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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



Local execs charged over open dumps

DENR official vows going after violators in government

By Patricia Denise M. Chiu
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The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Monday filed complaints before the Office of the Ombudsman against the mayor of Tabaco City, Albay province, and a former mayor of Limay town, Bataan province, as well as four others for allegedly violating the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, or Republic Act No. 9003.

Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Unit Concerns Benny Antiporda, who led the filing, said that while "the penalty is light" for violation of the Solid Waste Management Act, he expressed the hope that preventive suspension may be applied as penalty to serve as a deterrent to future offenders.

"What is important is that local government unit heads are aware that if they have a hand in destroying our environment, we will really go after them, no matter how heavy or light the sentence," Antiporda said in an interview after the filing.



We will leave it to the discretion of the Ombudsman, but I think preventive suspension can [apply]

Benny Antiporda

Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and LGU Concerns

"We will leave it to the discretion of the Ombudsman, but I think preventive suspension can be up to one year," Antiporda said of the complaint, which came with a prayer seeking the suspension of the respondents.

In a four-page complaint, the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) of the DENR held that former Limay Mayor Lilver Roque as well as municipal planning and development officer Romario Panangui, municipal environment and natural resources officer Randy Cacho and General

Services Office chief engineer Danilo Quinto, were liable for two counts of violation of Section 37 of the said law.

According to the DENR, Roque and the other respondents used a transfer station as an open dump at Sitio Mamala, Barangay St. Francis I.

A transfer station is a temporary site for waste until they are hauled to the end point of disposal.

Roque has not responded to the DENR's repeated requests for an explanation on this.

The respondents also al-

lowed an open dump at Barangay Alangan.

"The fact remains, during his tenure as mayor, Limay used its purported transfer station as an open dump site," the four-page complaint read in part.

"Worse, after the closure of the open dump site at Sitio Mamala, Barangay St. Francis I, Limay, Bataan, the municipality opened another dumpsite at Barangay Alangan, Limay, Bataan," the complaint added.

Meanwhile, the complaint against Tabaco City Mayor Cielo Krisel Lagman-Luistro and city environment and natural resources officer Reynold Martinez claimed that Luistro was a repeat offender and had a pending complaint before the Office of the Ombudsman for a similar offense.

"This complaint is executed to show everyone that the NSWMC is serious in its role of seeing to it that RA 9003 is strictly complied with, especially by the local government officials," the three-page complaint said.

The DENR likewise sought the preventive suspension of both Luistro and Martinez. INQ



Bataan, Albay LGU execs face raps over dumps

Criminal and administrative charges have been filed before the Office of the Ombudsman against local government officials of Bataan and Albay over the illegal operation of dumps.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) through the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) filed charges for violation of the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act against Lilver Roque, former mayor of Limay, Bataan; former municipal planning and development officer Romario Panangui, former municipal environment and natural resources officer Randy Cacho and Danilo Quinto, general services office chief.

Also charged were Mayor Cielo Kristel Lagman-Luistro

of Tabaco City, Albay, and city environment and natural resources officer Reynold Martirez.

The NSWMC said the respondents should also be held liable for grave misconduct, gross neglect of duty and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of service.

The DENR had earlier said a solid waste processing facility in Barangay St. Francis 1 in Limay operated as a dump. When it was ordered closed, the local government opened another dump in Barangay Alangan.

The NSWMC said the Albay city government operates a dump in Barangay San Vicente, where two temporary residual containment areas were also built.

- Rhodina Villanueva

Bataan, Albay mayors face raps over open dumpsite operations

BY PETER TABINGO

CRIMINAL complaints were filed before the Office of the Ombudsman yesterday against former Limay, Bataan mayor Liver Roque; Tabaco City, Albay mayor Cielo Krisel Lagman-Luistro, and other local officials over alleged violations of RA No. 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-National Solid Waste Management Commission

(NSWMC) said the two mayors ignored previous recommendations to comply with the law governing proper disposal of garbage.

In the case of Limay, DENR-NSWMC commissioner Romeo Hidalgo said the municipal government did not build a waste management facility after the closure of its previous open dumpsite in Sitio Mamala, Barangay St. Francis I but simply opened another dumpsite in Barangay Alangan.

Aside from Roque, also named respondents were Municipal Planning and

Development Officer Romario Panangui, Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Officer Randy Cacho, and General Services Office chief Danilo Quinto.

Hidalgo stressed that his office is determined to enforce the law to protect public health.

"This complaint is instituted to show to everyone that the NSWMC is serious in its role of seeing to it that local government officials comply with RA 9003," he said.

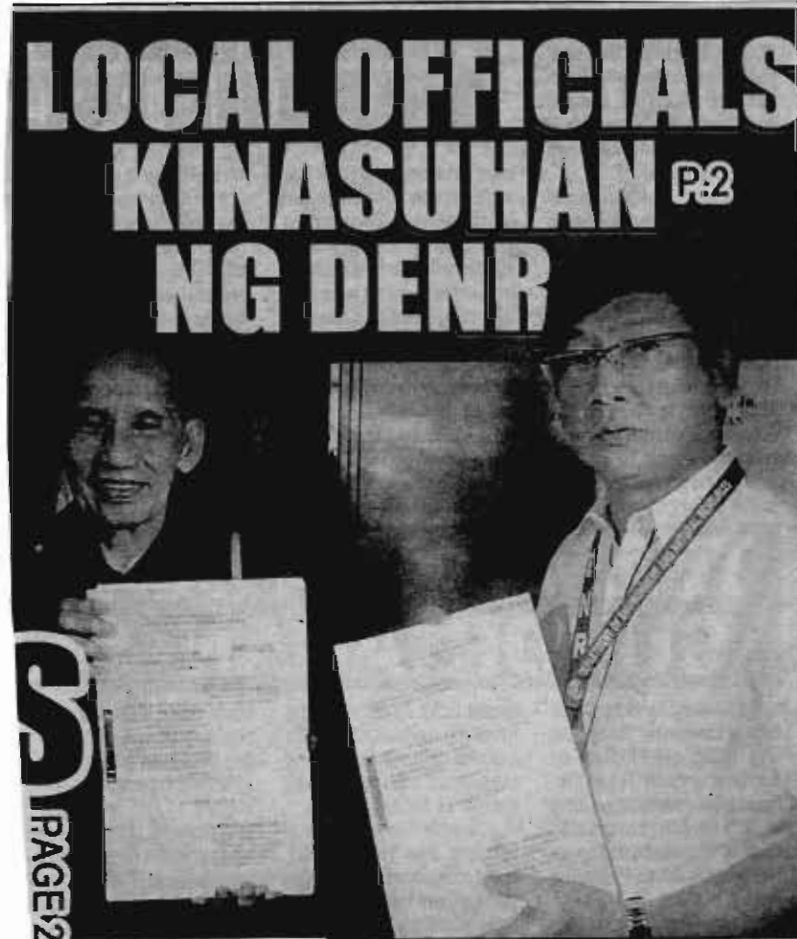
On the other hand, the complainant noted that Mayor Luistro has been

previously named in a complaint filed in 2017 with the Ombudsman involving the same violation.

It said DENR personnel verified the existence of "temporary residual containment area" being used as an open dump site in Barangay San Vicente, Tabaco City.

Named Luistro's co-respondent was City Environment and Natural Resource Officer Reynold Martinez.

Pending resolution of both complaints, Hidalgo asked the Ombudsman to place respondent public officials under preventive suspension.



IPINAKIKITA ni DENR Usec. Benny Antiporda ang kopya ng kasong isinampa ng kagawaran sa Ombudsman laban sa ilang opisyal ng Tabaco, Albay at Samal, Bataan dahil sa pagpayag ng mga ito sa open dumpsite sa kanilang lugar. **DANNY QUERUBIN**



Local officials kinasuhan ng DENR

SINAMPAHAN kahapon ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources ng kasong kriminal at administratibo sa Office of the Ombudsman ang incumbent city mayor, dating town mayor at iba pang local govern-

ment officials dahil sa umano'y pagpayag ng mga lito sa operasyon ng open dumpsite sa kanilang lokalidad.

Kabilang sa kinasuhan sina Mayor Krisel Lagman-Luistro ng Tabaco City, Albay at dating Mayor Liver Roque ng Limay,

Bataan bilang principal respondent sa dalawang hiwalay na reklamo ng paglabag sa Republic Act 9003 o Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

Nakasaad sa Sec. 37 ng RA 9003 ang pagbabawal sa mga establisimiyento na mag-

mantine ng open dumpsites na isang banta sa kalikasan at public health.

Nabatid sa ulat na isinampa nina DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and LGU Concerns Benny D. Antiporda at NSWMC Commissioner Romeo G. Hidalgo ang reklamo sa Ombudsman.

"We are doing this because we want to show to everyone that the DENR and the NSWMC are serious in their role of seeing to it that RA 9003 is strictly complied with, especially by local government officials," ani Antiporda.

Diniin pa ni Antiporda na ang batas ay tumutukoy sa LGUs bilang pangunahing responsable para sa waste segregation and disposal.

Sa reklamong isinampa laban kay Luistro, sinabi ng DENR na responsable umano lito sa illegal operation ng open dumpsite sa Barangay San Vicente sa Tabaco City at dalawang temporary residual containment areas sa lugar ang itinaayo.

Bukod kay Luistro kabilang din sa respondent sa reklamo

ang City Environment and Natural Resources Officer na si Reynold Martinez.

Sa hiwalay na reklamo, si Roque at ang iba pang Limay local officials ay inakusahan umano ng pagiging responsible sa umano'y operation ng open dumpsites sa Barangay St. Francis 1 at Alangan.

Nauna rito, ipinag-utos ni Antiporda ang pagpapasara sa dumpsite sa Barangay St. Francis 1 noong Mayo 9, subalit matapos umanong maipasara ang naturang dumpsite ang local government ng Limay na pinamumunuan umano ni Roque ay nagbukas ng ibang dumpsite sa Barangay Alangan.

Kabilang sa co-respondents ni Roque ang kanyang Planning and Development officer na si Romario Panangui at Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Officer Randy Cacho, at incumbent Limay General Services Office head Danilo Quinto.

Nahaharap din sa kasong Administratibo ang mga respondent dahil sa kasong grave misconduct, gross neglect of duty and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service.

SANTI CELARIO



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FILE:

PAGE 1/

DATE

House committee approves bills creating 2 departments

By **CHARISSA L. ATIENZA**

The House Committee on Ways and Means unanimously approved on Monday, Nov. 25, the House leadership-backed bills creating

the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and Department of Disaster Resilience (DDR).

After more than 30 minutes of deliberations, the House panel, chaired by Albay Rep. Joey Salceda approved

the tax provisions of the unnumbered substitute measures, which are President Duterte's priority measures.

Batangas Rep. Mario Vittorio Mariño, chairman of the House Committee on Gov- ▶ **5**

House committee approves... 1 ◀

ernment Reorganization, asked the Salceda panel to favorably consider the tax provisions of the proposed National Water Act, and the proposed Disaster Resilience Act.

He assured that the tax provisions of the DWR and DDR bills were "carefully scrutinized and reviewed."

It was Nueva Ecija Rep. Estrellita Suansing, vice chairperson of the panel, who moved for the approval of both bills.

Responding to a query from Deputy Speaker and Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr., Salceda stressed that under the bill, no taxes will be imposed on water consumers.

Nueva Ecija Rep. Estrellita Suansing, vice chairperson of the panel, moved for the approval of both bills.

Salceda said under the bill, which is a consolidation of 35 bills, the new department shall be the primary national agency responsible for the comprehensive and integrated planning, policy formulation and management of water resources in the Philippines.

Under the substitute bill, the functions of the following key water agencies will be transferred to the DWR: River Basin Control Office, Manila Bay Coordinating Office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Flood Management Planning and Sediment Functions of the DPWH, Water Supply and Sanitation Unit of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and Water Quality Management Section of Environmental Management Bureau (EMB)-DENR.

Under the bill, the following agencies shall be attached to the new department:

Metro Manila Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA), Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA), Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) and National Irrigation Administration (NIA) as an infrastructure arm.

Department of Disaster Resilience

The Salceda panel also approved Section 68 of the substitute bill which provides that the Bureau of Customs (BOC) shall create rules which would among others hasten the processing, release of donated goods and equipment to disaster victims and/or affected areas.

It also passed Sections 54, 64, 69 and 88 of the proposed DDR Act.

Under Section 54, "the declaration of a state of calamity shall allow the immediate implementation of any or all of the following remedial measures: [c] grant of tax credits or exemptions by the BIR, upon the recommendation of the President or the Department."

While, Section 64 authorizes the DDR to receive and manage donations from any persons or entity, whether from local or international sources.

Section 69 of the bill provides that the DDR must consult the Board of Investments under the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), which formulates the Investment Priorities Plan (IPP). The IPP lists the areas for investments eligible for tax incentives, it said.

Section 88 provides the creation of special courts on disaster resilience matters.

Under unnumbered substitute bill, the DDR is tasked to serve as the primary government agency responsible for leading, organizing and managing the national effort to reduce disaster risk, prepare for and respond to disasters, recover and rehabilitate, and build after the occurrence of disasters.

The DDR is mandated "to oversee and coordinate the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of disaster and climate resilience plans, programs, projects and activities; and provide leadership in the continuous development of strategic and systematic approaches to disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery and rehabilitation."



House panel OKs DWR, DRR bills

The House Committee on Ways and Means unanimously approved yesterday the House-leadership backed bills creating the Department of Water Resources and Department of Disaster Resilience that would prevent water crisis, and strengthen the country's disaster preparedness, respectively.

After more than 30 minutes of deliberations, the House panel, chaired by Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, approved the tax provisions of the unnumbered substitute measures, which are President Duterte's priority measures.

During his fourth State-of-the-Nation Address last July 22, Duterte asked Congress to pass

measures creating the two new departments.

Batangas Rep. Mario Vittorio "Marvey" Mariño, chairman of the House Committee on Government Reorganization, asked the Salceda panel to favorably consider the tax provisions of the proposed National Water Act and the proposed Disaster Resilience Act.

He assured that the tax provisions of the DWR and DDR bills are "carefully scrutinized and reviewed."

Nueva Ecija Rep. Estrellita Suaning, vice chairperson of the panel, who moved for the approval of both bills.

Salceda clarified that under the

bill, no taxes will be imposed after House Deputy Speaker and Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero "Butch" Pichay Jr. asked if the bill would "tax" the water consumers.

Under Section 8 of the proposed National Water Act, the DWR shall impose fees or charges, as may be deemed necessary, for water resources conservation and protections. These include polluter's fee, which shall be based on the net waste load depending in on wastewater charge formula pursuant to Republic Act 9275, and raw water price, which shall take into account, among others, the scarcity of water.

(Charissa L. Atienza)



New Bulk Water Supply to Boost Water Security

With water shortage in Metro Manila again looming in the horizon, AMA Water assured the MWSS that its commitment to deliver the first water by summer of 2021 under its 50mld bulk water supply project with Manila Water is still on track.

Pagasa has recently reported that water levels at both Angat and Ipo Dams have been dipping low lately despite the rains which have not substantially replenished both dams to their usual highs of 210 m. and 101 m. respectively. Angat's level stood at 187.49 m. and Ipo's at 100.69 which don't sound comforting to both water concessionaires.

AMA Water COO Charles D. Sullivan said their proposal is now under assessment by the MWSS-RO consultant after it was initially approved by the MWSS Board in July.

Along with MWCI's East Bay project, the AMA Water project is the only bulk water supply project that can deliver new water to Metro Manila within 18 months to avert another shortfall in the summer of 2021. Angat Dam has supplied some 90 percent of Metro Manila's water requirements for many decades now without recourse to other equally big sources. Sullivan said AMA WATER will "pull all the stops" to get this project on stream by summer of 2021. He was confident that issues raised on the water quality of Laguna Lake can be addressed effectively by using a combination of reverse osmosis and membrane technologies.

The AMA GROUP Holdings holds a 300mld water rights at Laguna Lake as granted by The LLDA. Laguna Lake is the country's biggest freshwater resource at 92,000 hectares spanning the provinces of Rizal, Laguna and Cavite as well as parts of Metro Manila. President Duterte has underlined the urgent need for water security as the Philippine population continues to grow especially in Metro Manila. Other new sources in the pipeline include Kaliwa and Wawa dams with the former still embroiled in some issues that could potentially derail its immediate implementation.



Pagtatayo ng Kaliwa Dam, hirip ng mga magsasaka

BUSTOS, Bulacan - Isang resolusyon ang pinagtibay ng mga magsasaka ng palay sa Angat-Bustos-Pandi (Anbuspa) na humihiling kay Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na agad nang pasimulan ang pagtatayo ng Kaliwa Dam.

Tugon ito ng mga magsasaka sa hiling ni Presidential Adviser on Peace Process Secretary Carlito Galvez at tumatayong Cabinet Officer for Regional Development and Security (CORDS) ng gitnang Luzon, na suportahan ang proyektong Kaliwa Dam sa idinaos na asembleya ng mga magsasaka ng Anbuspa na ginanap sa gilid ng Bustos Dam.

Ipinaliwanag ni Sec. Galvez na kung maitatayo ang Kaliwa Dam, mas lalaki ang alokasyong tubig para sa irigasyon ng mga magsasaka mula sa Angat Dam.

Positibo ang tugon dito ni Severino Santos, bagong chairman ng Anbuspa dahil aniya sa mahabang panahon hanggang sa kasalukuyan, 97% ng pangangailangan sa tubig ng Metro Manila ay nagmumula sa Angat Dam.

Pero kung maitatayo ang Kaliwa Dam, ani pa ni Santos, doon na kuha ng suplay na 600 milyong litro kada araw ng tubig ang mga taga-Metro Manila. Ibig sabi-

hin, 600 milyong litro rin ng tubig araw-araw ang maiiwan sa Angat Dam na magagamit nang husto hindi lamang bilang inuming tubig ng mga Bulakenyo, kundi para sa mga sakahan ng Bulacan.

Nagkakahalaga ang proyekto ng P12.2 bilyon kung saan P10.2 bilyon dito ay popondohan ng Official Development Assistance (ODA) mula sa China habang ang P2 bilyon ay magmumula sa Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS).

Sa Bustos Dam iniimbak ang mga sobrang tubig mula sa Angat Dam na nasa Norzagaray, Bulacan. (Omar Padilla)



EDITORIAL

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Is OGCC lawyering for concessionaires?

WHEN the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel (OGCC) was called to the Senate to have its budget passed, that office lamented the fact that of all the agencies under the Department of Justice, theirs is the only one left behind in terms of promotions, personnel and salary adjustments. The OGCC said when it was established decades ago, there were only seven government corporations utilizing their services but now, there are over 200 government firms. Their legal services to these government corporations, given for free because it is within their mandate to be lawyers for these government firms, could translate into a billion pesos in savings for these corporate entities, they pointed out in the Senate.

Because of this situation, we at first sympathized and were inclined to support the OGCC's plea for a bigger budget, more lawyers in its employ, and operational and logistical needs. But recent developments in one particular case left us checking our sympathetic bent.

Last Aug. 6, 2019, the Supreme Court declared that Maynilad, Manila Water and the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) lost their case against the DENR Pollution Adjudication Board and so the three corporations have to pay jointly and severally P921,464,184 in fines covering the period May 7, 2009 to August 6, 2019.

'Our concern is that the OGCC, which uses the people's taxes and should work for the people, is also defending the interests of the private companies whom the highest court in the land had established by final judgment as having committed a transgression of the law, thus the imposition of millions of pesos in fines.'

Thereafter, from the finality of the decision until Maynila and Manila Water have fully paid the P921 million, they shall be fined the initial amount of P322,102 a day, subject to further 10% increase every two years as provided under Section 28 of the Philippine Clean Water Act, until full compliance with Section 8 of the same law. The total fines shall likewise earn legal interest of 6 percent a year from finality until full satisfaction of the decision.

The huge businesses that they are, Manila Water and Maynilad are expected to exhaust all the legal recourse such as motions for reconsideration in their desire to at least lessen the fines imposed by the High Tribunal. What is extraordinary--anomalous even-- is the motion for reconsideration filed by the OGCC on behalf of the MWSS, a government corporation. In its MR, the OGCC took the cudgels not only for the MWSS, but also for the two water concessionaires: a clear case of lawyering for the private sector.

Throughout its 23-page MR, the OGCC defended the two water concessionaires and pointed an accusing finger at the DPWH, Department of Health, DENR and local government units for what it considers as various hurdles the accused firms had to face in order to fulfill their responsibility of delivering the needed waste water and sewerage facilities. The MR was signed by the three top officials of the OGCC.

Expensive and top lawyers were employed by Maynilad and Manila Water to argue their case on this one, and we do not care how they choose to do their work. Our concern is that the OGCC, which uses the people's taxes and should work for the people, is also defending the interests of the private companies whom the highest court in the land had established by final judgment as having committed a transgression of the law, thus the imposition of millions of pesos in fines.

There have been many instances when government regulators were called out because they behaved like they are the ones being regulated by their clientele. This is especially true when regulators are given additional allowances or incentives by the firms they are supposed to regulate, which usually happens in the utilities sector such as energy, water, etc.

When are we gonna learn?



Miners voice concern over regulatory climate

If there's a possible downfall in the future, the mining industry would be at the losing end because metal prices are so volatile. A competitive tax regime would be a factor to help attract possible investors

By Maria Romero
@tribunephil_mbr

BAGUIO CITY – Mining executives recently expressed apprehension over the adverse effects that may be prompted by the current tide of uncertainties over how the mining industry will be managed and regulated.

Philex Mining Corp. president and CEO Eulalio Austin thus urged lawmakers to immediately resolve the unstable fiscal regime and regulatory climate as these policy shifts may impede mining companies' growth.

"We support the increase in taxes but it should be some sort of equitable because the mining industry is so dependent on metal prices that's why we are proposing tax measures that are linked also to metal prices and margins," Austin told reporters in a spot interview.

He explained that the mining tax regime should take into account the volatile metal prices to at least help companies easily recover should there be a future downfall in the industry.

"If there's a possible downfall in the future, the mining industry would be at the losing end because metal prices are so volatile. A competitive tax regime would be a factor to help attract possible investors," Austin said.

Despite gaining the full trust of people in the area where they operate, Austin said the ambiguous regulatory climate currently scares off future investors.

"We are currently having a hard time raising the initial money for our Silangan Mine project because some issues are being raised because of the regulatory environment but we are trying to convince them that Silangan is a different story,"

Austin said.

In a separate interview, C.T.P. Construction and Mining Corporation president Clarence J. Pimentel Jr. also admitted that the vague regulatory mining climate is among the "biggest risks" his company has to hurdle.

Pimentel, who is also the chairman emeritus of the Philippine Nickel Industry Association (PNIA), said he remained optimistic that the lawmakers will soon figure out how they want to manage the mining industry.

"Hopefully once it gets settled, it will help the industry a lot more to move forward. At this point, we're just waiting for it to move to the Senate and once it goes there at least we can finally settle a lot of things in the industry," Pimentel said.

Recently, the House of Representatives' Committee on Ways and Means approved on third and final reading a new fiscal regime that will impose a 3 percent tax royalty on top of a 4 percent excise tax regardless if a mining company operates inside or outside a mineral reservation area.

The new fiscal regime fines lower royalty tax for companies operating within a mineral reservation area while those operating outside declared mineral reservation zones will now be fined with royalty tax.

Mining companies currently operate under a fiscal regime that imposes a 4 percent excise tax and a 5 percent royalty on mining companies that operated within the declared mineral reservation areas.

The development in the new tax regime was announced by Mines and Geosciences Bureau director Wilfredo Moncano during the kick-off ceremony of the 66th Annual National Mine Safety and Environment Conference.



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B12
PAGE

UPPER
 LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

11-26-19

DATE

TITLE: Miners voice concerns over regulatory climate PAGE 1/ 2/2



STAKEHOLDERS have expressed support for the tax increase but asserted that the hikes should be equitable as their industry is highly dependent on metal prices.



Apex rejoins COMP, PMSEA

The company said that instead of blaming small mining firms, the organization should boost policies on mining operations

BAGUIO CITY – Two years after it resigned over policy disagreement, publicly listed Apex Mining Company said it will rejoin the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) and the Philippine Mines Safety and Environment Association (PMSEA).

This was announced by Apex Mining chairman emeritus Walter Brown during his speech at the 66th Annual Mine Safety and Environment Conference.

"We are rejoining the Chamber of Mines. The reason we left is something of the past... We will all work together for change. There is no stopping us now," Brown said.

Brown explained that they already settled its past disagreement with COMP, which is currently chaired by

Gerard Brimo.

With this new development, he said they will work closely with other mining groups to champion responsible mining.

To recall, Apex left COMP in 2017 due to their difference in its stance on President Rodrigo Duterte's anti-illegal mining campaign where he urged the late environment chief Gina Lopez to restore and rehabilitate all areas damaged by all mining activities.

Answering the president's order, COMP blamed the small-scale mining operations over the destruction of the environment.

At the time, Apex maintained that large-scale mining should not blame pocket mining for the destruction of the environment.

The company said that instead of blaming small mining firms, the organization should boost policies on mining operations.

For the January to September period, Apex said its consolidated income only stood at P227 million amid higher production output. This was 31 percent lower than the recorded income in its year-ago level.

Maria Romero



6 mining companies bag Presidential Mineral Industry Environmental Award

SIX mining companies were recently recognized for outstanding levels of dedication, initiative and innovation in mining. The awards highlight an annual mining conference that focuses on mine safety and the environment in Baguio City.

Mt. Labo Exploration and Development Corp. won in the Mineral Exploration category while the Mindanao Mineral Processing and Refining Corp. bagged the award for the Mineral Processing category. For the Quarry Operation Category, Republic Cement & Building Materials, Inc.—Bulacan and Holcim Mining and Development Corp.—Davao bagged the Quarry Operation category.

For the Surface Mining category, Agata Mining Ventures Inc. and Cagdianao Mining Corp. bagged the coveted award.

Environment Undersecretary for Climate Change and Mining Concerns Analiza R. Teh, who represented Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, together with Philippine

Mine Safety and Environment Association (PMSEA) President Walter W. Brown led the awarding during the Awards Night and Testimonial Dinner at the CAP John Hay Trade and Cultural Center in Baguio City Friday night. The event capped the four-day 66th Annual National Mine Safety and Environment Conference organized by the PMSEA in partnership with Mines and Geosciences Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Presidential Mineral Industry Environmental Award recognizes outstanding levels of dedication, initiative and innovation in the pursuit of entities involved in various aspects of mineral utilization.

The scope of the environmental management includes among others, programs/projects/activities being implemented for environmental protection and enhancement of mining areas, development of the host and neighboring communities, land use improvement, exploration, and mining site rehabilitation and, final decommissioning. *Jonathan L. Mayuga*



4 **POLICE FILES**



PALIBHASA, hindi ako nakapanirahan sa mga komunidad na kinaroroonan ng mga nagsisipagmina ay salot sa kapaligiran ang naging pananaw ko sa pagmimina dahil na rin sa ipinagsisigawan ng mga kontrang militante... pero marami palang mga minahan ang pawang may pagmamalasakit sa kalikasan na ito ay nadiskubre ko sa ginanap na 66th ANNUAL NATIONAL MINE SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE (ANMSEC) sa BAGUJO CITY na pinangasiwaan ng PHILIPPINE MINE SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION (PMSEA) sa liderato ni DR. WALTER W. BROWN.

Ang event na 4-day idinaos sa SUMMER CAPITAL OF THE PHILIPPINES ay naging tandem ng PMSEA ang Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) na pinamumunuan ni DIRECTOR ATTY. WILFREDO MONCANO, na iba't ibang programa ang inilunsad kabilang na ang lakad parada na nilahukan ng mahigit 150 kompanya ng mga minahan.

Sa ginanap na pagbibigay parangal sa mga natatanging kompanya ng mga nagsisipagmina dahil napanatili ng mga ito ang pangangalaga sa kalikasan at pagpapairal ng ligtas na pagtatrabaho sa mga minahan ay hindi nakadalo si DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES (DENR) SECRETARY ROY CLIMATU na ang nagrepresenta ng kaniyang posisyon ay si ENVIRONMENT UNDERSECRETARY FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND MINING CONCERNS ANALIZA TEH, kung saan ay naging elegante ang gabi nitong nakaraang Biyernes (November 22) sa CAP CAMP JOHN HAY na pinagdausan ng mga pagpaparangal.

Ang MT. LABO EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION ang nanalo sa MINERAL EXPLORATION Category at ang MINDANAO MINERAL ROCESSING AND REFINING CORPORATION ang nakakopo naman sa parangal na MINERAL PROCESSING Category.

Sa QUARRY OPERATION CATEGORY ay ang REPUBLIC CEMENT AND BUILDINGS MATERIALS INC ng BULACAN at ang HOLCIM MINING AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION ng DAVAO ang nakakopo naman sa nasabing kategoryang parangal.

Ang parangal naman para sa SURFACE MINING Category ay ang AGATA MINING VENTURES Inc at ang CAGDIANAO MINING CORPORATION ang komopo naman.

MALAKING KAPAKINABANGAN ANG PAGMIMINA SA BANSA!

Ang lahat ng mga mining company na nag-oooperate ng exploration, active surface o underground operation, quarry operations at mineral processing sa buong bansa ay kuwalipikado sa mga mapagpipiliang mabibigyan ng award.

Ngayong taon ay 2 kompanya ang tumanggap ng TITANIUM AWARD at 15 iba pa ang naparangalan tulad sa BEST MINING FOREST AWARDS ay ang PHILEX MINING CORPORATION ang tinanghal na MINERAL EXPLORATION Category; ang PHILIPPINE MINING SERVICE CORP. ALCOY PLANT ang pinarangalan para sa MINERAL PROCESSING Category. Ang LAFARGE HOLCIM AGGREGATES INC naman ang komopo sa NON-METALLIC Category at ang FCF MINERALS CORP. ang tinanghal namang METALLIC CATEGORY Award.

Ang mga nanalo naman para sa 2019 SAFEST MINES AWARDS ay ang FILIMINERA RESOURCES CORP. ang nakakopo nito para sa EXPLORATION A category at sa SAFEST MINERAL EXPLORATION B category ay ang MT. LABO EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT CORP. ang naparangalan. Ang REPUBLIC CEMENT AND BUILDING MATERIALS INC sa BATANGAS ang ginawaran ng SAFEST QUARRY OPERATION category.

Sa kategoryang SAFEST SURFACE MINING OPERATION ay ang CAGDIANAO MINING CORP at sa SAFEST UNDERGROUND OPERATION category ay ang APEX MINING COMPANY ang komopo.

Ang "BEST AMONG THE BEST AWARDS" para sa BEST SAFETY INSPECTOR -UNDERGROUND category ay si JONATHAN HAVANA ng APEX MINING CO. ang pinarangalan at si ARCHIE SIERRA ng CAGDIANAO MINING CORP ang pinarangalan bilang BEST SAFETY INSPECTOR -SURFACE category. Si NASSER SILONGAN ng APEX MINING CO. at JAMES WILKINS ASIO ng HINATUAN MINING CORP naman ang nanalo bilang mga BEST MINE SUPERVISOR, UNDERGROUND at SURFACE category.

Ang BEST MINER -UNDERGROUND category ay nakopo nina MIRANTES HELARIO ng APEX MINING CO at ang BEST MINER-SURFACE category ay si ANGELI CANADA ng HINATUAN MINING CORP naman ang nakakuha ng award... CONGRATULATIONS sa lahat at dapat ay maipairal ang RESPONSIBLE MINING sa lahat ng nasa industriya ng pagmimina para sa kapakanan ng sambayanan!

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



Atimonan One ECC bawiin

BITBIT ang maraming mabibigat na 'buko' o coconut tree galing Quezon ay nagsagawa ng kilos protesta ang environmental advocates at mga kinatawan ng komunidad ng lalawigan sa harap ng tanggapan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) upang hilingin ang kanselasyon ng Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) na ipinagkaloob sa Atimonan One Energy (A1E), makaraang madiskubre ang maraming paglabag nito sa 'environmental and community education requisites'.

Kasamang naghain ng petisyon kahapon sa DENR sina Monsignor Emmanuel Ma. L. Villareal, kinatawan ng Quezon for Environment, Father Warren Puno, ng Ministry of Ecology, Diocese ng Lucena-Quezon; Reynaldo, Upalda, kinatawan ng Atimonan Power to the People; Gerard Arances ng Center for Energy, Environment and Development Inc. (CEED); Bibiano Rivera Jr., ng Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMJ) Inc., at Marie Marguerite Lopez ng Sanlakas para suspendihin at kanselahin ang ipinagkaloob na ECC sa Coal-Fired Power Plant Project ng A1E sa Brgy. Villa, sa Atimonan, Quezon.

"The ECC issued to A1E in 2015 clearly stated specific requirements before they are able to clear land, and that an Information, Education and Communication (IEC) program should be conducted to ensure that all stakeholders, especially local residents, fully understand the risks posed by the project and what A1E's proposed mitigating measures are. We are concerned that they have not succeeded in following through with both," paliwanag ni Bernardo Gregorio, legal counsel ng Power for People Coalition (P4P).

Sinabi naman ni Fr. Puno, may apat na planta na ng coal ang kanilang lalawigan na tinatawag nang 'coal capital' kaya hindi na nila hahayaan na tayuan pa ito ng isa pang Atimonan One, na pag-aari ng Meralco ng kanilang 'dirty source of energy'.

Aniya, maraming pinutol na puno at pinatag na ang kabundukan sa kanilang lalawigan para pagtayaran ng A1E nang walang ipinakikitang permit mula sa lokal na pamahalaan at mga kaukulang ahensiya ang Meralco.

"Humihingi kami ng permit sa lokal na pamahalaan pero walang maibigay, maging dito sa DENR. Ngayong nabuko namin na maraming paglabag ang Meralco (Gen. sa kanilang Atimonan One kaya naghain kami ng petisyon sa DENR na kanselahin ang ibinigay sa kanilang ECC," ayon sa Pari.

Iginiit rin Fr. Puno, na 25 taon ang kontrata ng Atimonan One kaya ngayon pa lamang ay puspusan ang kanilang pagharang dahil ang coal power plant na itatayo sa kanilang lalawigan ay hindi lamang ang kalikasan ang sisirain, kundi magiging malaki rin ang epekto nito sa 'climate change' sa ating planeta.

Nabatid na mula 2016-2017, ang A1E ay pina-yagang makapagputol na ng halos 3,500 coconut trees, bukod pa sa ibang uri ng mga puno kapalit umano ang pangakong milyon-milyong halagang kikitang buwis na ibabayad sa lokal na pamahalaan.

Sinabi naman ni P4P Coalition Convenor at CEED Executive Director Arances, ang pagkakaalbo ng kagubatan at pagputol sa maraming mga puno ay isang malaking kawalan sa mga residente ng Atimonan. **(Dolly Cabreza)**



Protest move. Environmental activists join Lumad people in a protest outside the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for the agency's alleged lack of action on critical projects that have spurred human rights violations across Mindanao.

PHOTO BY ROLLY SALVADOR



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
INITIATIVES
SERVICE



PAGE



UPPER
LOWER



PAGE 1
STORY



BANNER
STORY



EDITORIAL



CARTOON

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TIME:

PAGE 17

BORACAY REHABILITATION

DEMOLITION OF BEACH STRUCTURES PUSHED

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
@inquirervisayas

ILOILO CITY—The demolition of 10 structures allegedly encroaching on the beach easement on Boracay Island will be completed this week, according to an official of an interagency task force.

“We do not have enough personnel and we are removing concrete structures but we expect the demolition to be completed within the week,” Natividad Bernardino, general manager of the Boracay Inter-Agency Rehabilitation Management Group, told the Inquirer.

Dismantled

Bernardino said three of the 10 commercial and residential structures targeted for demolition had already been dismantled.

These include the Freestyle Academy Kite Surfing School, Lumbung Residences and a unit of 7 Stones Boracay Suites.

The demolition of parts of the Aira Hotel, Ventoso Residences, Kite Center at Banana Bay, Wind Riders Inn, Pahuwayan Suites, Boracay Gems and a unit of 7 Stones Boracay Suites is ongoing.

The commercial and residential occupants were found to have encroached on the easement, a no-build area since the island was closed to tourists for the six-month rehabilitation set on April 26 to Oct. 25 last year.

A road will also be built along Bulabog Beach, at the eastern side of the 1,032-hectare island parallel to White Beach, the island’s main attraction.

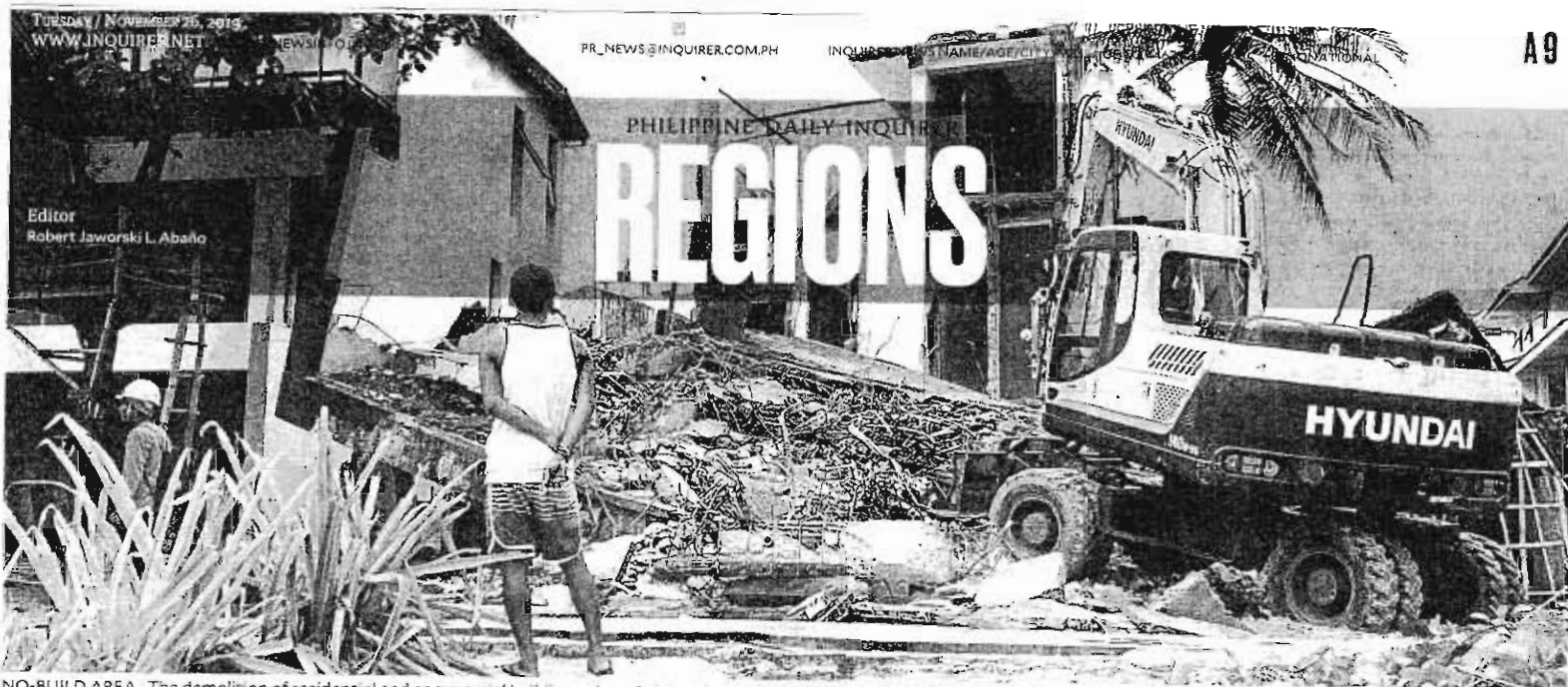
Civil complaint

Owners of the buildings up for demolition have filed a civil complaint before the Kalibo, Aklan, Regional Trial Court to have the demolition stopped and declared illegal.

They maintained that they were already compliant with easement rules after they removed parts of their properties based on measurements conducted by the local government of Malay, Aklan, and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

They are also questioning the new measurements conducted by the DENR in 2018.

The demolition started on Nov. 7 after a 20-day temporary restraining order lapsed on Nov. 4. INQ



NO-BUILD AREA The demolition of residential and commercial buildings along Bulabog Beach on Boracay Island. —CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



AFP, DENR stretch UNTV runs

Games on Sunday (San Juan City gym)

2 p.m. - Judiciary vs AFP/ 3:30 p.m. - DA vs NHA/ 5 p.m. - Malacañang-PSC vs PITC

Former Letran star Boyet Bautista fired five treys as titlist Armed Forces of the Philippines extended its run to six games with an 86-84 decision over National Housing Authority in the UNTV Cup at the San Juan City gym.

Bautista shot 5-of-6 from the 3-point area on the way to scoring 17 points as the AFP Cavaliers stayed on top of Group A with a perfect 6-0 record.

Not to be left out was Department

of Environment and Natural Resources which likewise stretched its unbeaten run to six games by downing Department of Agriculture, 94-85, in Group B action of the tournament organized by UNTV president and CEO Daniel Razon.

The DENR Warriors started slow and trailed the Food Masters in the first two quarters before outscoring their rivals, 26-17, in the third to seize momentum and prevail.



AFP, DENR stay unscathed

FORMER Letran star Boyet Bautista produced five triples and the same number of assists as defending champion Armed For-

ces of the Philippines extended its winning run to six with an 86-84 win over National Housing Authority in the 8th UNTV Cup at the San Juan City gym over the weekend.

The 5-foot-6 Bautista shot 5-of-6 from the 3-point area on the way to scoring 17 points as the AFP Cavaliers stayed on top of Group A with a perfect 6-0 record.

Three other AFP players scored

GAMES SUNDAY
(San Juan City gym)
2 p.m. - Judiciary vs AFP
3:30 p.m. - DA vs NHA
5 p.m. - Malacañang-PSC vs PHTC

in double figures, with Jerry Lumongsod leading the way with 19 while Rolando Pascual and Romeo Almerol chipped in 15 and 11 points, respectively, to help boost AFP's bid for an outright semis berth in the annual tournament for public servants.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources also stretched its unbeaten run to six by downing Department of Agriculture 94-85 in Group B action of the tournament organized by UNTV President and CEO Daniel Razon.



AFP five keeps hot run going

Games Sunday
(San Juan City gym)
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3:30 p.m. - DA vs NHA
5 p.m. - Malacañang-PSC vs PITC

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Department of Agriculture, 94-85, in Group B action of the tournament organized by UNTV President and CEO Daniel Razon.

The DENR Warriors started slow and trailed the Food Masters in the first two quarters before outscoring their rivals, 26-17, in the third to seize momentum and prevail.

Meantime, Malacañang-Philippine Sports Commission drew big games from Erick dela Cuesta, Martin Antonio and Visnu Das Javier to turn back PhilHealth, 98-81, for a 5-1 mark.

Dela Cuesta paced the Kamao with 20 points but its Javier who shone brightly as he posted 15 points, six assists, three rebounds and a steal. Antonio contributed 16 points.

First Game
Malacanang-PSC (98) - Dela Cuesta 20, Antonio 16, Javier 15, Besa 11, Jimenez 11, Roque 8, Javier 6, Punzalan 4, Gadong 3, Garrido 2, Ignario 2.

Philhealth (91) - Aldave 34, Mazo 20, Emata 17, Hernandez 13, Armojalas 6, Pacheco 1.

Quarterscores: 24-26, 47-47, 75-68, 98-91.

Second Game
DENR (94) - Abanes 23, Ayson 18, Rivera 16, Bangal 13, Parreño 11,

Mamac 8, Atablanca 2, Calungcagin 2, Baluyot 1.

DA (85) - Manigo 23, Fernandez 15, Mastelero 11, Casaysayan 11, Oreta 7, Silva 6, Dematera 6, Mayran 3, Hassan 1, Comercias 1.

Quarterscores: 14-27, 39-41, 65-58, 94-85.

Third Game
AFP (86) - Lumongsod 19, Baustista 17, Pascual 15, Almerol 11, Cordero 7, Rosopa 6, Casulla 6, Tan 3, Fernandez 2.

NHA (84) - Vitug 33, Dizon 14, Mercado 10, Lustestica 6, Alastoy 6, Dizon 6, W. Tibay 3, Prado 3, Sumayang 3.

Quarterscores: 12-19, 37-37, 64-58, 86-84.



Cavaliers, Warriors stay hot in UNTV Cup

Games Sunday
(San Juan City gym)
2 p.m. - Judiciary vs AFP
3:30 p.m. - DA vs NHA
5 p.m. - Malacañang-PSC vs PITC

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FIRST GAME

MALACAÑANG-PSC 98 - Dela Cuesta 20, Antonio 16, Javier 15, Besa 11, Jimenez 11, Roque 8, Javier 6, Punzalan 4, Gadong 3, Garrido 2, Ignacio 2.

PHILHEALTH 91 - Aldave 34, Mazo 20, Emata 17, Hernandez 13, Armojallas 6, Pacheco 1.

Quarters: 24-26, 47-47, 75-68, 98-91.

SECOND GAME

DENR 94 - Abanes 23, Ayson 18, Rivera 16, Bangal 13, Parreño 11, Mamac 8, Atablanco 2, Calungcagin 2, Baluyot 1.

DA 85 - Manigo 23, Fernandez 15, Mastelero 11, Casaysayan 11, Oreta 7, Silva 6, Dematera 6, Mayran 3, Hassan 1, Comercase 1.

Quarters: 14-27, 39-41, 65-58, 94-85.

THIRD GAME

AFP 86 - Lumongsod 19, Bautista 17, Pascual 15, Almerol 11, Cordero 7, Rosopa 6, Casulla 6, Tan 3, Fernandez 2.

NHA 84 - Vitug 33, Dizon 14, Mercado 10, Lustestica 6, Alastoy 6, Dizon 6, W. Tibay 3, Prado 3, Sumayang 3.

Quarters: 12-19, 37- 37, 64-58, 86-84.



DIMINUTIVE Boyet Bautista once again stood tall in the AFP Cavaliers' 86-84 win over the NHA Builders.



AFP, DENR 'di matinag sa UNTV Cup

LARO SA LINGGO

(San Juan City gym)

2 p.m. - Judiciary

vs AFP

3:30 p.m. - DA

vs NHA

5 p.m. - Malacañang-

PSC vs PITC

Nagsasipak si dating Letran star Boyet Bautista ng limang triples para akayin ang nagde-dependensang Armed Forces of the Philippines sa 86-84 paggupo sa National Housing Authority sa 8th UNTV Cup sa San Juan City gym.

Ito ang ikaanim na sunod na pananalasa ng Cavaliers.

Tumipa ang 5-foot-6 na si Bautista ng 5-of-6 shooting sa 3-point area para tumapos na may 17 points sa 6-0 record ng AFP sa Group A.

Pinamunuan ni Jerry Lumongsod ang Cavaliers sa kanyang 19 points, habang may 15 at 11 markers nina Rolando Pascual at Romeo Almerol, ayon sa pagka-

kasunod.

Pinalakas ng AFP ang kanilang tsansa para sa isang outright semifinals berth sa annual tournament para sa mga public servants.

Pinatumba naman ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources ang Department of Agriculture, 94-85, sa Group B sa torneong inorganisa ni UNTV President at CEO Daniel Razon.

Dumiretso ang DENR Warriors sa kanilang

ikaanim na dikit na ratsada sa Group B.

Samantala, humugot naman ang Malacañang-Philippine Sports Commission ng produksyon mula kina Erick dela Cuesta, Martin Antonio at Visnu Das Javier para talunin ang PhilHealth, 98-81, at ilista ang 5-1 marka.

Umiskor si Dela Cuesta ng 20 points para sa Kamao at nagdagdag sina Antonio at Javier ng 16 at 15 markers, ayon sa pagkakasunod.



House panel okays bill on swift reversion of abandoned fishponds

By BEN ROSARIO

A House of Representatives committee has approved a bill proposing to cut short the waiting period for reversion to forestlands of unutilized and abandoned fishponds, saying that the move would help address the devastating effects of climate change.

The House Committee on Natural Resources, chaired by Cavite Rep. Elpidio Barzaga, unanimously voted to endorse the enactment of House Bill 4119 which will cause the reversion of thousands of hectares of unused fishponds into forestlands.

HB 4119 seeks to amend Presidential Decree No. 705, otherwise known as "The Revised Forestry

Reform Code of the Philippines" that provides the rules for the reversion of fishponds with Fisheries Lease Agreements into forest land.

Bulacan Rep. Henry R. Villarica, principal author of the bill, said that under current environmental laws, fishponds with Fisheries Lease Agreements with government may only be reverted to forestlands after the lapse of five years of non-utilization.

Both Barzaga and Villarica agreed that the five-year wait is "too long" for a particular fishpond to be used for purposes other than it was intended.

"This period is deemed too long for such fishponds to be utilized for purposes other than that it was intended, such as using it for mangrove propagation to address the

devastating effects brought about by climate change," said Villarica.

The administration lawmaker stressed that

quicker reversion of fishponds into forest lands will also promote ecotourism activities "to jumpstart the economy of communities wanting socio-economic development."

HB 5799 proposes to shorten the required period of abandonment and non-utilization from five to three years before a fishpond can be classified as forest land.

Villarica said she re-filed the bill after failing to get approval during the 16th Congress because of the importance of making environmental laws "attuned to the demands of climate change".

By reducing the waiting period to just three years, government will be able to convert abandoned fishponds into mangrove areas "to address the devastating effects" of climate change.

Villarica re-filed the bill after it failed to get the approval of the Senate during the 17th Congress.

It was approved on third and final reading during the said Congress.

The bill also mandates the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to jointly set the guidelines for determining and rehabilitating abandoned, undeveloped and underutilized fishponds covered by FLA.

'DETRIMENTAL TO PH'

CLIMATE BODY UNDER DISASTER DEPT' OPPOSED

By **Jhesset O. Enano**
@JhessetEnanoINQ

Placing the Climate Change Commission (CCC) under the proposed Department of Disaster Resilience will restrict the exercise of its mandate as the policymaking body on climate adaptation and mitigation, according to a ranking official.

"You cannot limit the work of the CCC only within the aspect of disasters or disaster resilience. That is only a small aspect in the climate change adaptation and mitigation," CCC Secretary Emmanuel de Guzman told reporters.

De Guzman said the proposal would be "detrimental" to the country, since other aspects of adaptation and mitigation would not be adequately addressed in the absence of a lead agency.

"Disaster risk reduction is just the first step to adaptation. With adaptation, we think of future risks: what will happen in the future in terms of climate change scenarios and how we will plan now to address those future risks," he said.

De Guzman said the 10-year-old CCC also leads the implementation of the National Climate Change Action Plan.

This roadmap focuses on priority areas on climate action such as food security, water sufficiency, sustainable energy and human security, among others.

"Our convergence with the proposed department ... is only with human security, contingency planning and humanitarian response following the disaster," he said. INQ



BSP, gov't agencies ready roadmap for sustainable financing

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) and key government agencies are finalizing a roadmap to promote sustainable finance, facilitate investment in public infrastructure, and mobilize funds to finance green and sustainable projects.

BSP Governor Benjamin Diokno said in his speech during the 2nd Annual National Business Climate Action Summit that there is a need to adopt a "whole-of-country" approach to address climate change and environmental challenges as well as to scale up promotion of green and

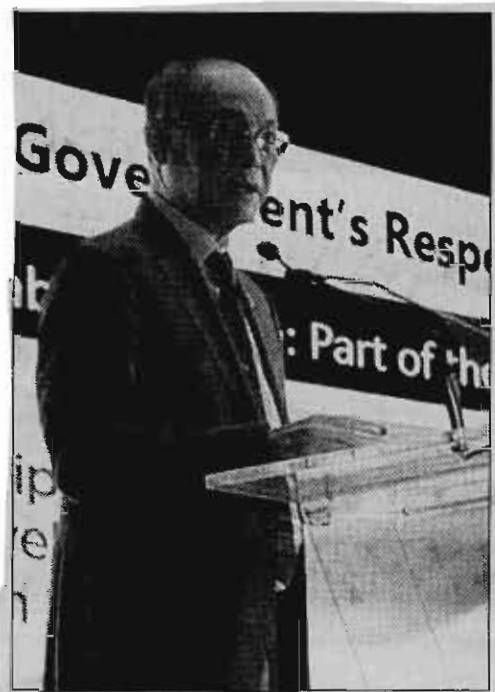
sustainable finance.

"Aware of the magnitude of multi-faceted challenges surrounding sustainable financing, the BSP is supporting the "whole-of-country" approach in this important undertaking," Diokno said.

Apart from the public sector, the BSP chief said there is a need to increase the awareness of the private sector, business enterprises and part of the households on the impact of climate and environment-related risks hopefully with the unceasing support by the development partners and academe.

According to Diokno, the

Turn to B8



Diokno

BSP... From B7

Philippine Development Plan of 2017-2022 outlines the government's climate-related and other environmental priorities.

Strategies include promotion of green technology innovations; institution of appropriate incentives to intensify the use of more energy efficient technologies; further development and use of renewable energy; promotion of climate-smart infrastructures and designs; promotion of low-carbon, energy-efficient and environment-friendly urban transport systems; and promotion of sustainable consumption and production.

Diokno pointed out the BSP has rolled out a two-pronged approach in promoting environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles via capacity

building and awareness campaign as well as by mainstreaming ESG principles through the issuance of enabling regulations.

"We deem that this approach will increase the BSP and the banks' understanding of the risks posed by environment degradation and climate change on the financial sector, enhance capacity to manage these risks, and increase banks' awareness on the investment opportunities for green or sustainable projects before issuing regulatory expectations on sustainable finance," he said.

He said financial regulation could be a useful tool to contribute to the achievement of national and international environmental and social objectives.

The ESG-related regulations will provide high level principles and broad expectations on the

integration of ESG and sustainability principles in the corporate and risk governance frameworks as well as in the business strategies and operations of banks; provide more granular expectations in managing climate change and other environment-related risks in relation to credit, market, liquidity, and operational risks; and cover potential regulatory incentives.

Sustainable finance, Diokno said, is ultimately a public good since it could translate into profitable investments and at the same time attain environmental and social objectives when done right.

He said Philippine banks are getting more involved into green finance, issuing green or sustainability bonds in order to fund and refinance renewable energy and energy efficient projects, green buildings, and other green assets.

- Lawrence Agcaoili



Greenhouse gas levels hit new high – UN

GENEVA: Greenhouse gas levels in the atmosphere, the main driver of climate change, hit a record high last year, the United Nations said Monday, calling for action to safeguard “the future welfare of mankind.”

“There is no sign of a slowdown, let alone a decline, in greenhouse gas concentration in the atmosphere despite all the commitments under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change,” the head of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Petteri Taalas said in a statement.

The WMO’s main annual Greenhouse Gas Bulletin listed the atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in 2018 at 407.8 parts per million, up from 405.5 parts per million (ppm) in 2017.

That increase was just above the annual average increase over the past decade.

CO₂ is responsible for roughly two-thirds of Earth’s warming.

The second most prevalent greenhouse gas in the atmosphere is methane — emitted in part from cattle and

fermentation from rice paddies — which is responsible for 17 percent of warming, according to WMO.

Nitrous oxide, the third major greenhouse gas which is caused largely by agricultural fertilizers, has caused about six percent of warming on Earth, the UN agency said.

Atmospheric concentration levels of both methane and nitrous oxide both hit record highs last year, the UN said.

“This continuing long-term trend means that future generations will be confronted with increasingly severe impacts of climate change, including rising temperatures, more extreme weather, water stress, sea level rise and disruption to marine and land ecosystems,” WMO said.

Emissions are the main factor that determines the amount of greenhouse gas levels but concentration rates are a measure of what remains after a series of complex interactions between atmosphere, biosphere, lithosphere, cryosphere and the oceans.

Roughly 25 percent of all emissions are currently absorbed by the oceans and biosphere — a term that accounts for all ecosystems on Earth.

The lithosphere is the solid, outer part of the Earth while the cryosphere covers that part of the world covered by frozen water.

The UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has said that in order to keep warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius, net CO₂ emissions must be at net zero, meaning the amount being pumped into the atmosphere must equal the amount being removed, either through natural absorption or technological innovation.

While Taalas made clear that the world was not on track to meet UN targets, he did highlight some reasons for cautious optimism.

“The visibility of these issues is the highest [it has] ever been,” he told reporters in Geneva, noting that the private sector was increasingly investing in green technology.

AFP

How sick is our planet?

COMMENTARY

RODEL D. LASCO

For some time now, scientists and environmentalists have sounded the alarm that our planet is sick. But do we really know how sick it is? One way that scientists have been grappling with this puzzle is through the budding concept of “planetary boundaries.”

Will Steffen and coauthors (2016) postulate that a planetary boundary (PB) is a safe operating space for human societies to thrive as constrained by the underlying biophysical process of the Earth System. The concept of PB recognizes that the earth can only operate in a relatively stable condition such as we have today if certain boundaries are not breached. To go beyond certain limits could threaten the capacity of the earth to sustain life as we know it. In other words, keeping within planetary boundaries is to be in the “safe zone of development.”

The boundary varies with the specific biophysical process as modified by human activities. Of these processes, those that have surpassed their planetary boundaries, or those that are posing increasing and high risk, include biosphere integrity (e.g., biodiversity), biogeochemical flows (nitrogen and phosphorus loading of rivers and lakes), climate change and land system change (e.g., deforestation).

To illustrate, according to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services assessment report (2019), three-fourths of the planet’s land surface has already been modified by humans. Such modification has led

to the loss of plants and animal species, loss of livelihoods and socioculturally significant places, degraded landscapes, and to increasing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

While the science is in its infancy, there are clear signs that human activities are shaping the state of the planet in ways that no one can fully predict. What can we do? More and more, we will have to act considering not just local and national impacts, but also planetary impacts.

Scientists are exploring how the concept of PB can guide decision-makers. For example, Ibrahim Algunaibet and coauthors (2019) incorporated PB into energy systems models by linking energy generation with the Earth’s ecological limits, with the United States as a test case. They pointed out that ignoring PB could lead to energy mixes that could negate sustainable development aims. For example, the proportion of fossil fuels as energy source will have an enormous effect on the rate of global warming. Another sector with significant impact on PB is that of agriculture and food systems, which are major contributors to nitrogen and phosphorus flows as well as greenhouse gas emissions (see Bruce Campbell and coworkers 2017). Practices such as chemical fertilizer application, if done improperly, could

lead to water pollution and climate change.

Clearly, the way forward is fraught with complexity, uncertainty and huge risks. Issues related to equity and social justice, even democracy itself, are just some of the more contentious issues that need to be addressed before the concept of PB becomes a real force in society. For instance, will imposing the concept of PB lead to a top-down approach led by so-called experts? Operationalizing the concept of PB by intergovernmental organizations, government entities as well as the private sector is still subject to ongoing inquiry and debate.

However, the state of knowledge should not lead to paralysis. There are enough indicators pointing to a sick planet, the concept of PB being just one of them. Fortunately, there are numerous multiple-benefit solutions that reduce ecological footprints while allowing for economic progress and profits. At the local and individual levels, each of us can do our share to minimize the impacts of our actions on the planet we all share. At the same time, we must increasingly open our minds to planetary perspectives that view local action in light of global implications.

Rodel D. Lasco is an author of several Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports, including the forthcoming sixth assessment report. He is the executive director of The OML Center, a foundation devoted to discovering climate change adaptation solutions (<http://www.omlopezcenter.org/>)



Philippines' stakes in the UN Climate Summit

By VINOD THOMAS



The global climate talks in Madrid this December must tackle an issue that has for too long been tiptoeing in the shadows of responses to the climate crisis: accountability. While scientific evidence on the emerging catastrophe is more frightening than ever, especially for countries like the Philippines on the front line, carbon emissions and global temperatures are heading, alarmingly, in the wrong direction. It is imperative that the UN's COP25 summit be aligned to the big emitters—the top 10% of countries (20 of them) that make up 75% of global carbon discharges, led by China, the United States, India, Russia and Japan.

Making the top emitters accountable makes sense because global warming is the result of the sheer magnitude of atmospheric pollution. Given the dominance of these large economies

in the crisis, their national policies make all the difference. The urgency for strong leadership from them has become more pressing because the United States, China and India are increasing their emissions. All countries, including the Philippines, need to participate in a climate solution, but fast results hinge on the biggest ones making a U-turn.

Climate change is no longer a distant phenomenon affecting faraway places. Today, the intensity of local catastrophes, like the 2013 Super Typhoon Yolanda or the great Kerala floods of 2018 or the deadly California fires of 2018 or this year's Australian fires, can be linked to climate change caused by emissions. It is vital that the general public appreciate this link.

Furthermore, policy leaders need to recognize that the payoffs from switching to a low-carbon growth path far outweigh the costs of making the transition. India, according to a World Bank estimate, could incur damage costs of 2.8% of gross domestic product (GDP) by 2050 in the current climate trajectory. One estimate places the loss from climate change from extreme weather events for 82 countries at 3% of GDP by 2050.

These estimates of climate losses, however, are too low because previous projections understated the extent of the true threat. Higher temperatures are increasing energy consumption (for example, in cooling and refrigeration); and global warming is making forest fires more destructive, in turn

contributing to new climatic extremes. Similarly, improved global elevation data show coastal levels, including in Southeast Asia, to be much lower and the risk of floods much higher than earlier maps had suggested.

If the big carbon-emitting countries reduced their fossil fuel consumption they could count on spillover gains from others following them – and, conversely, losses caused by others following their bad practices. The US administration's anti-environmental stance has had a knock-on effect on Brazil's deforestation binge in the Amazon, and the obdurate stances of

Turn to page 12

Philippines' ... From page 9

Russia and Saudi Arabia. Southeast Asia, including the Philippines is set to increase coal production, adding fuel to the climate fire.

An encouraging development is the price declines and greater competitiveness of renewable sources of energy, especially solar and wind, which can help countries achieve low-carbon growth. Even so, renewables still account for just 11 percent of global energy consumption, compared with 80 percent for fossil fuels. Solar and wind need to overcome technical and logistical impediments on production, storage and distribution. To counter this, strong policy support and subsidies, be it in the US or

the Philippines, could vastly increase their usage.

The crucial question is how to get the leading carbon-emitters to drastically reduce fossil fuel consumption. The answer seems to be a sustained wave of public sentiment favoring bold climate action. Politicians with strong climate agendas for climate are making inroads in Europe and even in the United States, but this momentum needs to be kept up. Sadly, there are still too few national leaders in Asia championing climate action.

Setting up a G-5 of the top five emitters to tackle climate change in the world's largest economies would be a nonstarter until the United States has a climate champion. In the meantime, a new G-20 of the top emitters, though more dispersed, would include Germany (the 6th largest emitter), which intends to

phase out coal by 2038 and France (20th), whose president has been a leading voice for this cause.

COP 25 negotiators at the Dec. 2–13 talks in Madrid will undoubtedly sound the alarm on the imminent danger of climate inaction. It must go further by announcing a new G-20 plan of action with 2020 as the year that started to change the climate trajectory. COP 25, the 25th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, should call on the leaders of the top carbon-emitting countries to take responsibility for reversing the dangerous climate trend – and Southeast Asia, in its own interest, should make its voice heard.

(Vinod Thomas is visiting professor at Asian Institute of Management, Manila.)



Architecture can slow down global warming

BBETTER architecture and energy savings in buildings could do more to fight global warming than all curbs on greenhouse gases." This was agreed upon under the United Nations' Kyoto Protocol. (The Kyoto Protocol is an amendment to the international treaty on climatic change, assigning mandatory emission and limitation for the reduction of greenhouse gas emission.) Its main objective is the stabilization of greenhouse gas concentration in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous interference in the climate.



THE ARCHITECT'S PERSPECTIVE

ARCH. CELSO NIEVES

the environment. Framed by the larger discussion of sustainability, and having to do with the pressing economic and political issues of the time, it seeks to minimize the negative environmental impact of buildings by enhancing efficiency and moderation through the use of materials, energy and space development. It is a system in the architectural practice of using natural energy, forces, materials, design methods and retrofitting within the building, and its surroundings for health, safety and economy purposes.

Energy efficiency is perhaps the most important goal of architecture. It may also mean reducing and eliminating the use of fuels that cause the greenhouse effect by utilizing the energy of the sun, wind, gravity and other natural forces, which are available and free. Architects may use different techniques to reduce the energy needs of buildings and increase their ability to capture or generate their own energy.

It is clear that architecture endeavors to eliminate high energy-consuming mechanical equipment and use nature's energy whose primary goal is function, utility, strength, aesthetics; and of course, reduc-

tion of expenses.

In our tropical climate, the need for the better use of concrete, metal and other materials in construction and less use of energy for everything from air conditioners to lighting in homes and offices could save millions of pesos.

"By some conservative estimates, the building sector worldwide could deliver emission reductions of 1.8 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide," said Achim Steiner, the head of UNEP. "Carbon dioxide is the main greenhouse gas."

"A more aggressive energy efficiency policy might deliver over 2 billion tons, or close to three times the amount scheduled to be reduced under the Kyoto Protocol," continued Steiner.

The savings that can be made right now are potentially huge and the costs to implement them are relatively low if government, industries, businesses and consumers would act.

We need to focus on more efficient buildings as we add thousands of square meters of spaces every day. Overall, most energies are consumed by homes, shops, offices and buildings such as schools and hospitals. Typically, construction costs decrease by 3 to 5 percent with the introduction of these energy-efficient methods.

The call of the Kyoto Protocol is crystal clear — that architects everywhere have a momentous duty to the reduction of the deadly gases constantly hovering over the atmosphere, which causes imbalance to the ecosystem, abnormal growth to plants and animals, and sundry diseases to mankind.

The Kyoto Protocol specifically emphasized architecture as one of the main agencies that could save the world from this potential disaster.

The architectural profession is recognized as one of the prime movers to act on this calamity.

Our organization, the United Architects of the Philippines, can work alongside government agencies like the Department of Energy, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and other private sectors like Japan's ZERO Energy Building System, Hari-bon, Ecological Society of the Philippines, etc. It is timely that it should also be one of the fundamental subjects in the colleges of architecture and in the professional business world.

Arch. Celso Nieves is a fellow of the United Architects of the Philippines and has been the past chairman of the Specialty Council on Climate Change of the UAP. An advocate of green architecture and architecture for architects, he is an active member of the UAP QC Central Chapter.



TITLE:

MAKARAANG sibakin ni Pangulong Digong si Vice President Leni bilang co-chairman ng Inter-Agency Committee on Anti-Illegal Drugs, may mga naiwang usapin na gustong talakayin ng ating Uzi.

Una, may malalaking butas sa kampanya ni VP Leni.

Kabilang umano rito ang pagpipilit ni VP Leni na walang dapat mamatay sa giyera sa droga bilang best practice rito.

Ikalawa, may VP Leni man o wala sa ICAD, dapat magkaroon ng internal cleansing o paglilinis ng bakuran sa buong pulisya.

BEST PRACTICE

Noong nakaupo pa si VP Leni sa ICAD, naghahanap siya ng best practices sa giyera sa droga at isa sa mga nabanggit niya ang pagkalap ng mga ito sa ibang mga bansa.

Bigla nating naalala ang Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Alam ba ninyo na sa 10 bansang bumubuo ng ASEAN, ang Pilipinas at Cambodia lamang ang walang parusang bitay?

Ang Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei Darrusalam, Thailand, Laos, Myanmar ay may parusang bitay at kasama sa mga binibitay ang mga sangkot sa droga.

Paglabas mo naman sa ASEAN, may bitay rin sa mga bansang South at North Korea, China at Japan at kasama sa mga binibitay rito ang mga sangkot din sa droga.

Pagpunta mo sa mga Arabong bansa, binibitay rin ang mga sangkot sa droga.

EPEKTO NG BEST PRACTICE

Best practice ang bitay sa kanila dahil wala nang pag-asang makabalik pa sa paggawa, pagpapalaganap, pagtitinda at pagpapayaman ng mga sangkot sa droga.

Hindi na rin makahahawak pa ang mga sangkot sa droga ng kapangyarihan sa pamahalaan upang maprotektahan nita ang kanilang droga.

Mapipigilan din ang mga international drug syndicate na gawing transhipment point ang Pinas: ng mga droga na ibinibiyaha sa iba't ibang bansa.

Ang mga druglord na nakakulong at nag-oopereyng kahit nasa Bilid na sila ay hindi na dapat problema pa.

At sapilitang magkaleksyon ang mga gustong maging adik at at tulak para umiwas o tumigil sa droga.



BEST PRACTICES VS DROGA AT PAGLILINIS NG BAKURAN

migil sa droga.

Tanong: Bakit hindi nailisip ni VP Leni na isulong ang parusang bitay laban sa droga bilang pamalit sa patayan sa mga komunidad?

BEST PRACTICE PA

Bago iniupo si VP Leni sa ICAD, meron nang ibang mga best practice para labanan naman ang pang-aabuso sa kapangyarihan ng mga armadong pwersa ng pamahalaan.

Isa rito ang internal cleansing o paglilinis sa bakuran ng mga pulis, miyembro ng Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, National Bureau of Investigation at iba pa.

May mga tagumpay naman dito.

Halimbawa ang pagbubuking ng korapsyon ng mga miyembro ng Bids and Awards Committee sa pagbili ng daan-daang libong pisong halaga ng body camera ng mga pulis.

Anak ng tokwa, P5 milyon ang hinuhuthot ng tatlong pulis na miyembro ng BAC sa isang aplikanteng suplayer ng body camera.

Ngayon, sibak na at nahaharap sa mga administratibo at kriminal na kaso ang mga pulis na may ranggong police major.

BEST PRACTICE PA

Isa pang best practice ang aktibong pagsupil sa mga pasaway na pulis na lumalaban sa droga ngunit nais lang palang magkaperá.

Bago dumating ang administrasyong Duterte, talamak ang hulidap ng malalaki at maliliit na sangkot sa droga.

Magpatuloy ito sa kasagsagan ng giyera sa droga ni Pang. Digong at umabot pa nga ang pang-aabuso sa Camp Crame na roon pinatay ang isang Koreano saka sinunog pero pagkatapos na magkaperá ang mga pulis.

Umaaksyon ang mga pwersang Counter Intelligence Task Force laban sa kanilang kabaro at marami nang scalawag ang kanilang nadakma, ikinulong at kinasuhan.

BEST PRACTICE PA RIN

Sa kabila ng masamang imahe na gawa ng mga iskalawag sa Oplan Tokhang, masasabing napakaapektibong Best

Practice ito laban sa mga sangkot sa droga.

Aba, hindi lang mga pulis ang nagtutuk-Tok Hangyo sa mga sangkot sa droga sa barangay kundi ang mga lokal na opisyal.

Kita naman ninyo, mahigit 1.3 milyon ang nadiskubreng adik, tulak at druglord nang pairalin ang Oplan Tokhang na pagkatok sa mga tahanan ng mga sangkot sa droga at pakiusap sa mga ito na tumigil na sa pagdodroga.

Pinagtayo ng Department of Interior and Local Government ang lahat ng lokal na pamahalaan ng mga Anti-Drug Abuse Council upang makatulong ang mga pulis, militar, NBI at iba pa sa giyera sa droga.

BEST PRACTICE KAHIT MADUGO

Nagkaroon ng napakalaking epekto sa malaganap na droga ang best practice na madugo.

Sa mga buy-bust at raid sa bisa ng mga warrant of arrest at search warrant, lumalaban ang mga sangkot sa droga.

Natural na ipagtanggol ng mga awtoridad ang kanilang mga sarili.

Sa Mindanao, matindi, dahil, kasama ang mga militar sa mga buy-bust at raid dahil, armadong mga matataas na uri ng baril ang mga sangkot sa droga.

Sa bisa ng kamatayan sa best practice na ito, maraming komunidad, kalsada at tahanan ang lumaya sa droga.

Kung noon ay takot na takot sa mga sangkot sa droga, na may mga protektor sa pamahalaan ang mga mamamayan, ang mga mamamayan, ngayon, dahil sa madugong best practice, nagbibigay na sila ng importasyon.

May iba pang madugong sumasanta na sa pagkuyog sa mga sangkot sa droga na aktong gumagawa ng krimen.

Paano si VP Leni na kontrabida sa ilang best practice rito?

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