

DATE : 11-28-19

DAY : Thursday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service

Climate change budget rises; investments needed

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said government has made “considerable progress” in providing funds for climate resilience in the last four years.

“Since we started tagging the climate change budget in 2015, there has been an increasing trend in the budget that supports climate adaptation and mitigation,” said DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu.

In a statement, Cimatu said the budgetary allocation for climate change had increased to P132 billion in 2019 from P76 billion in 2015. He, however, said this is

“not enough” to generate more and better targeted investments for climate resilience.

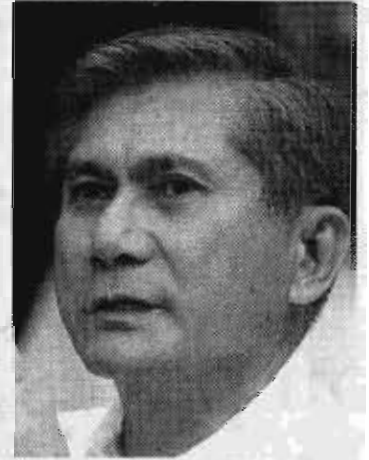
He said a Risk Resiliency Program (RRP) which is being led by the agency for planning, budgeting and evaluating climate investments between national agencies and local government units will help in pushing for such effort.

Under the program, investments for climate change will be focused in more than 20 climate vulnerable provinces, some 800 coastal municipalities, and four major urban centers, namely Metro Manila, Cebu, Iloilo and Davao by 2022.

Cimatu said the RRP would

also help the Cabinet Cluster for Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation and Disaster Risk Reduction to close the gap between budget and climate resilience requirement, address inadequacy in some areas and fill significant gaps in targeting places for resilience investment while the criteria needed for privatizing investments remain unclear.

“We see the reforms to the (RRP) as strategic opportunity for having more public investments for climate resilience and better targeting of investments to the geographic areas where they are most needed,” he said.



CIMATU



VILLAR: PROTECT FARMERS FROM CLIMATE CHANGE

By RYAN PONCE PACPACO

A YOUNG lady House leader is proposing to peg the crop insurance extended to agriculture sector to the weather such as rainfall, typhoon or drought as basis for insurance payouts to shield the country's small farmers from the risks of climate change and extreme weather disturbances.

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VILLAR

From Page 1

House Deputy Majority Leader and Las Piñas Rep. Camille Villar suggested indexing the crop insurance to weather conditions to facilitate the insurance coverage process and speed up payments to farmer beneficiaries, cutting red tape significantly.

"Weather index-based crop insurance (WIBCI) is a unique insurance product based on the occurrence of breach of a weather-based parameter, which serves as legal proof of the occurrence of extremely adverse weather condition and proxy for the expected crop damage,"

In filing House Bill (HB)

3310, Villar explained that WIBCI as an innovation, requires less administrative costs in terms of selling the product, administering the policy coverage and monitoring over wide areas.

"It maximizes the use of relevant technologies and networks in order to reach out more and more farmers; and provides faster payout turn-around in the event of breach of the agreed parameters without need for bureaucratic processing by an adjuster. The hassle-free disbursement of claims is made possible through the use of technology and a widely distributed network of payment centers," Villar pointed out.

Weather index-based insurance is an attractive approach to managing weather and climate risks

because it uses a weather index, such as rainfall, to determine payouts and these can be made more quickly and with less argument than is typical for conventional crop insurance, the solon declared.

Villar said the WIBCI-type crop insurance will essentially improve and expand the current coverage and mandate of the Philippine Crop Insurance Corp. (PCIC), which "so far, has too few participants and very miniscule outreach compared with the total number of farmers that is supposed to be served."

From 2013 up to 2017, Congress has been appropriating an average of P1.55 billion per year to subsidize the PCIC insurance premiums on up to 600,000 hect-

ares of rice farms in a number of provinces.

Still, against a total of almost P380 billion in paddy production in 2014, the PCIC has been insuring only around P12.2 billion worth of crops annually or roughly 3% of potential insurable value. In short, the greater number of our small farmers remain uninsured simply because of the inadequate resource base and outreach of the PCIC.

"To effectively reach and serve more of the country's five million small-hold farmers, provide them with greater resiliency, there is a need for the country to involve the private sector and adopt a more relevant strategy and safeguard the food security of the broader rural population," said Villar.



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DATE

Rody seeks greater cooperation vs security threats, climate change

By ALEXIS ROMERO

BUSAN – President Duterte has called for greater cooperation among countries in the region in combating terrorism, illegal drugs and other security

threats, and in mitigating the effects of climate change which makes developing countries like the Philippines vulnerable to natural disasters.

Speaking to fellow leaders during the ASEAN-Republic

of Korea Commemorative Summit last Tuesday, Duterte said fighting transnational crimes is one of his domestic priorities because of the threats they pose to societies across the globe.

A statement issued by Malacañang quoted Duterte as saying that criminal networks are raking in billions of dollars every year through illicit drugs and human trafficking, cybercrime and other

forms of criminal activities. The President suggested that ASEAN and Korea must sustain cooperation in fighting threats through exchange of information and intelligence, the statement added.

Duterte said the 2017 Marawi siege carried out by Islamic State-linked militants was “a wake-up call” that reminded everyone that terrorism has no borders.

“He (Duterte) then called for a greater collective action to combat this threat by addressing its root causes that include underdevelopment, inequality and historical injustices. Cooperation should focus on capacity-building,” the Palace statement read.

Duterte also raised the issue of climate change during the summit, and the need to enhance cooperation in disaster response.

“We also look forward to closer cooperation in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief,” the President said. “We want to enhance our capabilities to respond to crisis and rebuild communities, given our high vulnerability to natural disasters.”

The President also recognized South Korea’s expertise in smart city development and expressed interest in working with the east Asian country to build communities that are economically vibrant and resilient to extreme weather disturbances.

Duterte likewise expressed concern about the region’s problem with marine debris, which he said is becoming serious.

“We need stronger political resolve to address this issue. It threatens our marine resources

and, ultimately, our food security,” he added.

New policy

The Philippine leader lauded South Korean President Moon Jae-in’s New Southern Policy, which aims to forge stronger ties with Southeast Asian countries. He described the policy as a “timely and forward-looking initiative” that complements ASEAN Vision 2025.

“I am confident that the next 30 years will be even more productive for us. We look forward to further deepen our partnership as we prosper each other and build lasting peace for our peoples on the basis of friendship and mutual respect,” he said.

The President likewise welcomed South Korea’s interest to work with ASEAN in enhancing connectivity and called on fellow leaders to use technological revolution to promote integration.

“The Philippines is keenly aware that the ongoing revolution in technology and innovation could be disruptive. But we also recognize the opportunities it creates for greater connectivity. Digital and other emerging technologies have the power not just to disrupt but also to integrate,” Duterte said.

“We must do this, bearing in mind the development as well as knowledge gaps within and between countries,” he added.

Duterte also reaffirmed the Philippines’ resolve to fully implement the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 and expressed optimism about the establishment of the ASEAN-Korea Infrastructure Fund in 2022.



'Gov't funds ready for climate change'

ENVIRONMENT Secretary Roy Cimatu on Wednesday cited the government's "considerable progress" in providing funds for climate resilience in the last four years.

He said the government has signified its serious commitment to build safe and sustainable communities in the face of climate change.

"Since we started tagging the climate change budget in 2015, there has been an increasing trend in the budget that supports climate adaptation and mitigation," he added.

He said the budgetary allocation for climate change increased to P132 billion in 2019 from P76 billion in 2015.

Despite the increase, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said the amount was still "not enough" to generate more and better targeted investments for climate resilience.

Rio N. Araja



2020 hinirit gawing 'Disaster and Climate Emergency Consciousness Year'

IPINANUKALA ni Albay Rep. Joey Salceda sa Kamara na ideklara ang 2020 bilang 'Disaster and Climate Emergency Awareness Year'.

Isang panawagan para sa patuloy at lalong pinaigting na pagpukaw sa kamalayan ng bansa sa banta ng lalong humalakas na mga bagyong dulot ng 'climate change'.

Ang House Resolution 535 na iniakda ni Salceda ay tugon sa panawagan ng Philippine Councilor's League (PCL). Matatandaang dumalaw sa Kamara

ang mga lider matapos ang 'First PCL Conference on Climate-Disaster Resilience and Federalism Governance' nila sa Quezon City.

Sa pangunguna ni Albay Board Member Jesciel Richard Salceda, hiniiling nila sa mga mambabatas, kasama si House Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano, na ikonsidera ang 'working output' ng kanilang PCL climate change conference - na madeklara ang 2020 bilang 'Disaster and Climate Change Awareness Year'.



EDITORIAL

Climate Consciousness Year

IT is a serial, recurring event.

And it is the cruel kind – extreme, extended dry spells parching the land, taking turns with savage typhoon season of relentless rains that unleash floods and landslides.

The cause of the environmental disaster is still the subject of an unsettled debate among scientists and other experts.

But we, as citizens of a country right smack in what is quite arguably Ground Zero of natural disasters, should arm ourselves with two basic defensive capabilities – awareness and preparedness.

And so a key congressional climate campaigner, Albay Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda, has recently filed House Resolution 535 asking Congress to declare 2020 as Disaster and Climate Emergency Awareness Year, a call to continuous public caution on dangers brought by increasingly deadly weather events spawned by climate change.

Salceda's call came following a recent visit to the House by members of the Philippine Councilor's League after their First PCL Conference on Climate-Disaster Resilience and Federalism Governance in Quezon City.

The PCL leaders, led by Albay Board Member Jesciel Richard Salceda, urged the lawmakers, including House Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano, to consider the working output of the PCL climate change conference – the declaration of 2020 as Disaster and Climate Change Awareness Year.

Salceda, designated by the UN as Senior Global Champion for DRR-CCA, said the country has been suffering from a "disaster and climate emergency which now compels a whole-of-government and whole-of-nation policy response to anticipate, halt, reduce, reverse, address and adapt to its impacts, consequences and causes".

His HR 535 responds to the PCL's challenge and calls his colleagues in Congress to support and act on it. The declaration aims to highlight the role of the LGUs in leading the process of transformation and adaptation to climate change and disaster resilience, along with business communities and other stakeholders.

The lawmaker urged his fellow legislators to:

- Declare 2020 as Disaster and Climate Emergency Awareness Year;
- Conduct continuous inquiries in aid of legislation and in relation to its oversight functions, on measures being implemented by all concerned national agencies and local government units to address the impacts of disasters and climate change on the fundamental rights of Filipinos;
- Ensure the full integration and convergence of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts through the passage of the Department of Disaster Resilience bill as an urgent policy response; and
- Enjoin a whole-of-government, whole-of-nation and whole-of-society mobilization on disaster and climate emergency, in behalf of climate-vulnerable communities, LGUs and other stakeholders in the country.



Slash emissions now or face climate disaster, UN warns

PARIS—The world will miss its chance to avert climate disaster without an immediate and all-but-impossible fall in fossil fuel emissions, the UN said Tuesday in its annual assessment on greenhouse gases.

The United Nations Environment Program said global emissions need to fall by 7.6 percent each year until 2030 to limit global temperature rises to 1.5C.

The harsh reality is that emissions have risen on average 1.5 percent annually over the last decade, hitting a record 55.3 billion tonnes of CO2 or equivalent greenhouse gases in 2018 — three years after 195 countries signed the Paris treaty on climate change.

The World Meteorological Organization said Monday that atmospher-

ic greenhouse gas concentrations hit an all-time record in 2018.

The Paris deal committed nations to limit temperature rises above pre-industrial levels to "well below" 2C, and to a safer 1.5-C if at all possible.

To do so they agreed on the need to reduce emissions and work towards a low-carbon world within decades.

Yet the UN found that even taking into account current Paris pledges, the world is on track for a 3.2C temperature rise, something scientists fear could tear at the fabric of society.

Even if every country made good on its promises, Earth's "carbon budget" for a 1.5-C rise — the amount we can emit to stay below a certain temperature threshold —

would be exhausted within a decade.

In its own words, the UN assessment is "bleak".

While it insisted the 1.5C goal is still attainable, it acknowledged that this would require an unprecedented, coordinated upheaval of a global economy that is still fuelled overwhelmingly by oil- and gas-fuelled growth.

"We are failing to curb greenhouse gas emissions," UNEP's executive director, Inger Andersen, told AFP.

"Unless we take urgent action now and make very significant cuts to global emissions we're going to miss the target of 1.5C."

The Emissions Gap report, now in its tenth year, also details the cost of a decade of government inaction.

Had serious climate action begun in 2010, just

after the Copenhagen summit that breathed new life into the debate, annual needed emissions cuts would be 0.7 percent for 2C of warming and 3.3 percent for 1.5C.

"Ten years of climate procrastination has led us to where we are today," said Andersen.

The report highlighted specific "opportunities" for big emitters to push their economies into line with the Paris goals.

While advice varies between countries, the theme is clear: completely phase out coal, significantly pare back oil and gas, and dramatically build up renewable energy.

G20 nations were singled out as laggards: although they produce around 78 percent of all emissions, only 15 rich nations have outlined plans to reach net-zero. AFP



Slash emissions, avert disaster

Analysis

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Low-carbon world

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G20 nations were singled out as laggards: although they produce around 78 percent of all emissions, only 15 rich nations have outlined plans to reach net-zero.

In all, countries must increase their contributions to the climate fight five-fold to deliver the cuts needed for 1.5C.

“Incremental changes will simply not make it,” said lead author John Christensen.

“ Emissions have risen on average 1.5 percent annually over the last decade, hitting a record 55.3 billion tons of CO2 or equivalent greenhouse gases in 2018.

“We really need to transform societies in these 10 years.”

Wendel Trio, director of Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe said 2020 needed to be a “major historical turning point” in the climate fight.

‘No sign of peak’

“The hope lies in millions of people taking to the streets, who can force politicians to act according to the recommendations from scientists,” he said.

Last year the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change — the world’s leading scientific body on the subject — issued a stark warning that going beyond 1.5C would increase the frequency and intensity of heatwaves, superstorms and mass flooding.

With just 1C of warming so far, 2019 is projected to be the second hottest in human history, a year marred by deadly wildfires and cyclones rendered more frequent as temperatures climb.

And despite the need for urgent action, with global energy demand set to continue rising for years, the UN itself conceded Tuesday that “there is no sign of (greenhouse) gas emissions peaking in the next few years.”

That peak should have come years ago, said Alden Meyer, director of policy at the Union of Concerned Scientists.

“We are not running out of time — we are already out of time,” he explained.

The report said emissions would need to drop 55 percent by 2030 to stay on a 1.5C track — an unprecedented fall at a time of sustained global growth.



FRONTLINE
Ninez Cacho-Olivares

Ninez Cacho-Olivares’
column will resume
soon.



Taiwan can help in global climate efforts

IT's a pity Taiwan's crucial participation is barred at an upcoming climate change international meeting.

Due to China's intervention, the 23 million people of Taiwan will have no voice in the 25th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP25) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to be held in Madrid, Spain from Dec. 2 to 13.

"It is unfair for Taiwan to be excluded from international organizations on the basis of political prejudice," decried Minister Chang Tzichin of the Environmental Protection Administration, Executive Yuan, Republic of China (Taiwan).

"Our exclusion contradicts the spirit of related climate conventions, which urge all nations to work together to combat global climate change, and overlooks both the concept of climate justice emphasized in the Paris Agreement and the significance of calling on all nations to take climate action," he explained.

Minister Chang warned: "This breach of the UN Charter weakens our international framework and harms the entire world."

Taiwan's de facto ambassador to the Philippines, Michael Peiyung Hsu, the Representative of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in the Philippines, has echoed the same warning. He said Taiwan's absence at the UNFCCC "weakens the world's ability to act as one."

"It is unjust to keep Taiwan excluded from the UNFCCC and leave Taiwan to deal with the impact of climate change on its own," Representative Hsu said. "Climate change concerns all humans. The climate change issue is a humanitarian issue as well as a global issue that knows no borders. Climate change requires not just national, but global solutions. It requires cross-border cooperation."

Climate devastation indeed transcends borders and both the Philip-

INSIGHTS.xlr8



Angelo Tugado

ippines and Taiwan bear the brunt of climate change due to their close proximity to the Pacific Ocean where most typhoons are formed. With Mother Earth getting overheated with global warming, more deadly typhoons are on the horizon as climate change wreaks havoc across the planet.

It often happens that the typhoon hitting northern Luzon, particularly in Batanes, would be the same one devastating Taiwan. So close is Batanes to Taiwan's southernmost tip that it's like "one community, one typhoon." Having a shared destiny - being ravaged by deadly typhoons - Filipinos need to support the Taiwanese people who want meaningful participation of their country in UN efforts to combat climate change.

But despite being excluded from UNFCCC, Taiwan has not wavered in its own efforts to fight climate change and help the international community.

Representative Hsu said that in June 2015, Taiwan passed the Greenhouse Gas Reduction and Management Act, setting five-year regulatory carbon reduction targets in the hope of reducing Taiwan's greenhouse gas emissions to 50 percent of 2005 levels by 2050. It seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by two percent by 2020, 10 percent by 2025, and 20 percent by 2030. He added that in August 2018, Taiwan amended its Air Pollution Control Act to reduce air pollution and accelerate Taiwan's energy transformation.

Minister Chang said Taiwan has a clearly outlined roadmap for national carbon emission reduction. Its key points include: promoting energy transformation; assisting manufacturers to become green, low-carbon enterprises; developing green transportation and expanding the use of low-carbon vehicles; upgrading energy-saving design standards for the exteriors of new buildings; helping livestock farms recycle biogas; and strengthening methane recycling from waste landfills and industrial wastewater.

"The approval of a Greenhouse Gas Control Implementation Plan proposed by local governments shows how Taiwan is responding to climate change collectively, from a central level to a local level," he said. "Our government has made significant progress in developing Taiwan's renewable energy sector in recent years, actively pursuing policies designed to reduce coal-fired power generation, increase our use of natural gas, and promote green development. By 2025, we expect solar- and wind-power generation to produce 20?GW and 6.9?GW of electricity per year, respectively."

He also cited Taiwan's contributions towards improved global weather forecasting: "Since the launch of our FormoSat-3 satellite in 2006, Taiwan has amassed over 10 million items of meteorological data, which it has provided, free of charge, to experts and scholars around the world for use in their scientific research. Furthermore, data gathered following this year's launch of the FormoSat-7 satellite will now improve accuracy even further when it comes to predicting severe weather events."

With its immense contributions toward mitigating the impact of climate change, Taiwan has shown it can indeed be a valuable partner in the global response to the phenomenon now wreaking havoc across the planet.

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Epson, DENR to hold short film contest for students

COMPUTER company Epson and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Environment Management Bureau-Environmental Education and Information Division (DENR-EMB-EEID) has launched the second edition of their EcoVision Short Film Competition.

According to Epson, this year's competition theme is "Upcycling Heroes," in which entrants are required to focus on a certain Philippine-based organization or any individual who does upcycling, which is defined as using waste products and by-products and transforming them into materials of environmental value as a means for environmental stability.

Applicants for the competition have to be bona fide students from any year level or course from different colleges and universities in the National Capital Region (Metro Manila), Region 3 (Central Luzon) and Region 4-A (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon or Calabarzon). They can submit individual or group entries.

According to the mechanics for the competition, the documentary can be shot and edited with any device, as long as resolutions are acceptable for cinematic viewing. In addition, the entries must run for five to 15 minutes and must require a documentary title card

provided by Epson Philippines for both the opening and closing ceremonies. Also, English subtitles are required to be embedded for the final input.

Documentary entries that were already exhibited in other contests can also be submitted.

Interested applicants are required to visit the Epson website (epson.com.ph/ecovision) to print and fill out a form. They should also submit and upload a high-definition copy of their documentary, in an MP4 video format. They must email their entries to epson.ecovision@gmail.com, using the subject "EcoVision — (name of school)."

The submission period runs from Nov. 18, 2019 to 11:59 p.m. of March 12, 2020. Entrants are expected to receive an email within one to three days if their entry will make it past the selection process.

For the selection of finalists, they will be judged by officials from Epson and the DENR in terms of adherence to the theme (50 points), story and content (40 points) and structure (10 points). The official selection of the finalists will be held at the Epson Philippines office in Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

Selected finalists are expected to receive a notification from Epson by March 12, 2020. Once the 10 finalists get selected, they will receive an email

from Epson Philippines, with an official approval to promote their videos and their invitation to the Awards Night.

The documentary trailers of the finalists will also be posted on the official Facebook page of Epson in order to determine their social media engagement score. This will be monitored from March 20 to 26, 2020.

Three winners will be selected by three members of the Selection Committee and a documentarist through the following criteria: adherence to the theme (40 points), story and content (30 points), cinematic attributes and technical execution (20 points) and aggregated number of social media engagements (10 points).

Winners of various categories will receive corresponding prizes, including cash. Winners of the Best Film Editing and Best Cinematography awards will each receive a plaque and P10,000; the second runner-up will receive a P20,000-cash prize, along with Epson products; the first runner-up will receive a P40,000-cash prize; and the champion will receive a cash prize of P80,000. The top 3 winners will all receive P16,000 worth of Epson products for their respective school.

For more details, visit the Epson's official website.

ARIC JOHN SY CUA



House zeroes in on plastics ban

The House Committee on Ecology, chaired by Zamboanga del Norte Rep. Glona Labadlabad, has started tackling bills that seek to gradually phaseout single-use plastics by regulating the importation, sale and use of plastic products.

The initial discussion on the 32 bills against plastic came weeks after President Rodrigo Duterte expressed interest to ban use of plastic nationwide in a bid to mitigate climate change.

House Committee on Energy Chairperson and Marinduque Rep. Lord Allan Velasco who authored House Bill 2396 or "Ban on Single-Use Plastics Act," in his sponsorship speech, told the committee that the Philippines remains as

the world's third largest source of plastic-based marine pollution.

"We clearly see the urgency of our task at hand. We must all work together for the earnest passage of the total ban of single use plastics in our beloved country," Velasco told members of the panel.

Muntinlupa Rep. Ruffino "Ruffy" Biazon, who filed House Bill 546 or the "Single-Use Plastic Products Phase-out Law," House Bill 708 or "An Act Prohibiting the Release of Balloons" and House Bill 5411 or "Packaging Waste Collection at Source Act" also urged the speedy passage of the measures against the use of plastic.

"I am a witness to devastation that we humans are inflicting in our world by irresponsible use of plastics as someone who is always under water," Biazon, a scuba diver, said. "75 percent of the earth is water and we know how this provides life to us. The health of our oceans is directly related to climate change."

Ilocos Norte 2nd District Rep. Angelo Barba told the committee that the Philippines has become the world's third largest ocean polluter despite the 18-year existence of the Solid Waste Management Act.

While the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) supports the legislation on the regulation of plastic products, the agency said plastic is not the problem.

"The problem is people. We need to (address) the culture of the Filipino people on this battle," DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda pointed out during the hearing.

Antiporda said there has to be alternative if the government will ban use of plastics. **Keith Calayag**



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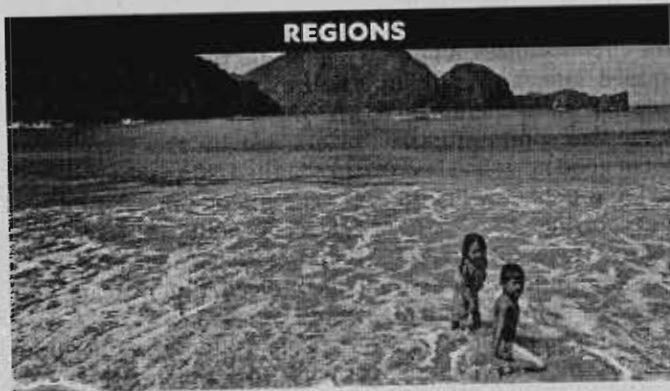
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DENR: Easement rule enforced in El Nido

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has ordered residents and businessmen to vacate their houses and establishments near the shoreline and mangrove areas in El Nido, Palawan. The DENR identified 363 structures encroaching on easement zones in violation of the Water Code. The local government is looking for a relocation site for the affected residents. —STORY BY ROMAR MIRANDA

A10

El Nido residents told to vacate beach homes

Local gov't enforcing easement rule, looking for relocation site

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has served notice to residents and businessmen to vacate houses and establishments near the shoreline and mangrove areas in El Nido town, Palawan.

Clarisse Pador, officer of the El Nido-Taytay Managed Resource Protected Area (MRPA), said on Wednesday that notices had been served informing residents of their violation and ordering them to "self-vacate" in Barangay Bucana.

"We did the survey and many would be affected," she

said, referring to 1,000 residents. "The DENR's mandate is to inform them of their violation. We don't have the power to demolish."

The DENR has identified 363 households and business establishments that had encroached on the 20-meter and 40-meter easement zones.

Structures within the 20 meters of shoreline and 40 meters of mangrove areas are prohibited under Article 51 of Presidential Decree No. 1067, or the Water Code of the Philippines.

The local government in El Nido had been tasked to look for a relocation for the resi-

dents who would be displaced by the order.

Short notice

One resident rued that the 30-day notice was too short and that relocation was "not properly" discussed during the barangay council forum.

Raffy Cabate, El Nido administrator, assured the residents that due process would be followed.

"Everything would undergo due process. We would not just demolish because we could be sued," he said.

El Nido Mayor Edna Lim has taken steps to find a relocation

site, including cadastral lands, for the residents, Cabate said.

He said the residents and business owners could appeal the notice until late December by presenting land title and other relevant documents.

"Lands that are to be released will be given consideration. Our goal is to fix the residential areas and not those areas that are prohibited," Cabate said.

Henry Adornado, director of DENR in Mimaropa, is set to meet with Mayor Lim on Thursday to discuss the matter as the "rehabilitation" plan for El Nido gets underway. —ROMAR

MIRANDA, CONTRIBUTOR INQ



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LET'S HIT THE BEACH Two frolicking kids have the beach of El Nido, Palawan, to themselves, but maybe not for long because beach house owners will soon be relocated. —CELESTE ANNA FORMOSO/CONTRIBUTOR



SINGAPORE SHOWS OFF RARE PH EAGLES

SINGAPORE: Singapore showed off two critically-endangered eagles on Wednesday that were loaned from the Philippines as part of a breeding program to reverse the dwindling numbers of the feathered giants.

Destruction of tropical rainforest and relentless hunting have decimated the population of the Philippine Eagle — one of the world's biggest and most powerful birds whose wingspan can reach 2 meters (7 feet) — with only around 800 believed left in the wild, conservationists say.

The birds, Geothermica and Sambisig, are the first breeding pair ever to be sent outside the Philippines and arrived in Singapore in June on a 10-year loan from Manila.



■ A male Philippine eagle named Geothermica is seen in an enclosure at Jurong Bird Park in Singapore. AFP

The creatures are being cared for at the city-state's main aviary and were shown to the media Wednesday, as part of events marking 50 years of diplomatic relations between the countries.

"Any future offspring of the eagles will be returned to the Philippines to contribute to the sustainability of the species' population," said Wildlife Reserves Singapore, which runs the aviary.

The scheme has echoes of China's "panda diplomacy," which sees the Asian giant send the black and white bears to countries as gifts.

A breeding program is also being carried out in the Philippines by a small band of conservationists at a sanctuary outside the southern city of Davao, close to the eagles' main forest habitat.

The bird of prey, which has white and brown plumage and an enormous wingspan, is classified as "critically endangered" by protection group the International Union for Conservation of Nature. **AFP**



PH EAGLE HAS LANDED IN S'PORE.

A male Philippine eagle named Geothermica is seen Wednesday in an enclosure at Jurong Bird Park in Singapore, which unveiled two Philippine eagles at its main aviary, the first breeding pair of the critically endangered raptors to be brought outside their native habitat as part of a conservation plan. **AFP**



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Majestic Pinoy bird Philippine eagle named Geothermica is seen in an enclosure at Jurong Bird Park where two of the rare birds were showcased as part of a conservation plan.

AFP

Expert warns of water scarcity in various areas

THE government is implementing a groundwater management plan to ensure sustainable water resources for future generations as the list of areas in the Philippines that are running out of water is growing, according to an official of the National Water Resources Board (NWRB).

Susan Abaño, chief of the policy and program division of NWRB, said several critical areas where water is running out have been identified. These are Metro Manila, Metro Cebu, Iloilo, Cavite, Angeles City and Mabalacat City, Baguio City, Bacolod City, Zamboanga City, Tagbilaran City, and Batangas City.

Abaño, who spoke at a recent forum, said these are not the only places where water is growing scarce, as more are expected to join the list.

In view of this, a groundwater management plan is being implemented for these "water-stressed areas," she added.

The plan for water sustainability, she said, seeks to establish systematic

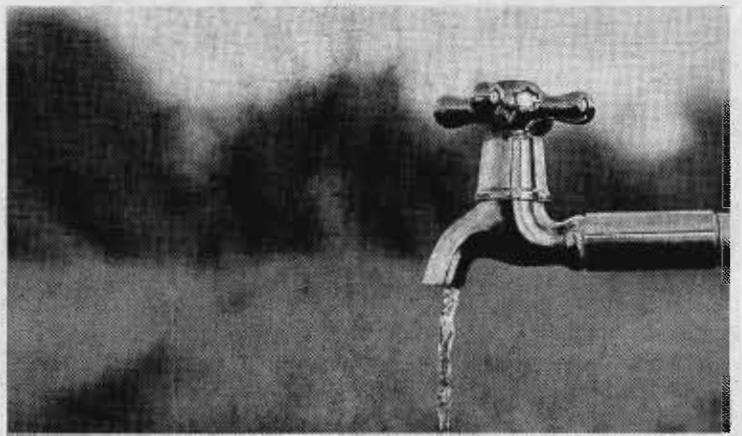
and scientific management strategies for groundwater allocation as well as provide information for prioritizing aquifers, which are underground layers of rock that hold groundwater that can be drained by man-made wells.

The plan also calls for preparing groundwater vulnerability assessment maps to show where the areas prone to pollution are, said Abaño.

This is so that gasoline stations, sewerage treatment plants and other polluting establishments can be prohibited in those places where the groundwater can become polluted.

The plan likewise demands designing a groundwater monitoring network on water quality and quantity of the aquifers.

Also part of the plan is the development of a groundwater management plan for a study area that considers integrated water resources management and future impacts of climate change. Results of the project will then be used as basis for



Water-stressed. A groundwater management plan is being implemented in critical areas where water is getting scarce.

policy, planning, programming and project implementation.

Most importantly, Abaño said, the NWRB is continuing to manage the allocation of Angat Dam, which is the main source of water supply for Metro Manila, home to 15 million people.

Short-term measures taken by the

NWRB to manage levels at Angat include the following: allowed the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) to continue activating its existing deepwells and establishing new wells to serve as standby water source; reactivated deepwells for vital services such as those for hospital use and firefight-

ing purposes. Cloud seeding operations have also been conducted over the Angat watershed area.

For the long term, measures included fast-tracking the development of additional water sources through the grant of a water permit by NWRB to MWSS. These water sources could include Sumag Dam, Wawa River Project, and Kanan and Kaliwa dams.

But Abaño said that although the water permit has been granted, "it's not being utilized."

Other long-term measures are the development of Bayabas Dam for irrigation purposes, rehabilitation of irrigation canals, and construction of infrastructure to capture excess water.

There is also a roadmap being prepared—the Comprehensive National Plan on Water Security—in which one of the solutions identified is rainwater harvesting. This entails that government agencies install rainwater harvesting mechanisms, and LGUs issue ordinances

requiring new developments to be fitted with rainwater harvesting facilities and existing buildings to be retrofitted. Likewise the roadmap will prescribe the optimal use of rainwater for agricultural purposes, said the official.

In her update, Abaño also talked of the plan to create a Department of Water, currently being discussed in congressional hearings. She said that with such department, duplication and waste of manpower and financial resources can be avoided as the 32 water-related agencies will be placed under one umbrella.

The NWRB is the national coordinating and regulating agency on water resources management and development.

Meanwhile, architect and urban planner Felino Palafox, Jr. during the open forum pointed out that Laguna de Bay, if cleaned up and protected from industrial wastes, is enough to provide for all the water needs of Metro Manila. - *Philexport News & Features*



NWRB cuts water for irrigation

The National Water Resources Board will implement lower water allocation for the irrigation requirements of some farmlands in Central Luzon starting Dec. 1.

The NWRB is currently providing 17 cubic meters per second of irrigation water from Angat Dam to Bulacan and Pampanga. It will be reduced to five cms by Dec. 1.

NWRB Executive Director Seville David Jr. said the reduction in irrigation water may only bring minimal effect on farms in Bulacan and Pampanga as it is already harvesting season in these provinces.

Meanwhile, allocation for domestic water will remain at 40 cms, David pointed out.

He noted that NWRB is still managing water releases by not giving the normal allocation of 46 cms for domestic water requirements.

Angat Dam, which is the main source of 96 percent of Metro Manila's domestic water requirements and irrigation of about 27,000 hectares of farmlands in Bulacan and Pampanga, remains below the 210-meter normal high water level.

Its water level was 187.98 meters yesterday, which is slightly higher than the 187.78 meters the other day.

To ensure that it can supply domestic, irrigation, and energy needs at least until the first half of 2020, Angat Dam has to reach the desired 210-meter to 212-meter level. **(Ellalyn Ruiz)**



Time and water is running out

These days, even with the onslaught of typhoons, monsoon rains, and tropical depressions, water shortages and rationing in Metro Manila continue to happen, something that had been unheard of in previous wet season months.

In a couple of months, summer will be upon us, aggravating the low water levels of Angat Dam which for 52 years has been the primary source of water used for drinking and sanitation of a growing metropolis.

For such a serious problem, the need to augment the increasingly inadequate water supply sources for Metro

BIZLINKS



REY GAMBOA

Manila and its surrounding provinces is not being given the prompt attention it deserves from both the national and local governments.

With certainty, we are seeing a developing crisis that can only be blamed on the callousness of government to act quickly and decisively. Putting the blame on Metro Manila's two water concessionaires is unjust, especially since both had been warning of this

problem more than five years ago.

Much delayed

It is time to seriously look at the next best option, rather than just wait for the controversies surrounding the groundbreaking of the Kaliwa Dam project to be resolved and to disappear.

The government has been attempting, since the 1970s, to tap the Sierra Madre's Kaliwa Watershed Forest Reserve as an additional water source for Metro Manila, and eventually, the rapidly urbanizing provinces of Rizal, Bulacan, and Pampanga.

Strong protests by environment groups, indigenous peoples, and even scientists, however, have contributed to stalling the project construction's schedule, even under the current populist leadership of President Duterte, in spite the availability of official development assistance from the Chinese government.

As it now stands, even if the project were to start early next year, assuming that Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) is able to secure approval of the National Commission on Indigenous People, this massive P12-billion project will only be completed at best in five years.

By that time, Metro Manila could be bone dry.

Plan B

Maynilad Water Services, Inc. and Manila Water Company, MWSS's water concessionaires, are now seriously looking at Plan B, although this may similarly come a bit late given the current predicament of Angat Dam's below-normal levels.

The alternative plan is to draw more water from Laguna de Bay by building more treatment plants capable of purifying the polluted lake water to within acceptable standards that conform to world standards set by the World Health Organization.

Maynilad has two treatment plants already drawing water from Laguna Lake, while Manila Water has one in Cardona, Rizal. Both operate complex treatment plants designed to process suspended solids, organic water, algae and dissolved solids prevalent in the lake.

Maynilad is building a third plant in January, and has plans to build another one if the construction of the Kaliwa Dam does not start in 2021. Manila Water, on the other hand, is expecting the second phase of its Cardona plant to be operational by August.

Manila Water and Maynilad are also both eyeing to set up portable treatment plants that will process water from the Marikina River. The Wawa Dam project in Rodriguez, Rizal is pushing ahead, and will likely be ready by 2021 to provide Manila Water with 80 million liters per day (MLD), and 500 MLD in 2025.

Temporary measures

Most likely in the next two years, especially if the water levels at Angat Dam and Ipo Dam continue to be below spilling levels, rotational water rationing will continue for Metro Manila residents.

It may be time again to remind people how best to conserve water until adequate sources of raw water are developed and channeled to Metro Manila's private water concessionaires for distribution to their customers.

Local governments have a role to play too. There are many models of urban living that take into consideration the management of rainwater, not only by enabling its collection for use in public gardens and spaces, but also to deter flooding especially in low-lying areas.

Industries, especially those that rely heavily on water for their manufacturing processes, should be encouraged to include the concept of water sustainability in their production designs.

We must also realize that pollution does not only destroy water, it also makes it more expensive. An example of this is Laguna Lake, where filtering its water to safe standards can run up to billions of pesos in investments. In the end, consumers have to pay for that higher cost.

Mismanaged water resource

Meanwhile, Congress is working to create a Department of Water that will oversee the country's water resources.

Luckily, the Philippines is not among the countries that face a real danger of water scarcity or heavy pollution. Ours is more a case of mismanagement, when laws governing waterways and watersheds are not properly implemented, and where there is no single propelling force that will champion the correct management of the country's abundant water wealth.

Laguna Lake, for example, does not lack in rules and regulations designed to protect its ecosystem and preserve it as a source of potable water for its surrounding environs. And yet, such laws are blatantly disregarded by industries, communities, and even local governments that continue to dump their toxic wastes in the lake.

We have seen this happen in Boracay Island and the Pasig River, and while these have had successful campaigns at rehabilitation, there are many more areas in the country, like Manila Bay, that are threatened by pollution.

Let's hope that the recent water problems of Metro Manila will teach the nation the value of water, and just how precious it is in our everyday lives.

Facebook and Twitter

We are actively using two social networking websites to reach out more often and even interact with and engage our readers, friends and colleagues in the various areas of interest that I tackle in my column. Please like us on www.facebook.com/ReyGamboa and follow us on www.twitter.com/ReyGamboa.

Should you wish to share any insights, write me at Link Edge, 25th Floor, 139 Corporate Center, Valero Street, Salcedo Village, 1227 Makati City. Or e-mail me at reydgamboa@yahoo.com. For a compilation of previous articles, visit www.BizlinksPhilippines.net.



Nickel Asia bags mine awards

NICKEL Asia Corp. subsidiaries were feted at the recently-concluded 66th Annual National Mine Safety and Environment Conference (ANMSEC) in Baguio City with one affiliate taking the most coveted Presidential Mineral Industry Environmental Award (PMIEA).

Cagdianao Mining Corp. (CMC), based in Valencia, Dinagat Islands, bagged the top Presidential award and the two highest safety performance awards – the Safest Surface Mines and the Overall Safest Mine Operations. These awards are given to operating mines that have shown exemplary performance in the area of environment enhancement and protection, safety, health,

and social development and corporate social responsibility.

CMC's Archie Sierra also won the best surface safety inspector award.

ANMSEC is the largest annual gathering of the country's minerals sector that also feature safety competitions, mining equipment exhibits, and a symposium tackling industry issues.

NAC companies/staff were also awarded: Hinatuan Mining Corp. (HMC), Platinum Award in the surface mining category and as first runner up in the Best Forest Award;

HMC miners James Wilkins Asio and Angelo Cañada, Best Mine

Supervisor Award and Best Miner Award, respectively and;

Rio Tuba Nickel Mining Corp., Mine Safety Field Demonstration and Field Competition on First Aid;

The annual mine safety and environment conference is organized by the Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association in coordination with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Mines and Geosciences Bureau, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines, the Philippine Society of Mining Engineers.

The PMIEA is pursuant to Executive Order No. 399, series of 1997, which recognizes outstanding levels of dedication, initiative and innovation in various aspects of operations in the country's minerals sector.



Executives and associates of Nickel Asia and its subsidiaries pose after the awards rites in Baguio City on November 22.



Pandan primed as eco-tourism destination

By Jun N. Aguirre

KALIBO, Aklan — The municipality of Pandan, Antique is now gearing up for eco-tourism development after it passed the criteria to become a protected area based on House Bill 632, or an act declaring the Northern Antique Protected Seascape and Landscape Act of 2019.

The bill, which was authored by Antique Rep. Loren Legarda, declares the seascape and landscape located in the municipalities of Libertad, Pandan, Sebaste, Culasi and Tibiao in the province of Antique as eco-tourism zones.

This also requires priority development for the said areas by the Department of Tourism, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA).

Pandan Vice Mayor Raymund Gumboc said that personnel from the DENR, DPWH, and TIEZA were recently present for a public hearing, which was attended by barangay officials coming from the 15 coastal barangays of Pandan to discuss matters on Pandan Island's development.

"We are glad that our town is a priority," Gumboc said.

Pandan is a fourth-class municipality with a population of 84,333 people based on the 2015 census.

The town boasts of tourist destinations such as the Bugang River, which is considered the cleanest river in the country, the Malumpati Cold Spring, rare animal sightings and a mountain beneath the sea.



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Agri science group holds convention

THE International Society of Southeast Asia Agricultural Sciences (Issaas) Philippine Chapter held last week its national congress and general meeting at the Cavite State University (CvSU) in Indang, Cavite.

Agriculture Secretary William Dar was guest of honor and keynote speaker.

According to CvSU president Hernando Robles, this year's theme for the Issaas congress was "Reshaping Philippine Agriculture

for Sustainable Development."

Four plenary speakers discussed their respective papers during the congress: Ronnie Domingo, director of Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Animal Industry; Elpidio Agbisit Jr., dean of the College of Agriculture and Food Science, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB); Ruperto Sangalang, CvSU president emeritus and former commissioner of the Philippine Commission on Higher Education,

with the topic "The Research-Extension Helix: Outcomes, Impact and Accountability"; and Maria Victoria Espaldon, UP scientist and UPLB professor, with the topic "Coping with Climate Risk through Digital Agriculture."

Likewise, parallel sessions in the afternoon of the first day and the entire second day were conducted with topics on animal science, crop science, soil science, environmental agriculture, fishery

science, crop protection, and organic agriculture.

Meanwhile, the morning of the third day was devoted to a tour of the Sanctuario Nature Farm, Silan's Agri Farm, and CvSU Agri-Tourism Park, all in Indang.

The congress was supported by CvSU's Office of the Vice President for Research and Extension and the College of Agriculture, Food, Environment and Natural Resources.

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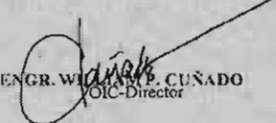
Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT BUREAU
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Telephone Nos.: 925-47-93 to 97
Email: emb@emb.gov.ph
Visit us at <http://www.emb.gov.ph>

EMB MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR
No. 2019-009

**SUBJECT: HARMONIZATION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
EMB MC NO. 2019-003**

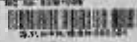
In the interest of public service and to harmonize the processing and issuance of Environmental Compliance Certificates with existing laws, rules and regulations, the implementation of the EMB Memorandum Circular No. 2019-003, otherwise known as "*Updated Guidelines in the Processing and Issuance of ECC for Category B Projects*" is hereby held in abeyance, pending revision of the EMB Citizen's Charter, pursuant to Republic Act No. 11032, otherwise known as "*Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018*".

This Memorandum shall take effect immediately after publication in a newspaper of general circulation and upon acknowledgment of receipt of a copy thereof by the Office of the National Administrative Register (ONAR), UP Law Center.


ENGR. WILFREDO P. CUÑADO
OIC-Director

Department of Environment and Natural Resources
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT BUREAU
Office of the Director

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HINDI dapat na magpatali ang buong bayan sa problema sa pagsibak ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte kay Vice President bilang co-chairman ng Inter-Agency Committee Against Illegal Drugs.

Basta ang malinaw, ginusto mismo nina VP Leni at Senator Francis Pangilinan na masibak si VP Leni.

Isa pa, basta presidential appointee, he or she serves at the pleasure of the President na pwedeng bawiin ang appointment anomang oras at sa anomang dahilan.

Ayon naman kay Sen. Bong Go, hindi mapagkakatiwalaan si VP Leni kaya ito sinibak ni Pang. Digong.

At suwak na suwak ang salita ni Sen. Go dahil nagbabanta ngayon si VP Leni na ibubunyag niya ang kanyang napag-alaman sa ICAD.

Kung anoman iyon, bahala na umano siya dahil wala naman umanong itinatago ang Philippine National Police, Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency at Palasyo rito.

Pero kung masasaling ang national security o pambansang seguridad sa mga sasabihin ni VP Leni, meron umano itong kalalagyan.

BALIK-GIYERA SA DROGA

Bulto-bultong shabu ang nakukumpiska sa gitna ng maigting na giyera sa droga ng administrasyon ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

Ano ba ang mga pangunahing dahilan at nagaganap ito?

Marami ang kasagutan dito at dapat na pag-aralan nang husto para maging epektibo ang nasabing giyera.

PAANO NAKAPAPASOK?

Isang mahalagang tanong sa pagkakaroon natin ng mga malalaking bulto ng shabu ay kung paano nakapapasok sa bansa ang mga ito?

Lumalabas kasing imported o galing sa ibang mga bansa ang mga shabu at iba pang droga na nadidiskubre.

Magandang tingnan ang istayl ng mga smuggler na mga druglord at mga protektor nila.

Kasama sa mga istayl ang paglalagay ng shabu sa mga tea bag.

Nitong huli, ang P2.7 bilyong shabu na nadiskubre sa Makati nitong nagdaang araw ay sa mga package naman dog food inilagay.

Anak ng tokwa, mahirap talagang agad na malaman kung shabu o tsaa o dog food ang ipinararating.

Nauna rito, ginamit



NI BENNY ANTIPORDA

BALIK-GIYERA NA LABAN SA ILIGAL NA DROGA

ang mga parang dram na bakal na gamit sa paggawa ng diaryo ang nakalusot sa Bureau of Customs at nakumpiska sa Valenzuela City at nagkahalaga ng bilyon-bilyong piso.

Sumunod ang paggamit ng magnetic lifter na bilyon-bilyong piso rin ang halaga at nakalusot sa BOC saka itinakas sa Cavite mula sa pier ng Maynila.

Meron ding gumamit ng mga aluminum na palette na nakalusot pa rin sa BOC at nakumpiska sa Malabon.

Sa Thailand naman, nakumpiska ang bilyon-bilyong halaga ng Baht (pera ng Thailand) na nakasukok sa mga tubo ng mga treadmill o gamit sa ehersisyo sa mga fitness gym at ibibiyaha sana sa Japan.

Sa ibang salita, mga Bro, mapanlikha ang mga druglord at ang kanilang mga protektor sa isang bansa upang mapaikutan ang mata at ilong ng mga awtoridad na lumalaban sa giyera.

Afa-Jaworski ang dapat na pagbabantay rito.

IBA PANG ISTAYL

May iba pang istayl sa pagpapasok sa bansa ng mga droga.

Sa maraming bansa sa Europa, gaya ng The Netherlands, hindi bawal ang mga party drug at marijuana.

Kaya naman kung magbenta sila at may Pinoy na mag-import ng mga ito, hindi pupwedeng huliin sa kanilang mga paliparan dahil ligal nga ang mga ito, maging ang paggawa at pagbebenta.

Mabuti kung may magbigay ng tip mula sa mga taga-Europa.

Yung iba naman, gumagamit ng tao mismo bilang courier o mule o tagadala.

Kung hindi ipakakain sa tao saka itatae pagdating sa bansang pagdadalan ng droga, ipadadala sa mga biyahero kapalit ng mga pabuya gaya libreng pamasaha at gastusin sa airport at malaking komisyon.

Ang iba naman, mga precursor kung tawagin o sangkap lang ang dinadala sa Pinas saka nila binubuo sa mga shabu laboratory.

Marami talagang istayl ng pagpapasok sa Pinas ng droga na dapat bantayan at laging tatandaan ng mga awtoridad.

MAHALAGANG SANGKAP

Pero may iba pang mahahalagang sangkap na dapat talagang bantayan.

Kabilang dito ang korapsyon sa hanay ng mga iskalawag na awtoridad.

Diyan naglalaro ang mga korap sa BOC at protektor na mga ninja cop at narco-politician.

Sa BOC, naging talamak ang paglalagay ng mga kontrabando sa express lane para hindi magamitan ng x-ray.

Diyan naman nakaready ang mga escort na awtoridad na tumatanggap din ng malaking escort fee hanggang sa dumating ang mga kontrabando sa mga ligal na warehouse at imbakan.

Kasaysayan na rin ang agawan ng mga pulis, halimbawa, sa pag-custody sa mga big time na sangkot sa droga.

At kung mabuking ay may palit-ulo.

Yun bang — ibang suspek ang ihaharap gaya ng ginawa ng mga pulis-Pampanga na inimbestigahan ng Senado kamakallan.

DAPAT MAITUWID ITO. BUTAS SA BATAS

Ang isa pang matinding ay ang pakikipaglaro uamno ng mga piskal at huwes sa mga kaso.

Ayon sa mga pulis, nadi-dismiss umano ang mga kaso nila dahil sa pagpapairal ng mga piskal at huwes ng batas na Republic Act No. 9165, Section 21 na nagsasabing kailangang maging saksi sa panimula ng kaso ang suspek o abogado o kinatawan nito, tao ng Department of Justice at mediaman.

Pero sinasabi naman ng iba na naam-yendahan na ito ng RA 10640 na nagsasabing maaaring taga-DOJ o mediaman na lang ang kasama sa mandatory witness.

Kung totoo ang sinasabi ng mga pulis, walong magtatagumpay na kaso kontra sa mga sangkot sa droga at mabibigo ang giyera sa droga.

Anomang reaksiyon o reklamo, maaaring iparating sa 0922840-3333 o i-email sa bantiporda@yahoo.com.