianao Mining Corporation (CMC).

“In one day alone, all 139 of us, including our children, relatives and friends, planted 2200 trees under an hour. We felt we could do more. We felt we connected with the world indeed. It was very motivating,” relayed Rotary Club of Surigao City

President, Louie Chua.

CMC is spearheading this ‘tree-planting adventure’ to showcase the mining company’s Environment Protection Enhancement Program (EPEP) and to help build a community of tree-planters by enjoining equally enthusiastic environmentalists such as the members of the Rotary Club to come to the mine site to plant trees.

CMC Resident Mine Manager, Engr. Arnilo Milaor, says Nickel Asia Corp (NAC) and all its subsidiaries, which includes CMC, is mandated to initiate these kinds of collaborative efforts with other organizations and government agencies.

“This is in relation with the National Greening Program of the government. We are opening the doors to Cagdianao Mining for everyone to experience the operations of a responsible mining company and to

be educated on the benefits of regularly planting trees,” explained Milaor.

He added that CMC has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Rotary Club of Metro Surigao and has committed to provide the Rotarians what they need especially healthy planting materials and access to areas waiting to be planted with all sorts of trees.

CMC also provided the group with a thorough orientation on the mining company’s rehabilitation programs in Dinagat Islands and in-depth lessons on climate change adaptations, biodiversity conservation, reforestation, food security for the communities, among other things, as mandated by law.

“The Rotarians are leading by example. The experience was a crusade of sort that required each of the participants to go out of his/her way and make time to plant a tree at least once every month. This is one way we can help direct the course of the future to a better and healthier environment,” explained Dr. Romulo Ybiernas, CMC’s Resident Physician, who is also an active Rotarian.

There are 4 Rotary Clubs in Surigao City under District 3860 – Rotary Club of Metro Surigao; Rotary Club of Central Surigao; Rotary Club of Surigao City; and Rotary Club of Surigao Midtown Jewels.



Despite risks, farmers rescue landslide victims

By **Germelina Lacorte**
@InqNational

MAGSAYSAY, DAVAO DEL SUR—Rescuers had given up rescue and retrieval operations in the mountainous area of Upper Bala village here for fear of being buried in landslides triggered by aftershocks following the 6.5-magnitude quake on Oct. 31.

But Elmer Superales, a farmer totally untrained in rescue work, showed ingenuity in trying to save the life of an injured villager and retrieve the body of his brother who was buried in a landslide following an earlier quake on Oct. 29, one in a series that rocked Mindanao last month.

Gilbert Superales, 32, was one of two villagers in Upper Bala earlier reported to have been buried in a landslide triggered by that 6.6-magnitude quake.

He and Miggy Attic were among the group of six young men who left Upper Bala village in the early morning of Oct. 29 to fix the pipes, which had stopped bringing water to the village since the 6.3-magnitude quake on Oct. 16 that might have damaged their water system.

Water system

Fe Maturan, mother of one of the volunteers, recalled that the aftershocks seemed to have weakened. Almost two weeks had gone by since that first quake that the villagers thought it was time to check their water system, which could only be reached by going down a deep ravine.

Barely two hours after the six left on Tuesday, the 6.6-magnitude earthquake struck.

"They were already fixing the water pipes and were happy to see the first gush of water from the spring reservoir when the earth moved and soil and rocks from one of the cliffs above them came crashing down," recalled Maturan's son Frith Dave, 17, one of the six volunteers who happened to be in a safer spot during the quake.

Frith Dave said he and two

other volunteers were on top of a rock that protected the spring, which served as the water source for the entire village. Below them, the other three—Gilbert, Miggy and Aison Attic—were fixing the pipes right on the level of the water source.

"The pipes already started to work and we were about to jump in to join them and finish the work when the earthquake struck," the younger Maturan said.

Maturan and his group were able to run and take cover from the wall of the rock, which protected them against the onrushing debris.

Attic and Superales took cover on one side of the rock until the cliff towering over them gave in and came crashing down right over them, Maturan said.

"The ground was shaking and we could hear them calling to Aison for help and Aison, who was just about a few feet from them, also called out, 'I can't move. I am buried, too!'" he said in Cebuano.

Recovery efforts

They shouted each other's names soon after the quake had stopped, but it was only Aison, half-buried under the debris, who called back to them for help.

Villagers said what saved Aison was a pair of wood from a fallen tree just above him, which prevented the onrushing rocks from completely burying him.

Maturan said they recovered Aison, whose bones were broken from the debris. They moved him to somewhere safe and ran to the village for help.

Rescuers saw the scene of the landslide and decided they could not go ahead with recovery efforts because of what they deemed to be the risks involved.

"They turned their backs because it was too risky to go on but they left all their equipment to be used by the villagers," observed 42-year-old Alejo Catigan Jr., himself one of the villagers.

According to him, it was Elmer Superales who assembled his relatives into a team to rescue Aison Attic and find the body of Gilbert.

"He came up with 16 young men and they went to the landslide site to get Aison," Catigan said. "Blood had already colored the water, sand was already in his mouth when they reached him about 4 p.m. He must have been very hungry."

"They took him. Eight men carried the body below to hand him over to another eight above them ... and they would again climb up to get the body from below because the whole way was a cliff," Frith Dave said.

Danger zone

Superales said he had warned his brother that day not to go to the site because the ground seemed unstable and the area was earlier declared a danger zone. But the villagers were complaining of lack of water, and he did not know that Gilbert had decided to join the volunteers.

He said he was harvesting copra in his farm overlooking the whole area when he saw a cliff slide over where their water source was, following the strong quake.

"My first thought was, I hope there was nobody there or they would surely be buried by that earth," Superales said.

Since he learned what had happened, he went back and forth to the site of the landslide, finding out how to recover his brother's body.

"I even thought of digging a tunnel but another quake struck and another fresh mound added up to the pile," Superales said.

He estimated that his brother was underneath 30 feet of debris. Two days later, another quake struck, and Superales saw the debris piling up further.

"As much as possible, I would like to recover his body," he said. "He is my brother, I will do everything I can to take him back." INQ



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Cavaliers, Warriors sustain top form in UNTV meet

Games tomorrow
(Pasig City Sports Center)
Taped as live (for airing on Nov. 10)
4 p.m. - NHA vs DENR
5:30 p.m. - NHA vs DNR
7 p.m. - PNP vs GSIS

Defending champion Armed Forces of the Philippines extended its winning streak to five games while Department of Environment and Natural Resources stunned Malacañang-Philippine Sports Commission, 80-77, in the 8th UNTV Cup held over the weekend at the Pasig City Sports Center.

The AFP Cavaliers bucked a slow start to beat the Ombudsman Graftbusters, 92-74, to stay unbeaten in the Group A elims of the annual tournament for public servants.

The Cavaliers erased a 20-13 first-quarter deficit as Romeo Almerol and Wilfredo Casulla struck hard in the middle quarters, giving them a 67-55 lead going into the payoff period, which they protected to prevail.

The DENR Warriors leaned on Ed Rivera and Arturo Atablanca to notch their fourth straight win while snapping the four-game winning run of the Malacañang-PSC Kamao in Group B.



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EXTRA INNING

UNTV Cup: PAF, DENR post contrasting victories

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Almerol topscored for the Cavaliers with 21 points, Casulla added 17 while former Letran star Boyet Bautista and Jerry Lumungsod had 17 points each.

The DENR Warriors, on the other hand, leaned on the clutch plays of Ed Rivera and Arturo Atablanca to notch their fourth straight win while snapping the four-game winning run of the Malacañang-PSC

Kamao in Group B.

In the other Group A match, PhilHealth improved its record to 2-3 with a 104-80 drubbing of SSS.



UNTV tilt: DENR stuns Malacañang

Games Wednesday
(Pasig City Sports
Center)

Taped as live (for airing
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winning run of the Malacañang-PSC Kamao in Group B.

Rivera led the Warriors with 22 points while Atablanca posted five points, seven assists and four rebounds in another solid all-around game.

In the other Group A match, PhilHealth improved its record to 2-3 with a 104-80 drubbing of SSS.

First Game

PhilHealth (104) - Mazo 34, Aldave 21, Pacheco 16, Hernandez 11, Pedroso 8, Emata 8, Armojallas 4, Mbbagu 2.

SSS (80) - Quiambao 31, Aguila 12, Trinidad 11, Packlibare 10, Sarmiento 8, Roman 6, Puno 2.

Quarterscores: 15-20, 46-34, 71-53, 104-80.

Second Game

AFP (92) - Almerol 21, Casulla 18, Lumongsod 17, Bautista 17, Rosopa 10, Fernandez 5, Evidor 3, Tan 1.

Ombudsman (74) - Ignacio 22, Franco 14, Baldonado 12, Del Rosario 7, Lumague 7, Palacio 6, Sanchez 4, Buetipo 2.

Quarterscores: 13-20, 37-34, 67-55, 92-74.

Third Game

DENR (80) - Rivera 22, Bangal 17, Lansang 14, Ayson 12, Abanes 9, Atablanca 5, Parreno 1.

Malacañang - PSC (77) - Jimenez 19, Punzalan 17, Dela Cuesta 15, Besa 9, V. Javier 7, N. Javier 3, Garrido 3, Roque 2, Abalos 2.

Quarterscores: 21-12, 35-27, 59-45, 80-77.



AFP nails 5th win; DENR stuns Palace

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In the other Group A match, PhilHealth improved its record to 2-3 with a 104-80 drubbing of SSS.

The SSS Kabalikat absorbed their fourth straight defeat in the tournament offering P4 million to the chosen charity of the champion.



Senate clears agency mandate to buy palay from local farmers

MAJORITY and minority senators, voting 21-0 at Monday's session, passed a Joint Senate-House Resolution mandating major government departments and local government units to help promote the rice subsidy program.

As passed, the Joint Resolution directs the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Interior and Local Government (DILG), National Defense (DND), Transportation (DOTR), Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the local government units to coor-

dinate with the National Food Authority (NFA) and the Department of Agriculture.

The Joint Resolution effectively required the Executive departments listed in the congressional resolution to "directly purchase palay from the local farmers for the rice subsidy program."

Pressure has mounted in past weeks for the government to speed up assistance to farmers, who have been reeling from the eight-year record low palay prices in the months following the implementation of the rice trade liberalization law.

Butch Fernandez



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WALANG puwang ang paninisi sa kung sino ang Pangulo ng ating bansa tuwing may kalamidad.

Sa halip, dapat na maghatid tayo ng tulong sa abot ng ating makakaya sa mga biktima ng kalamidad.

Mahigit 30,000 katao na ang direkta at seryosong napinsalaan ng buhay at ari-arian sa Mindanao dahil sa sunod-sunod na lindol simula pa noong buwan ng Hulyo 2019 at mayroon pasulpot-sulpot na nito.

Kasama na rito ang may 17 patay at daan-daang nasugatan habang tinitipa natin ito.

Maaari pa ngang may maganap na magnitude 7.2 sa Mindanao na dapat nating paghandaan.

PARE-PAREHONG MAY KALAMIDAD

Sa mga araw na ito, mga Bro, kung ano-ano ang mga lumalabas sa bunganga ng mga kritiko ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

Kesyo, ang lindol umano ay bunga ng kawalan ng paniniwala ni Pang. Digong sa diyos ng mga kritiko at naniningil na umano ang diyos sa pamamagitan ng lindol sa Mindanao na lugar ng ating Pangulo.

Anak ng pitong putakte, sa kakitiran ng utak ng mga kritiko, nakalimutan nilang ang kanilang mga bayani at tagapaniwala ng kanilang diyos ay kinaganapan din ng mga matitinding kalamidad.

Noong panahon ng bayani nila na si ex-Pres. Corazon Aquino, naganap noong Hulyo 16, 1990 ang Baguio killer quake o magnitude 7.7 at intensity 9 na pumatay ng 1,621 tao mula Baguio hanggang sa Central Luzon (lugar ng mga Aquino) at Cabanatuan City-Aurora province.

Sinundan ito ng pagputok ng Mt. Pinatubo noong Hunyo 15, 1991 na pumatay ng 847 tao.

Noon namang Nobyembre 8, 2013 na panahon ni ex-Pres. Noynoy Aquino, dumating ang bagyong Yolanda na pumatay ng nasa 7,000 tao at nang-missing ng 1,800 iba pa.

Kung sinasabi ng mga kritiko na naniningil ang Diyos kay Pang. Digong sa pagkakaroon ng Diyos na iba sa kanilang Diyos, ano naman ang masasabi nila sa mga grabeng kalamidad noong panahon ng kanilang



PAGBANGON MATAGAL; TUMULONG, 'DI MANISI

mga pinapanginoon na maginang Aquino?

HINDI PA TAPOS

Ayon sa Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, maraming fault o bitak ng mga pundasyong bato at adobe ng lupa sa kabuuang Cotabato lamang.

Kabilang dito ang M'lang fault, Makilala-Malungon Fault, North Columbio Fault, South Columbio Fault, ang Mindanao Fault (Cotabato-Sindangan Fault) at Cotabato Trench na kinaganapan ng lindol na magnitude 8.1 at lumikha ng tsunami na pumatay ng 8,000 tao sa Mindanao noong Agosto 17, 1976 at panahon naman ni ex-Pres. Ferdinand Marcos.

Ayon sa Phivolcs, maaaring pauna pa lang ang mahigit 6 lindol nang naganap sa darating na mas malaki o magnitude 7.2 na lindol.

Ang nakatatakot pa nga, pray to God na sana hindi matuloy, baka magaya ang Mt. Apo sa Mt. Pinatubo.

Alam ba ninyong malaki ang paniniwala na ang killer quake na Cabanatuan-Baguio na lindol ang nagpasimula sa pagputok ng Bulkang Pinatubo?

Paano kung ang mga lindol ngayon sa Mindanao ay pauna rin ng pagputok ng Mt. Apo.

Paano kung maganap nga ito?

Heto nga, niyayari ng landslide ang kapaligiran ng Mt. Apo dahil sa mga lindol na ang bababaw.

MABAGSIK NA LINDOL

Kung maaaring dumating ang magnitude 7.2 na lindol sa nililindol nang mga lugar sa Mindanao, magdasal-dasal na tayo kahit wala tayong time para rito.

Bakit?

Ang babaw ng mga pinagmumulan ng lindol ngayon sa Mindanao.

'Yung magnitude 4.2 lang na naganap nitong nakaraang Biyernes, nasa dalawa kilometro lang mula sa ibabaw ng lupa o karagatan.

'Yung mabagsik na magnitude 6.6, nasa 7 kilometro lang din ang lalim.

Pero naging mabagsik ang magnitude 6.6 at ang sumunod na magnitude 6.1.

Paano na lang kung may magnitude 7.2 at nasa 2-7 kilometro lang ang lalim.

Ang Baguio-Cabanatuan quake na magnitude na 7.7 at may lalim na 25 kilometro ay pumatay ng maraming tao, paano pa kaya ang magnitude 7.2 na nasa 2-7 kilometro lang ang lalim.

Umabot sa intensity 9 ang Baguio-Cabanatuan quake.

Hindi kaya ganito rin ang mangyayari sa magnitude 7.2 sa Mindanao. Kaya, muli, sasabihin nating magdasal-dasal na tayo kahit wala tayong time para rito.

MAGHANDA NA, MAGTULUNGAN PA

Dapat tayong maghanda para sa magnitude 7.2 sa Mindanao na tiyak namang mamimisala nang todo sa naturang lugar.

Pero sa ngayon, dapat magtulungan tayo lahat sa paghahatid ng tulong sa libo-libong napipinsala ng lindol sa Mindanao na maya't maya may lindol na nagaganap pwersa pa ang mga after-shock.

Sa ngayon, nagiging Samaritano ang mga taga-Mindanao na hindi napinsala ng mga lindol.

Pupwede rin nating gawin ito, tayong mga taga-Visayas at Luzon, kasama na ang lahat ng uri ng relihiyon at non-governmental organization.

Marami ang nagugutom, nauhaw, maysakit, walang tahanan, walang pagkakitaan at iba pa.

Kayong mga kritiko, ano ang pupwede ninyong maitulong, huh?

oOo

Anomang reaksyon o reklamo, mangyaring iparating lamang po sa 0922840-3333 o I-email sa bantiporda@yahoo.com.