

DATE : 11-10-19

DAY : Sunday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



DENR documentary tackles significance of tamaraw

By **CORY MARTINEZ**

TO increase awareness and raise funds for the critically endangered Tamaraw, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has launched a one-hour documentary entitled "Suwag o Suko: Saving the Tamaraw from Extinction."

The documentary tackles the economic, social and cultural significance of tamaraw (*Bubalus mindorensis*), as well as the incessant efforts and hard work by tamaraw rangers who put their lives at risk to protect it from hunters. This endangered animal can only be found in Mindoro island.

DENR and the Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) of the United Nations Development Programme, with the help of young film practitioners produced the documentary and was launched at the National Museum of Natural History on Oct. 30. The movie premiere capped the celebration of October as Tamaraw Month.

DENR Assistant Secretary and concurrent Biodiversity Management Bureau Director Ricardo Calderon expressed hope that the documentary would inspire more Filipinos to help



save the tamaraw from extinction.

"I hope every single Filipino will have the opportunity to seeing real-life tamaraws today, and the coming years, decades and centuries," Calderon said.

The film is scheduled for regular screening in cinemas nationwide. It targets to raise P2 million to purchase patrol gear and equipment and to cover the accident insurance of the rangers.

Proceeds of the documentary will go to the DENR's Tamaraw Conservation Program (TCP), which seeks to address the decline in tamaraw population.

The Tamaraw, also called dwarf water buffalo, is the largest native land mammal in the Philippines.

From 10,000 heads in the 1900s, the tamaraw population has dramatically decreased to only 480 heads as of the latest count, making it among the world's most endangered animals.

Illegal logging, poaching, over hunting, intensive farming and the establishment of ranch in the forests of Mindoro had all contributed to the depletion of the tamaraw population.

In 1982, the Tamaraw Gene Pool was established under the program's captive breeding component. However, the 20 tamaraws originally captured for the gene pool have died. At present, TCP is focused on managing wild population and habitat, and the conduct of information and education campaigns on the importance of saving the tamaraw.



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Plastics ban bill to change public behavior, arrest solid waste crisis

TO keep the plastic waste crisis from worsening, Bohol 3rd District Rep. Alexie Besas Tutor filed House Bill 4724 banning single-use plastics from all tourist sites and destinations.

"With this bill, we want all tourists to be aware that they are most welcome but their single-use plastics like water bottles, spoons, forks, straws, and stirrers are not," she added.

Tutor explained that one natural consequence of this bill is widespread change in people's behavior.

"This is also a way of encouraging women's organizations to produce as livelihood eco bags or bay-

ong as an alternative to plastic," said Tutor.

"I am pushing for an alternative on plastic straws because it takes years for a straw to decompose. This is very apparent in beaches. Naniwan lang yung mga straw sa dalampasigan," the Boholana lawmaker lamented.

"The signages about the plastics ban should be present at the transport hubs, including airports and bus terminals. Plastics manufacturers will have to adjust to the new business rules. Tourism businesses must find alternatives to single-use plastics," she said.

"Popsicle sticks made of wood will be more in use now than before. I remember when we were kids, we had school projects on making cups and other containers out of popsicle sticks," Tutor said.

"For deterrence purposes, HB 4724 has stiff fines and other penalties to force and remind people not to bring single-use plastics to the beaches, hiking trails, mountains, and other places tourists go to," Tutor said.

Tutor said, "This is also a step towards a nationwide ban on the use of single-use plastics. In House bill 4724, we are focused on tourism areas."



FOR THE RECORD



Aileen Taliping

TWITTER: (@aileentaliping)

Marami ang nabuhayan lalo na ang mga environmental group matapos ihayag ng Malacañang ang kagustuhan ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na ipatigil ang paggamit ng plastic dahil sa epekto nito sa kalikasan.

Pero hindi ito basta-basta maipatutupad dahil kailangan ang batas para masigurong susundin ito ng publiko.

Hindi na bago ang ideya sa plastic ban

dahil ginagawa na ito ng ilang mga bayan sa bansa, pero dahil walang batas na nagtatakda ng parusa, marami pa ring mga Pinoy ang pasaway sa paggamit nito.

Hindi naman lingid sa mga tao ang epekto ng paggamit ng plastic, dahil bukod sa nasisirang kalikasan, pati mga yamang dagat ay nadadamay sa kapabayaang mga tao.

Maraming video sa internet ang nagpapakita kung paano napipinsala ang mga lamang-dagat na nakakakain ng plastic o kaya naman ay napupuluputan ng mga bagay na gawa sa plastic kaya panahon na para itama ang mga kamaliang ito.

Sa huling cabinet meeting na ipinatawag

ni Pangulong Duterte sa Malacañang ay isa sa mga tinalakay ang epekto ng climate change, at isa sa mga nakakasira sa kalikasan ay ang paggamit ng plastic.

Bago isinailalim sa rehabilitasyon ang Manila Bay ay nakakadismaya ang tanawin kapag namamasyal sa Baywalk sa Roxas Boulevard dahil sa mga basurang itinatapon sa dagat.

Tone-toneladang basura na ang nahakot sa Manila Bay at karamihan sa mga basurang ito ay gawa sa plastic. Nasalaula ang dagat dahil sa pagiging ireponsible ng mga tao sa paggamit ng plastic.

Pero hindi basta-basta maipatutupad ang plastic ban hangga't

walang batas na magtatakda nito.

Kailangan may ngipin ang batas para parusahan at panagutin ang mga nagtatapon ng plastic sa kung saan-saan matapos itong gamitin.

Sa mga palengke, iilan lamang na mga lugar sa bansa ang hindi na gumagamit ng supot na plastic pero mayroon pa ring mga patagong sumusuway nito dahil nakasanayan na ang paggamit nito.

Nasa Kongreso na ngayon ang bola kung susuportahan ang kagustuhan ng Presidente para sa kabutihan na rin ng mga Pilipino.

Sa ilang lugar sa Visayas at Mindanao, dahon ng saging ang ginagamit nang pambalot sa mga paninda

sa palengke, ang iba naman ay ginagawang sapin sa pagkain na mas mainam at ligtas gamitin dahil walang halong kemikal, kumpara sa plastic na kung ano-anong kemikal ang ginamit.

Kapag bumara sa mga kanal at lagusan ng tubig ang plastic, ang mga tao rin ang napipinsala dahil nagiging dahilan ito ng baha na ang resulta ay perwisyo sa mamamayan.

Hindi na kailangang hintayin pa ang batas para itigil ang paggamit ng plastic, dapat magkusa na ang mga Pilipino, gamitin ang common sense at malasakit sa komunidad at kapaligiran para hindi singilin ng kalikasan pagdating ng panahon.



PLASTIC BAN IPATUPAD AGAD

AGARANG pagpapatupad ng plastic ban ang nais ni Senador Cynthia Villar bunga ng pag-aaral na ang Filipinas ang isa sa pinakamalaking producer ng plastic wastes na napupunta sa karagatan.

Ito ay makaraang ikonsidera ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang nationwide ban sa paggamit ng plastic.

"With the President taking the lead in this campaign, I am confident we will be making a significant headway and finally remove us from that disconcerting title as one of the world's largest producers of plastic wastes," ani Villar, chairman ng Committee on Environment and Natural Resources.

Base sa 2015 report ng international group Ocean Conservancy and McKinsey Center for Business and Environment tungkol sa plastic pollution, pangatlo ang Filipinas sa pinaka-

malaking source ng plastic sa mga karagatan, kasunod ng China at Indonesia.

Nagbabala rin ang United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization na kapag hindi natugunan ang suliranin sa plastic pollution sa 2050, higit na magiging marami ang mga plastic sa karagatan kaysa sa isda.

"The fish will eat all the plastic and they will all die and our ocean will become virtual desert," ayon kay Villar.

Inakda ni Villar ang Senate Bill No. 333 o ang Single-Use Plastic Product Regulation Act of 2019, na naglalayong i-regulate ang manufacturing, importation, at single-use ng plastic products.

Binigyan-din din ng Nacionalista Party Senator na lalong lalala ang suliranin sa plastic waste sa pagbili ng mga produkto na nasa sachets.

"Hindi naman natin

masisi ang mga tao kung ang kaya lang bilhin ay yung sapat para sa ilang araw lang na gamitan. But we must put pressure on the corporations that produce these products to come up with a program to recycle these wastes and minimize impact on the environment," sabi pa ni Villar.

Sa ilalim ng panukala, ipagbabawal ang single-use plastics ng food establishments, stores, markets at retailers.

Aatasan din ang consumers na gumamit ng reusable materials at ang manufacturers n mangolekta at mag-recycle at itapon ang single-use plastics. Hindi na rin papayagan ang importasyon ng single-use plastics.

Sa bawat single-use plastics na ginawa, ipinakalat at ginamit sa transaction, papatawan ng retailers ang consumer ng minimum levy na P5.

"Violation for business enterprises, micro, small and medium enter-

prises will have penalties ranging from a fine of P10,000 to 100,000 and suspension or revocation of business permit," dagdag pa ni Villar.

Para sa VAT-registered enterprises, establishments, at tindahan, at sa lahat ng plastic manufacturers na lalabag sa batas na ito, pagmumultahin sila ng P100,000 hanggang P1 million at suspensyon o pagkansela sa business permit.

Sa ilalim ng panukala, magkakaroon din ng Special Fund for Single-use Plastic Regulation na binubuo ng collected tariffs, levies at fees.

Gagamitin ang pondo sa pagtatayo ng recycling centers, assistance at incentives sa manufacturers at community-based initiatives sa pagbawas sa single-use plastics, pati na rin sa non-government at civil society organizations na nagsusulong sa proper solid waste management.

VICKY CERVALES



Cov't launches nationwide responsible mining campaign

By MADELAINE B. MIRAFLORE

In a bid to wipe out the negative perception on the controversial mining industry, the Philippine government has embarked on a nearly impossible project — to convince a nation that is highly skeptical of the extractive industries that there is such thing as responsible mining.

On Friday, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) through the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) launched a nationwide information campaign on responsible mining.

Such move, according to Environment Undersecretary for Mining Concerns Analiza Rebuelta-Teh, could eventually pave the way for the lifting of the ban on new mining projects.

"It will have contributory effects," Teh said, referring to the efforts of the government to push for the lifting of Executive Order (EO) 79, which says that no new mineral agreements should be approved "until a legislation rationalizing existing revenue sharing schemes and mechanisms shall have taken effect."

Right now, the country's mining industry contributes only 0.85 percent, or ₱134.5 billion, to the country's total gross domestic product

(GDP). This is despite the fact the country's mineral resources has an estimated value of around US\$1.4 trillion.

During the launch of the campaign on responsible mining, Teh admitted that right now, it is still close to impossible for the government and mining companies to tame the negative public perception on mining.

"No matter how much we show that we cannot live without mines, the government is still far from changing or at least neutralized the negative perception for the mining industry," Teh said.

"The government is also being accused of weak monitoring of mining companies and that our enforcement of environmental laws is weak. We are also seen as corrupt and being attacked and accused of covering up for the failure of mining companies," she added.

The challenge now, she said, is to turnaround this negative perception by "effectively communicating" the sustainable practices and outcome in the mining industry.

Dubbed the #MineResponsibility campaign, the campaign was led by Teh and DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu. It seeks to recreate a clearer and more factual image of the mining industry in the Philippines.

"We now have better and stronger policies in place to protect the environment and local communities and to mine with a long-term positive effect. We should not be wasting the massive mineral wealth of the Philippines when it can be used to benefit the people," Cimatu said in a statement.

"Moving forward, our goal is to harness this mineral wealth for progress and development and the key to that is responsible mining," he added.

Meanwhile, MGB Director Atty. Wilfredo G. Moncano emphasized that the information campaign aims to promote an inclusive approach in ensuring the mining industry's commitment to the protection of people and the environment.

"It is important that the public is informed and involved in the enforcement of mining policies and environmental protection, and that's what this campaign is really about," said Moncano. "Especially now that mining requirements are more strict now than twenty years ago."

"We take the issues of mining seriously," added said Teh. "The campaign also goes beyond just information and education. We've been working on improving the mining industry since the start of the Duterte administration."

Moncano said last month that that to get rid of illegal mining activities in the Philippines — one of the highly mineralized countries in the world — a separate government agency with more resources and more manpower is needed.

"We are now pushing for a [mining] task force to be made into a separate bureau. In this way, it will have more resources, more manpower, and more leverage to work with other law enforcement bodies," Moncano said.

He is particularly referring to the National Task Force Mining Challenge (NTFMC), which was formed in 2018 to squash illegal mining operators. NTFMC's first gig took place

a month after it was formed when it was able to shut down a Baguio City mine near the Philippine Military Academy grounds.

"Through NTFMC, we aggressively apprehend illegal mining operators, as well as seize, confiscate, and dismantle their equipment, including blasting tunnel entrances or portals to the mining sites," Moncano said.

The NTFMC was later re-established as the Environmental Enforcement Task Force, expanding its management of environmental protection laws beyond mining and now including the violation of logging laws, wildlife protection and agricultural policies.



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ISTRIKTONG POLISIYA SA RESPONSABLENG PAGMIMINA!

ba ang kredibilidad nitong RED ANT PR agency para manghawak sa #MineResponsibility?

Ang RED ANT ang gagawa ng infomertial tungkol sa responsableng pagmimina, para maintindihan ng sambayanan ang malaking kapakinabangan ng mining industry...pero ang iniisyu ng mga kaka-mpetensiyang PR agencies ay kung magkano raw ba ang kontrata para sa #MineResponsibility? Sino-sino raw ang pomorsiyento at kung saan kinuha ang pondo? Bakit daw ganun kalakas ang RED ANT para mabigyan ng ganun kalaking kontrata at dumaaan daw ba ito sa bidding? Yan ang mga patutsadang dapat na makaabot kay DENR SECRETARY CIMATU o kay USEC TEH o kaya naman e kay MGB DIRECTOR MONCANO dahil ito ang rektang may mandato sa mga nagsisipagmina sa ating bansa.... para naman malinawan ang mga iling-iling na PR agencies!

Matapos ang launching ng kampanya kahapon ay isang mamamahayag ang nagtanong sa naging press conference kung saan manggagaling ang pondo ng kampanya... na sinagot naman ni DIR. MONCANO na ang panggagalingan ng pondo ay sa mga MINING COMPANY din manggagaling ang pondo... ayon, nasagot na ang isang katanungan... pero, mukhang marami pa rin yata sa mga REPORTER na kulang sa kaalaman sa kani-kanilang mga network.

Marami sa mga malalaking network sa MEDIA INDUSTRY ay mga investor o nagnamamay-ari ng mga minahan sa ating bansa... kaya kahit anong paglalantad sa mga negatibong epekto ng minahan e hindi rin maipapublish o maibabaita maliban kung pabor sa industriya ng pagmimina!

Ang hinahabol naman ng mga taga-Zambales na naapektuhan ng pagkasira sa kanilang mga ikinabubuhay at umaasa na makatatanggap na sila ng bayad danyos mula sa ipinataw ng DENR laban sa mga mining companies na nag-cooperate sa naturang lalawigan ay inihayag ng MGB na ang kadahilanan, kaya hindi nababayaran ang mga nagki-claim ay dahil sa isyu umano ng legality sa pagmamamay-ari ng lupain o mga lote... naku e mahabang labanan at paliwanagan pa ang iha-handle ng MGB sa isyung ito!

Kung kayo po ay may mga puna o reklamo lalo na sa mga naba-batikos ng ARYA ay maaari kayong mag-email sa irwincorpuz22@gmail.com para sa inyong panig o kaya ay mag-text sa 09997806557.



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Angat may not reach 212 meters by yearend

Angat Dam, which is Metro Manila's main water source, may not reach its desired 212-meter level by yearend due to insufficient rainfall over the watershed area in Bulacan.

Citing the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration's projection of lesser rainfall for the rest of the year, National Water Resources Board Executive Director Sevillo David Jr. said Angat Dam may not be able to reach the end of the year target of 210 to 212 meters.

To ensure that there is enough water for millions of households during the next summer season, Angat Dam's water level has to reach its maximum level of 210 meters by the end of 2019. However, the water level of Angat Dam slightly declined to 188.46 meters yesterday from 188.55 meters last Friday.

"We are still hoping that there will be significant rainfall and probably a typhoon that will directly bring rains to the Angat watershed," David said.

Angat Dam's current situation can be compared to the 2010 event when the water reservoir

plunged to its lowest level in history at 157.57 meters in July 2010, PAGASA earlier pointed out.

During that time, Angat Dam reached its maximum level of 210 meters only the following year in September 2011. Its level by the end of 2010 just reached 203.3 meters.

Rainfall plays a critical role for the dam and so far there is no weather disturbance that could raise its level some more.

The Philippines was visited by five tropical cyclones last September and one tropical cyclone in October but none made landfall over any part of the country. So far, one tropical cyclone – typhoon "Quiel" – entered the Philippine Area of Responsibility this month but also did not hit land.

David said the technical working group on Angat Dam operations "will decide the December allocation next week."

Currently, NWRB maintained the 40 cubic meters per second allocation for domestic supply and reduced the allotment for irrigation to 17 cms.

"We will decide the December allocation next week," David added. **(Elalyn V. Ruiz)**



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Dam sa Cagayan nagkabitak, force evacuation ipinatupad

TUGUEGARA CITY, Cagayan- Nagpatupad ng force evacuation ang mga awtoridad sa hilagang Cagayan matapos makitaan ng bitak ang isang dam bunsod ng walang humpay na pag-ulan at pagguho ng lupa sa Barangay Silagan, Allacapan, nasabing lalawigan noong Biyernes.

Sinabi ni Cagayan Police Director Colonel Ariel Quilang na unang dinala ng mga police responders ang hindi bababa sa 50 pamilya na inilikas sa Allacapan

Gymnasium.

Ayon kay Quilang, kasama ng Allacapan na lulubog ang katabing bayan ng Lal-lo sakaling matuluyang bumigay ang dam.

Bunsod nito, isinailalim sa matinding pagmamatyag ng pulisya ang dalawang bayan habang patuloy na inililikas ang mga natitira pang residente na maaapektuhan ng pagguho.

Kaugnay nito, isinailalim na sa "state of calamity" ang Cagayan

Nina RAYMUND CATINDIG at JOY CANTOS

dahil sa matinding pinsalang idinulot ng mga pagbaha bunsod ng bagyong Quiel habang pumalo na sa apat katao ang nasawi sa kalamidad.

Tinukoy ni Cagayan Governor Manuel Mamba ang mga binahang lugar na kinabibilangan ng Sta. Praxedes, Claveria, Sanchez Mira, Pamplona, Abulug, Ballesteros, Allacapan, Apari, Gonzaga, Sta. Ana at Baggao sa nasabing lalawigan.

Sa report ng NDRRMC, nanatili ang

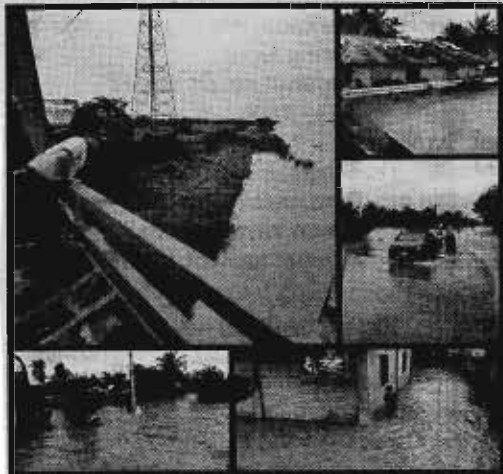
lakas ni Quiel habang papalabas na ito sa Philippine area of responsibility (PAR) dakong alas-2 ng madaling araw ngayon na tumatahak patungong Vietnam.

Sa kasalukuyan, nasa 4,987 pamilya o 21,060 katao ang naapektuhan ng bagyo bunga ng matinding mga pagbaha sa 98 barangays sa Regions 1 at 2 na nanunuluyan sa iba't ibang evacuations centers.

Ayon naman kay PRO2 Spokesman P/Lt. Col. Chevalier Iri-

ngan, ipinag-utos na ni PRO 2 Director Police Brig. Gen. Angelito Casimiro sa Cagayan Police at Regional Mobile Force Battalion 2 na magsagawa ng augmentation o pagdedeploy ng karagdagang mga personnel para sa search and rescue operations.

Inatasan ni Casimiro si Col. Quilang na masusing isuperbisa ang relief and rescue operations hanggang hindi nagbabalik sa normal ang sitwasyon sa mga lugar na apektado ng kalamidad.



Sa kaliwa, ininspeksyon ni Cagayan Police Director Colonel Ariel Quilang ang pagtaas ng tubig sa iba't ibang bahagi ng kanyang teritoryo bunsod ng walang humpay na pag-ulan at ang banta na pagbitak ng isang dam sa hilagang Cagayan. (Kuha ni Raymund Catindig)



A real water crisis?

In March this year, we aired the concern of many that the apparent water crisis hounding the metropolis and its environs may be real. We wondered if the panic which ensued after many Metro Manila households woke up one morning to find their faucets dry had a serious basis. We had hoped that the sense of panic would disappear as soon as the rainy season sets in – just like it had always been in the past.

It appears the water crisis is real and the areas served by the two water concessionaires may have to live with the reality until the government is able to put new water sources in place.

The indication of this sad situation was the recent announcement made by the water concessionaires – Manila Water and Maynilad – that their customers will experience scheduled rotating water supply interruption. The implementation of the scheme began over a week ago and the interruptions reportedly run from four hours to ten hours.

We believe this has finally driven home the point that the serious water supply shortage is no longer imaginary. The talk about a water crisis would no longer be going away when the rains come as it has been the case in the past.

We were told that the water level at Angat Dam did not reach the required level. It looks like the amount of rain which fell in the area of Angat during the recent wet season was not enough to fill the dam. The question is, even if Angat Dam's water level reached the optimum, would the supply last given the huge population which depends on a single water source?

Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) chief regulator Patrick Ty has explained the situation earlier. When the crisis hit us last March, Mr. Ty pointed out that "if we do not get a new water source soon, there will be a water shortage."

"Due to the increasing population, Metro Manila's water requirement is now 1,750 MLD," he explained in a social media post. "Metro Manila has no new water source because of the opposition to Kaliwa Dam, Laiban Dam, etc," he added.

We are grateful to Attorney Ty for the valuable clarification.

About two years ago, we shared in this column a water supply project which Manila Water and the Rizal Provincial Government under the leadership of Gov. Nini Ynares have put in place. This is the Rizal Province Water Supply Improvement Project (RPWSIP). The idea is to draw water from Laguna Lake; process the water at a plant which Manila Water built in Cardona, Rizal; and distribute the water to businesses and households in seven Rizal towns: Jalajala, Pililla, Cardona, Tanay, Baras, Morong and Binangonan.

We shared the view that if more water can be drawn from Laguna Lake and more plants can be built to process that water for household and industrial use, the other Rizal towns and Antipolo City will have to rely less on the water that comes all the way from Angat Dam.

Tapping the water of Laguna Lake will also mean that Rizaleños and Antipoleños will not have to wait for the government to address the opposition to the use of Laiban and Kaliwa Dams. When the government succeeds in tapping those new water sources, Rizal and Antipolo may not have to compete for a major allocation against the other cities of Metro Manila.

The reliable supply of clean water is important to Rizal and Antipolo. This is a vital factor which has led to the rapid socio-economic growth. This is why Rizal province is now a Hall of Famer in the roster of the country's most competitive provinces, having topped that list for several years.

The same is true for Antipolo. A reliable water supply is part

of the reason why Antipolo has been cited as a preferred investment destination by the business sector.

We cannot afford to lose that competitive advantage. This is an aspiration that has been shared by and committed to by the past leadership of Manila Water, particularly Messrs. Gerry Ablaza, Ferdz dela Cruz and Ding Carpio.

We heard that Manila Water is now aggressively pursuing the project referred to as the "East Bay" initiative. We have merely heard from third party sources. We are yet to be told about the impact that laying pipes in the portions of Laguna de Bay within the territory of Rizal province may have on marine life and the environment.

There is a new leadership now at Manila Water. We are yet to hear from the new leadership. It looks like the new leadership may not see the value of a strong relationship with local governments as the past executives of this water concessionaire did.

As we said many times in the past, the presence of reliable, clean and environment-friendly water supply contributed to the rapid growth of the city's population composed of so-called "Antipoleños-by-choice."

These are families who opted to settle and build their homes in Antipolo. This is where they have opted to raise their children, and enjoy the quality of life they have always aspired for.

We have to work harder together so as not to dampen that aspiration.

* For feedback, please email it to antipolocitygov@gmail.com or send it to #4 Horse Shoe Drive, Beverly Hills Subdivision, Bgy. Beverly Hills, Antipolo City, Rizal.



THE VIEW FROM RIZAL

DR. JUN YNARES



REDTAGGING DIVIDES THE COUNTRY

EAGLE
EYES

TONY
LA VINA

(Continued from Saturday)

THE state of our environment is a big national concern. We have serious environmental problems to solve and we need all hands on deck to do this.

Environmental defenders are the best of our citizens. Organizations like the Center of Environmental Concerns (CEC) and Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (PNE Kalikasan) should be praised and not threatened with raids as they have been for the last few weeks. They are confirmed to be under surveillance by the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) and could be attacked any time.

We need more CEC and PNE Kalikasan-like organizations if we are to effectively address our environmental crisis. Everyone in the environmental community should close ranks and support them as all of us have to speak truth to power on issues like Oceana Gold and the Kaliwa Dam.

Another major national concern that requires a whole of nation approach is responding to the climate emergency and

natural disasters. As a vulnerable country, we cannot afford to be distracted to deal with these big challenges.

All our available military units should be in Mindanao now helping the earthquake victims; instead we see the police arresting a community journalist like Anne Krueger in Bacolod or serving notice on IBON, an esteemed globally recognized think tank, that they will be arresting an unnamed person in the latter's office.

In relation to this, most inexplicable is the inclusion of Oxfam sa Pilipinas, a development and humanitarian organization that has worked in the Philippines for 31 years, among the organizations mentioned by General Basiao. This is laughable if not the fact that it endangers many good people and a lot of good work, including on disaster risk reduction.

I have worked with Oxfam in the Philippines and internationally for many years and I will emphatically say that they are not a front of any political party—underground or above ground. Independence and a commitment to development outcomes that address poverty and inequality are the hallmarks of Oxfam and I have seen their staff uphold these values time and again. I stand by Oxfam unconditionally and echo their statement:

"If our vision and mission in the

Philippines have led to Oxfam being labelled a 'local communist terrorist group' or a funder of 'communist terrorist groups' then we find this a most troubling situation. These allegations affect not only us, but also put the communities and partners we work with at risk. In a country where poverty remains, and poor communities are continually struck by disasters, we strongly believe that organizations like ours should be encouraged, rather than hindered, from undertaking our programs."

So what is happening?

First, clearly the intelligence apparatus of the military and police is in very bad shape, frozen in an understanding of political dynamics of the 1980s. Teaching already many of them as individuals, I will even offer to do a lecture and update those interested in the national security establishment, on the political and development spectrum of the Philippines.

Second, one can only speculate that worse things are coming. I believe that undeclared as it is outside Mindanao, martial law is already upon us and things could escalate further. We must now prepare for the worst. Among others, I call on all groups, regardless of ideological tendency, to close ranks. Forget all our quarrels. Much bigger things are at

stake. Remember that fascist do not even know how to differentiate between groups and individuals.

One practical thing we can all do is to preempt the planting of evidence (the usual modus operandi where arms and explosives are planted so unbailable crimes can be charged) in our office premises. We did that with the Kabataan Party-List the other day with a team from the Commission on Human Rights inspecting its headquarters and finding nothing illegal—only young and idealistic people were there.

As for me, let's be very clear that since the 1980s, I have decided to be consistently non-violent and independent in my political affiliation. I do not like guns and even when I was in government and facing threats, I refused bodyguards; I also did not allow the drivers who worked with me to have guns.

Third, the whole-of-nation approach has been seriously compromised by these careless statements and actions; the police and military should be warned that when they did this in the 1970s and 1980s, their institutions suffered immensely and it took decades to rebuild their human rights reputations. I hope they stop before they slide even further.

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What's baffling about recent Mindanao quakes

By Mario A. Aurelio

The series of earthquakes that struck Mindanao between Oct. 16 and Oct. 31, with magnitudes 6 or greater, should baffle laymen and scientists alike—because several characteristics of the seismic events remain poorly understood.

For instance, why is it that the four largest events are of the same order of magnitude within the range of 6? During an earthquake, theory dictates that aftershocks that follow the main shock should be of lower magnitudes.

In particular, following the logarithmic behavior of earthquake occurrence explained in the age-old Gutenberg-Richter Law, it is expected that there would be less higher magnitude aftershocks than there will be lower magnitudes. Further, there would be expected one first-level aftershock, 10 second-level aftershocks, a hundred third-level aftershocks, and so on.

The October earthquakes included a magnitude 6.3 on Oct. 16, a 6.1 and a 6.6 on Oct. 29, and a 6.5 on Oct. 31. If not aftershocks, what then could these earthquakes be?

Stress release

In recent years, earthquake scientists have employed the principles of the Coulomb stress transfer (CST) theory to explain the behavior of seismic events. CST derives from the friction experiments of the 18th century French military physicist Charles-Augustin de Coulomb, who is actually better known for his contributions in the field of electricity.

The theory revolves around the idea that as a fault slips, the generated earthquake is a manifestation of the release of stresses that have accumulated on that fault over time. That segment of the fault is thus said to have experienced stress decrease and becomes an unlikely location of the next immediate earthquake.

While being released, however, the stresses do not disappear but instead transfer to another location—an area said to experience stress increase. If a fault exists in the stress in-



Why is it that the four largest events are of the same order of magnitude within the range of 6? During an earthquake, theory dictates that aftershocks that follow the main shock should be of lower magnitudes

crease region, then that fault is likely to be the next to slip and generate the next earthquake.

Triggered quakes or doublets?

Using the CST principle, one possible explanation of the closely spaced October earthquakes is a mechanism called earthquake triggering, which states that an earthquake generated by a certain fault can trigger the movement of a nearby fault consequently generating the next earthquake.

So working on this principle, when the 6.6-magnitude earthquake of Oct. 29 struck a few tens of kilometers north of the 6.3-magnitude earthquake of Oct. 16, I asked Jagu, a research associate, to run a preliminary Coulomb stress change model.

It showed a stress increase region in the area where the 6.6-magnitude earthquake would hit 13 days later, validating his model. The validity of Jagu's model, however, did not last long because, only two days later, a 6.5-magnitude earthquake struck almost the same place where the previous earthquake should have already caused stress to decrease.

In some earthquakes, fault

slippage may occur in two or more stages, producing multiple main shocks called doublet earthquakes. Doublets can be differentiated from aftershocks as having similar order of magnitudes. The four 6-magnitude earthquakes of October may thus be interpreted alternatively as doublets.

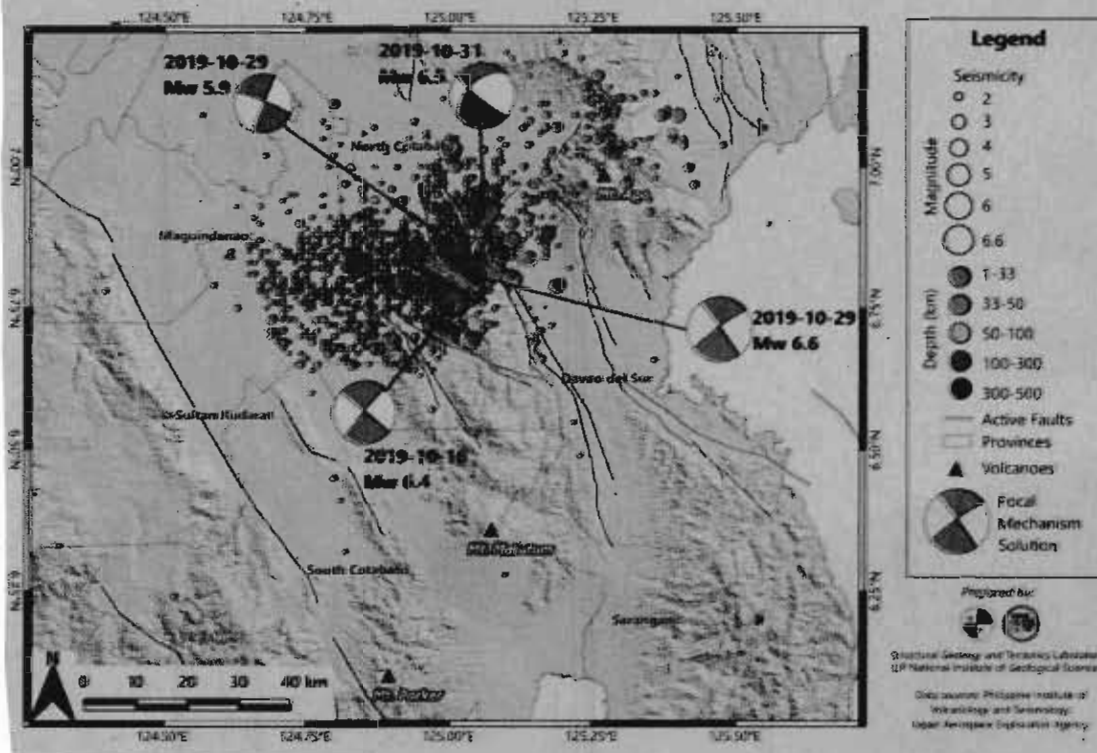
Stress changes may also impact on volcanic centers. For instance, some earthquake studies insinuated the possibility of associating the 7.8-magnitude North Luzon Earthquake of July 16, 1990, whose epicenter was located in Cabanatuan, with the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo located about 80 km away, less than a year later on June 13, 1991.

Similar cases have been reported in other countries, such as in Italy, Turkey and New Zealand with similar geological environments, defined by active faults coexisting with volcanoes in the same region.

The preliminary CST model of

what's baffling about recent Mindanao quakes

SEISMOTECTONIC MAP OF THE OCT. 16-31 TREMBLORS



the Cotabato earthquakes indicates a stress increase underneath Mt. Apo, consistent with the clustering of aftershocks underneath the volcanic edifice after the 6.5-magnitude event of Oct. 31.

Regardless of earthquake mechanism, damage has been intense and spread over a wide area no less than 100 km in diameter from as far east as Davao City to as far west as Kidapawan City in Cotabato province, and beyond. The intense damage to infrastructure may be attributed to the succession of the four 5-magnitude earthquakes occurring over a short period of time.

Whether they were aftershocks or not, the weakening effect of successive earthquakes is cumulative, much like the effect of the successive punches of a boxer on the face of the opponent—the first few punches may not hurt, but the next ones will certainly cause significant dam-

age to the face especially when thrown in close succession.

During the October earthquakes, buildings that initially sustained damage from the first event on the 16th eventually collapsed after the cumulative effect of the succeeding quakes on the 29th and 31st.

Possible culprits:

Among the major challenges in earthquake studies is determining which fault caused which particular earthquake. In the case of the October earthquakes, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology identified at least five faults in the region as possible culprits. One way of identifying the culprit fault is by using what seismologists call a focal mechanism solution that provides two possible fault choices, then asking a geologist to verify in the field which of those two faults is responsible.

The most convincing evi-

dence is a surface rupture that manifests when the fault breaks the ground surface over a considerable distance. However, the surface may not always break especially when the quake's energy is not strong enough or when the focal depth is too deep. In such instances, earthquake scientists resort to other methodologies.

One of these methodologies is called interferometry—where two or more satellite images of the same place, but taken at different times, are superimposed and their phase differences calculated and plotted as interference patterns.

Defying theory

In general, the interferometric synthetic aperture radar (InSAR) technique is widely used in the geosciences, and in earthquake studies in particular because it can determine the amount and direction of displacement of the ground before and after an earthquake at centimetric precision. InSAR thus provides a way to decipher the mechanism of an earthquake-generating fault.

InSAR data sent in by JD Dianala, an instructor at the University of the Philippines National Institute* of Geological Sciences (UP-NIGS), suggest ground deformation related to a dextral fault (i.e. fault movement allows one block to move to the right relative to the other) that trends north-easterly, the same trend as the orientation of the earthquake epicenters. These data sets are now being used to assist a UP-NIGS geological team find the trace of a possible ground surface rupture.

As I finish writing this piece, I will be joining the UP-NIGS team deployed as part of a concerted humanitarian effort by UP through the UP Resilience Institute, and hope to find in Cotabato more arguments to better understand the series of earthquakes that seemingly defies theory. INQ

(Mario A. Aurelio, Ph.D., is a professor at UP and director of UP-NIGS where he also heads the Structural Geology and Tectonics Laboratory.)

Scientists: Earth needs fewer people to beat the climate crisis

FORTY years ago, scientists from 50 nations converged on Geneva to discuss what was then called the "CO₂-climate problem." At the time, with reliance on fossil fuels having helped trigger the 1979 oil crisis, they predicted global warming would eventually become a major environmental challenge.



SHIBUYA is famous for its scramble crossing, it is located in front of the Shibuya Station Hachiko exit. Shibuya Station and surroundings will be undergoing major redevelopment over the coming years. Tokyu Toyoko Line Shibuya Station will be relocated underground and will join the Fukutoshin Line in March 2013. KEITH ESU/GETTY IMAGES

The scientists got to work, building a strategy on how to attack the problem and laying the groundwork for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the world's preeminent body of climate scientists. Their goal was to get ahead of the problem before it was too late.

But after a fast start, the fossil fuel industry, politics and the prioritization of economic growth over planetary health slowed them down.

Now, four decades later, a larger group of scientists is sounding another, much more urgent alarm. More than 11,000 experts from around the world are calling for a critical addition to the main strategy of dumping fossil

fuels for renewable energy: there needs to be far fewer humans on the planet.

"We declare, with more than 11,000 scientist signatories from around the world, clearly and unequivocally that planet Earth is facing a climate emergency," the scientists wrote in a stark warning published last week in the journal *BioScience*.

While warnings about the consequences of unchecked climate change have become so commonplace as to inure the average news consumer, this latest communiqué is exceptionally significant given the data that accompanies it.

When absorbed in sequence, the charts lay out a devastating trend for planetary health. From

meat consumption, greenhouse-gas emissions and ice loss to sea-level rise and extreme weather events, they lay out a grim portrait of 40 years of squandered opportunities.

The scientists make specific calls for policy-makers to quickly implement systemic change to energy, food and economic policies. But they go one step further, into the politically fraught territory of population control.

It "must be stabilized—and, ideally, gradually reduced—within a framework that ensures social integrity," they write.

The problem is enormous, yet the signatories still manage to

strike an upbeat tone. For all the lost chances, progress is being made, they contend.

"We are encouraged by a recent surge of concern," the letter states. "Governmental bodies are making climate emergency declarations. Schoolchildren are striking. Eco-cide lawsuits are proceeding in the courts. Grassroots citizen movements are demanding change, and many countries, states and provinces, cities, and businesses are responding."

The report, however, comes one day after US President Donald Trump began the formal procedure of withdrawing America from the Paris climate accord. *Bloomberg News*



Our right to speak for climate justice

A FEW years ago Pope Francis challenged those responsible for the well-being of the poor. He established the World Day of the Poor. It is a day that should be stretched into a week, a month or even a year of action challenging and protesting against the root causes of poverty, the most perverse of which being the political and corporate corruption that infests societies.

It is a time to challenge the people with the means and power to eliminate poverty, change their communities, build a nation and fight climate change, a cause of poverty, and make the world a safer and healthier place for humankind and creation.

These power brokers are the financiers, the bankers, the traders, the multinational corporations and the politicians that support them. They are mostly elected by the rich to do their bidding and make laws to benefit their corporate interests. They have the power of government and can give them permits and police and military protection to exploit the land of the poor, to damage the environment and to cause climate destruction all for their personal benefit. They mine the mountains, burn the forests, pollute the air and steal the wealth of nations. In the process, they destroy the cultures and cause greater poverty. We need to take a stand for climate justice.

A few days ago a very poor man, call him Juan, from a mountain village of indigenous people came asking for help. He said their crops had failed because the weather had

changed so badly. The storms and floods were so frequent that the root crops rotted or washed away. They were desperate. He was a subsistence farmer, with his family surviving by eating what they grew and selling any surplus to buy rice. He cared for mango trees, but they had failed for three years when the untimely rains washed away the blossoms. His only harvest in three years, for which the families earned a lot of money, was used to pay debts. Now the families were in dire need. I saw that they were given enough money to tie them over until the weather improved and they could grow their food in abundance again. His experience is that of millions of poor.

Juan is the face of poverty, of victims of destructive climate change. Then it is hunger and famine. Damaging climate change is caused by the massive pollution of corporate industry that releases carbon dioxide gases into the atmosphere from coal plants and factories increasing the global temperature. That in turn is melting the permafrost and millions of cubic feet of methane, the worst greenhouse gas of all, pour into the sky forming a blanket of gas around the globe. We live in a planetary oven, which is being baked by the blistering sun. Eleven thousand world scientists have declared this week a "climate emergency," proving by clear evidence and scientific proof that global warming will bring untold poverty and human suffering.

Soon, the world's temperature will reach the tipping point, the

point of no return. More crops will not survive, animals will become extinct, and poor people will die in vast numbers. We can see the raging fires, storms and floods across the world. The physical and scientific evidence is plain to see.

The only concern of the ignorant and greedy politicians is their own and corporate interests typified by President Trump withdrawing the United States from the Paris climate agreement.

We can see and hear the cries and protests of the school children, the unemployed, the hungry and the hopeless that are taking to the streets across the world demanding an end to global warming, climate change, inequality, poverty, injustice and corruption. We too must find a non-violent, peaceful way to express our protest. We can make a placard, join a march, raise it with others and add our voice to the rising protest against poverty and injustice.

Political power is the force that controls and directs a nation, influences our lives and families and, if implemented justly and with competence, it can bring peace, harmony, justice, well-being and an end to widespread poverty. It is the abuse of power, graft and corruption, greed and exploitation that cause poverty, unemployment, hardship, injustice, and human rights violations. Eventually, it can lead to mass demonstrations and even insurrection.

Around the world demonstrations are erupting in many countries. Protest is in the air. The common people want to vent their



REFLECTIONS

FATHER SHAY CULLEN

anger and exercise their freedom of expression and protest and even overturn corrupt governments. Even the children and youth are marching and protesting.

But small issues lead to big public outrage and both peaceful and violent protests. In Chile, an increase in bus fare sparked the fury; in Hong Kong, a law to extradite Hong Kong citizens to mainland China for trial started the protests. In Lebanon, it was because proposed tax on the use of WhatsApp, no less. In Iraq, it is government corruption and almost a hundred have been killed. The elite will hold on to power come what may. In the Philippines, there is silence.

The news feeds are reporting many more street protests and demonstrations in other countries around the world. The poor and the oppressed, the exploited and forgotten, downtrodden people are having their say. Will it change anything? We cannot know for now.

Organized or spontaneous peaceful, non-violent demonstration is a civil right. It is the bedrock of democracy; it is the voice of the people, the cry of truth and freedom. It is the only challenge to tyrants and dictators and corrupt leaders. It is a right that we should respect in our efforts to end poverty.



'Yolanda' survivors, ligtas sa trahedy, biktima naman ng korupsiyon kaya hindi makaahon

Totoo na sayang ang bahay kapag hindi tinitirhan, pero sa totoo lang, buhay ang maaaring masayang kung patuloy na titirhan ang bahay na tinipid at maaaring gumuho anumang oras.

Hindi biro ang pinagdaanan ng mga biktima ng Bagyong Yolanda, na nadagdagan pa ng anim na taong pagdurusa dahil walang matinong masilungan.

Panawagan sa mga kinaaukulan, panagutin ang mga dapat managot. Huwag nating bayaang maulit ang nangyari sa Bagyong Yolanda at mas maraming magdusa dahil sa kapabayaan ng iba.

Kung sa ganitong klase ng pabahay manirahan ang mga biktima, hindi ba, lalo silang malapit sa kapahamak?

Sana ay tutukan din ito ng pamahalaan.



Yolanda folk urged to protect environment vs future disasters

PALO, Leyte — A top church official on Friday called on Super Typhoon Yolanda survivors to care for the environment as a protection against future natural disasters.

During the 6th anniversary of "Yolanda" in this town, Roman Catholic Palo Archbishop John Du said people should be more concerned about the environment as a way of thanking God for surviving the killer typhoon.

"The destruction of 'Yolanda' was due to people not caring for the environment and by not knowing how it would affect our lives," Du said during his homily at the Palo Cathedral.

He added that people suffered the wrath of the super typhoon for not caring for the sacredness of life and for being hypocritical and pretentious.

But the "Yolanda" experience, he said, is not only about suffering and destruction.

"What happened during 'Yolanda' also helps people to develop greater faith and devotion to (the) Blessed Virgin Mary," he said. "Thank God for our faith to our Blessed Mother who reminded us that we can be liberated from destruction, who told us that we can always go back to

Jesus. It helps us learn how to care for our life, for our relationship with one another and our environment."

Du said that those who survived should be thankful and must start to cooperate in protecting the environment.

Joining the mass were Palo Mavor Anne Petilla, her

brother-in-law Leyte Governor Leopoldo Dominico Petilla, and hundreds of survivors.

After the mass, Du led the blessing of the mass gravesite within the Palo Cathedral complex where 300 victims were buried. Pope Francis blessed the site during his visit in January 2015.



Toyota starts with simultaneous national coastal clean-up and mangrove planting

TOYOTA Motor Philippines (TMP) recently led 1,900 volunteers spread out across 35 locations nationwide for its very first "Start Your Impossible" National Coastal Clean-up and Mangrove Planting weekend.

Held in partnership with TMP's dealership network, NGO and LGU partners plus various coastal communities all over the Philippines, the volunteers were able to plant 40,000 mangrove propagules and collect 1,200 sacks of waste by

the end of the activity.

"With each and every volunteer cleaning up the coasts and planting mangrove seedlings, all spread out across 35 locations nationwide, we are indeed starting our impossible, one place at a time. If we continue

doing these small acts for our environment, soon our big vision of building sustainable communities will become possible," says TMP President Satoru Suzuki during the opening program at Lian Mangrove Park, in Batangas.



EDITORIAL

Stop ASF spread

THE government continues to come up with meaningful measures aimed at addressing the spread of African swine fever (ASF), which has been terrorizing hog raisers in China and other countries.

Of course, this is not surprising since the Philippines, an impoverished Southeast Asian nation of 106 million people, is the world's seventh biggest pork importer and the 10th largest consumer of pork.

In fact, the ASF outbreak has cost the local hog industry P1 billion in "opportunity losses" each month, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA), headed by Secretary William Dar.

Although not harmful to humans, ASF is fatal to pigs, alarming commercial and backyard hog raisers. In fact, since the ASF outbreak in July, an estimated 62,000 pigs have been culled.

Thus, we doff our hat to President Duterte for allowing DA to use his contingency fund to help affected hog raisers in Metro Manila, Cavite, Nueva Ecija, Rizal, Bulacan, Pampanga and Pangasinan.

Likewise the contingency fund will be used to establish cold storage facilities at the Ports of Manila, Subic, Batangas, Cebu and Davao, according to Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo.

The setting up of these storage facilities is seen to ensure the 100 percent "monitoring" of the entry of imported meat products, particularly those coming from ASF-affected countries.

Panelo said the Chief Executive from Davao City authorized the use of his contingency fund upon the request of the DA top honcho during last Wednesday's Cabinet meeting in Malacanang.

President Duterte's move monuments his determination to help the millions of Filipinos who depend on the swine industry for their cash and livelihood, according to various quarters.

Hopefully, supermarkets, "sari-sari" stores and other business establishments - in the interest of the hog industry - should voluntarily yank canned pork products from ASF-hit areas off their shelves.

Dapat lang!



Tidal wave destroys 25 houses, 58 boats in Mindoro

FIFTY-EIGHT boats and 26 houses were destroyed when a 5-meters tidal wave occurred in the seashore of Paluan, Occidental, Mindoro.

This was confirmed yesterday by Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (MDRRMO) officer Albert Dimaano.

He said the tidal wave was triggered by typhoon Quiel that battered several areas in Northern Luzon and also hit seawaters covered by Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan or the MIMAROPA areas.

"Malaking alon brought by Typhoon Quiel, Siguro nasa 5-meters, yung seawall namin, 4 meters so lumampas siya, pumasok sa kabahayan," Dimaano said.

He said the tidal wave affected 10 to 12 villages in the area including Barangays Harrison Uno, Dos, Cuatro, Cinco, Sais, Lumang Bayan, Marikit, Tubili and Alibayoy located in the coastal areas of Paluan.

Because of the incident, Dimaano said there are 600 persons evacuated and temporary staying in Barangay hall and other school buildings.