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# DENR

## IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



## Full Boracay rehab seen by May, 2020

By ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ

The Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF) sees the completion of the resort island's rehabilitation by May 2020.

"We are on track and if everything goes on smoothly, all our targets for the two-year rehabilitation program will be met by the time the task force is dissolved," BIATF general manager Natividad Bernardino said.

Boracay was closed to tourists on April 26, 2018 to give way to a six-month rehabilitation program. It reopened on October 26, 2018 with stricter regulations on the use of its famous white beach and the entry of tourists.

In her presentation before the BIATF last Tuesday, Bernardino reported that 67 percent of the 339 commercial and residential structures along the beachfront are already compliant with the 25+5 meter shoreline easement rule.

She also pointed out that the island's maximum carrying capacity of 19,215 tourists at any given time was strictly observed.

The average number of tourist arrivals for the period October 2018 to November 2019 was at 5,639 tourists per day.

According to Bernardino, the main road is also expected to be finished by yearend and other road sections by April or May 2020.

"The biggest problem we still have right now, and even after the two-year rehabilitation, is decongesting the island," she said.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu acknowledged the efforts of the task force and those who are doing their share in the rehabilitation.

"I am thankful and grateful for all the success we have gained no matter how big or small in the continuing rehabilitation of Boracay," Cimatu said.

On May 8, 2018, President Duterte issued Executive Order No. 53 creating the BIATF and designating Cimatu as its chairman. The EO provides that the BIATF shall be deemed dissolved two years after its creation.

Cimatu said the creation of a Boracay Island Development Authority (BIDA) to permanently manage the island is being proposed in Congress.

BIDA will be an attached agency of the DENR under its proposal.

"In the meantime, we may request President Duterte to extend EO 53," Cimatu said.



## Rehab of Boracay on track

THE TOTAL rehabilitation of Boracay is on track to be completed in May 2020, the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF) said on Thursday.

In a statement, Natividad Bernardino, general manager of the BIA Rehabilitation Management Group (BIARMG), said work was moving right on schedule for completion in the first half of next year in time for the expiration of BIATF.

"We are on track, and if everything goes smoothly, all our targets for the two-year rehabilitation program will be met by the time the Task Force is dissolved," Bernardino said.

Her statement came as BIATF continues to make steady progress in its effort to rehabilitate the world-famous resort island as it enters the final six months prior to its scheduled dissolution.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu welcomed the good news and acknowledged the efforts of the task force and all those who are doing their share in the rehabilitation.

"I am thankful and grateful for the all success we have gained no matter how big or small in the continuing rehabilitation of Boracay," Cimatu said.

On May 8 last year, President Rodrigo Duterte issued Executive Order (EO) 53 creating the BIATF and designating the secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) as its chairman. The EO provides that the BIATF shall be deemed dissolved two years after its creation.

"Boracay is truly an amazing turnaround story and we, the members of the BIATF, the BIARMG, and all stakeholders, are relentlessly working to secure the gains we have achieved," Cimatu said.

"All of us want to bring back the beauty, cleanliness,

and peace and order in Boracay," he added.

Earlier this week, Bernardino reported that 67 percent of the total 339 commercial and residential structures along the beachfront have already complied with the 25+5 meter shoreline easement rule.

She said the island's maximum carrying capacity of 19,215 tourists at any given time was strictly being observed.

The average number of tourist arrivals from October 2018 to November 2019 was at 5,639 tourists per day.

The main road is expected to be finished by yearend and other road sections by April or May 2020.

Bernardino said the infrastructure works were seen as one of the obstacles that might delay the rehabilitation's completion. Adding to this is overpopulation, particularly the big number of workers who stay in boarding houses.

"The biggest problem we still have right now and even after the two-year rehabilitation is how to decongest the island," she said.

Meanwhile, Cimatu noted that the creation of a Boracay Island Development Authority (BIDA) to permanently manage the island is being proposed in Congress.

Under the proposal, BIDA will become an attached agency of the DENR since environmental sustainability will be its main concern.

"In the meantime, we may request President Duterte to extend EO 53," Cimatu said.

Boracay was closed to tourists on April 26, 2018 to give way to a rehabilitation. It reopened on Oct. 26, 2018 six months after the rehabilitation adopting a stricter regulations on the use of its famous white beach.

**EIRENE JAIREE GOMEZ**



# Boracay rehab: On track for 2020 completion

We are on track and if everything goes on smoothly, all our targets for the two-year rehabilitation program will be met

**By Maria Romero**  
@tribunephil\_mbr

As it enters the final six months before its scheduled dissolution, the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF) remains optimistic the Boracay Island rehabilitation plan remains right on track as they continue to make "steady progress."

According to Natividad Bernardino, general manager of the Boracay Inter-Agency Rehabilitation Management Group, the rehabilitation is right on schedule for completion by May 2020 in time for the expiration of BIATF.

"We are on track and if everything goes on smoothly, all our targets for the two-year rehabilitation program will be met by the time the Task Force is dissolved," Bernardino said.

Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu welcomed the good news and acknowledged the efforts of the task force and all those who are doing their share in the rehabilitation.

"We, the members of the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force, the Boracay Inter-Agency Management Rehabilitation Group and all stakeholders are relentlessly working to secure the gains we have achieved," Cimatu said.

In her presentation before the BIATF alternate members this week, Bernardino reported that 67 percent of the total 339 commercial and residential structures along the beachfront are already compliant with the 25+5 meter shoreline easement rule.

Bernardino also said that the island's maximum carrying capacity of 19,215 tourists at any given time was strictly observed and that no exceedance had been reported. She said the average number of tourist arrivals for the period October 2018 to November 2019 was at 5,639 tourists per day.

According to Bernardino, the main road is expected to be finished by yearend and other road sections by April or May 2020.

Bernardino said the infrastructure works and overpopulation are seen as one of the obstacles that may delay the rehabilitation's completion.

"The biggest problem we still have right now and even after the two-year

rehabilitation is decongesting the island," Bernardino said, adding that overpopulation should be addressed with strategic interventions.

To recall, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte issued Executive Order (EO) 53 last 8 May 2018 creating the BIATF and appointing Secretary Roy A. Cimatu

of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) as its chairman.

The EO provides that the BIATF shall be deemed dissolved two years after its creation.

Meanwhile, Cimatu said a recommendation creating the Boracay Island Development Authority (BIDA) to permanently manage the island is being proposed in Congress.

Under the proposal, BIDA will be

an attached agency of the DENR since environmental sustainability will be its main concern.

"In the meantime, we may request President Duterte to extend EO 53," Cimatu said.

Boracay was closed to tourists on 26 April 2018 to give way to a six-month rehabilitation. It reopened on 26 October 2018 with stricter regulations on the use of its famous White Beach and the entry of tourists.



REGIONS BRIEFS



**RETURN TO SENDER** A customs agent beholds a pile of plastic trash from South Korea. —JIGGER J. JERUSALEM

**Environmental group calls anew for ban on trash imports**

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Environment watchdog EcoWaste Coalition has renewed its call for government to impose a ban on waste imports after some 53,000 metric tons of radioactive materials from Gwangyang City in South Korea were found in Zambales last week. “We have yet to return more than 5,000 MT of contaminated plastic wastes to South Korea. [While these imported wastes remained] in Misamis Oriental, a new controversy involving the recent toxic shipments looms,” Thony Dizon, EcoWaste Coalition chemical safety campaigner, said in a statement. The Bureau of Customs in Northern Mindanao earlier scheduled the remaining 5,177 MT of mixed garbage stored inside the Phividec Industrial Authority facility to be shipped back to South Korea. Dizon proposed that government agencies tasked to check the cargoes coming in from other countries should immediately order their return once the cargoes were found to be illegal. —JIGGER J. JERUSALEM



## NESTLÉ, VALENZUELA CITY MARK 100 DAYS OF *MAY BALIK SA PLASTIK*



THE country's first citywide residual waste collection program called *May Balik Sa Plastik* aims to reduce the amount of plastic wastes in the city's transfer station and landfill by incentivizing their collection per kilogram, sorting them for recycling or upcycling, or co-processing in cement kilns. Story on page A2.

**P**LASTIC wastes come in different forms, shapes and sizes. These wastes include used sachets and beverage cartons, candy wrappers, and *sando* bags—residual wastes—which are difficult to collect and often end up as litter.

While local government units (LGUs) may have solid waste management programs in place that collect and recycle larger plastics and other discarded items, more often than not, these types of residual wastes are not adequately accounted for, and they add up to a significant problem.

### Assigning value to used sachets and beverage cartons

GIVEN this realization, Nestlé Philippines and Valenzuela City recently formed a partnership called *May Balik Sa Plastik* that aims to reduce the amount of residual wastes in the city's transfer station and landfill by incentivizing their collection per kilogram, sorting them for recycling or upcycling, or co-processing in cement kilns.

The program also seeks to change the behavior of residents toward residual plastic wastes by putting a value to them that did not previously exist, giving a reason to collect rather than discard them haphazardly.

The initiative is the country's first citywide residual waste collection program that recovers used laminates and beverage cartons.

### Driving the right behavior toward plastic waste

AS *May Balik Sa Plastik* marked its 100th day from the start of the first collection, the program has diverted from the landfill a substantial amount of household plastic wastes. Collections have increased by close to 400 percent since the first run. "This is in line with our goal of achieving plastic neutrality at the earliest possible time, that is, recovering the equivalent amount of plastic packaging we use for our products," Nestlé Philippines Chairman and CEO Kais Marzouki said.

Currently, the top three barangays for residual waste collection are Ugong, Bignay, and Gen. T. de Leon, while the top three schools are Roberta de Jesus Elementary School, Disiplina Village Bignay Elementary School, and Lingunan High School.

Barangay Ugong, notably, gathered less than 10 kg. on the initial collection day, but with the combined efforts of community leaders and residents, in a short span of time collections had increased exponentially to 2,000 kg. The experience of Ugong demonstrates that the campaign is effecting positive change.

"Through this program we are proving that we can actually retool and reuse these plastic sachets. What we're showing is that we can offer an alternative to a total ban," Valenzuela Mayor Rexlon Gatchalian emphasized.

"Even my children are learning to pick up plastic on the streets, at school, to avoid litter in our surroundings. We have learned to collect plastic from our neighbors and community. Now there is less trash collected by the garbage truck where we live," said Barangay Ugong resident Merlinda Genares, 47.

Jairabbai Eugenio, a high school science teacher in Valenzuela, observed that children are participating in *May Balik Sa Plastik*. "They bring plastic wastes to school. And during break time, you'll notice that whereas in the past you would see plastic packaging from snacks filling up trash receptacles, now students take these wastes and are collecting them," he said.



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TITLE:

PAGE 1/

11-29-19

DATE

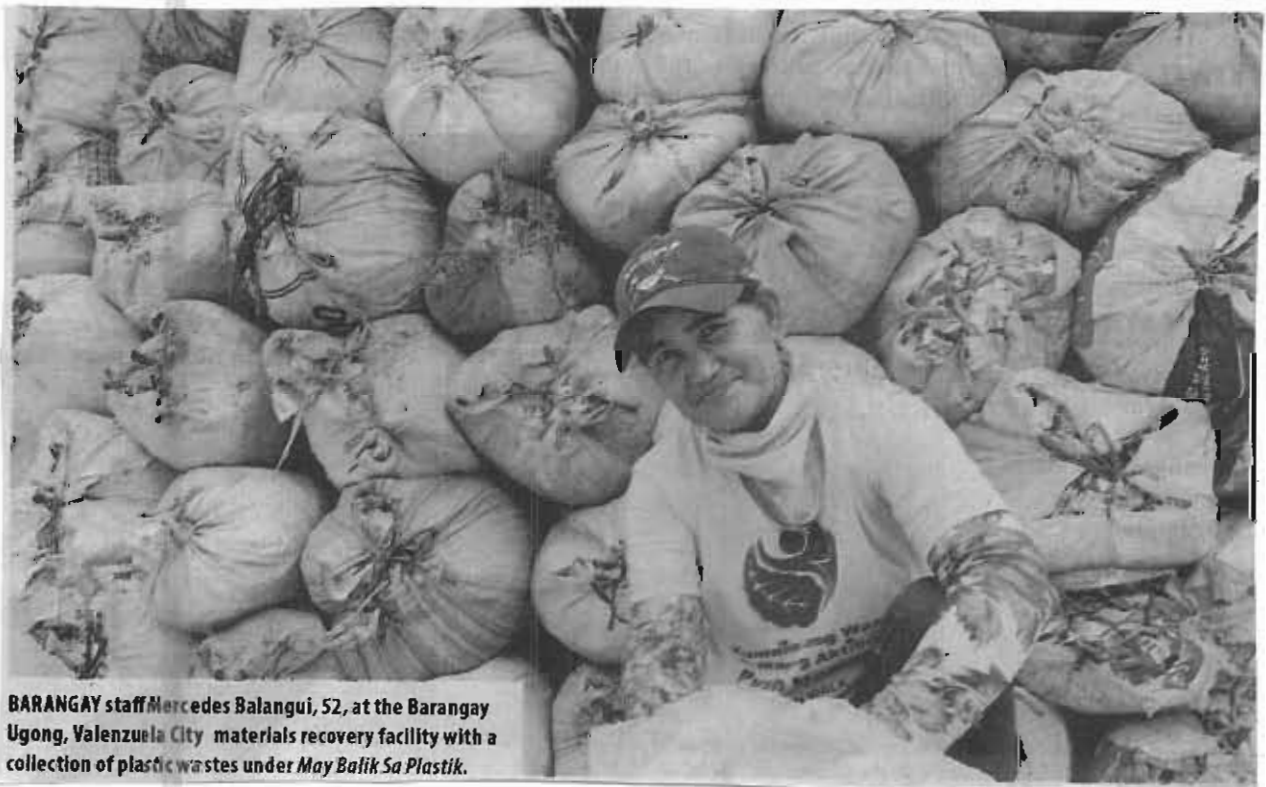
P-2

Nestle, Valenzuela City Mark 100 Days of May Balik sa Plastik

### Ensuring sustainability

AS for making *May Balik Sa Plastik* sustainable, the Local Solid Waste Management Board has submitted to the City Council a proposal to mandate waste segregation at source through a city ordinance. "We will institutionalize the program through an ordinance, hopefully before the end of the year," explained Emmanuel Delesmo, vice chairman of the board and head of the Public Sanitation and Cleanliness Group.

"We are actively seeking collaboration with different stakeholders such as the city government and the residents of Valenzuela. As we learn from *May Balik Sa Plastik*, we are gearing up to expand it to other parts of the country, bringing us closer to the vision of a waste-free future," according to Mr. Marzouki.



**BARANGAY** staff Mercedes Balangui, 52, at the Barangay Ugong, Valenzuela City materials recovery facility with a collection of plastic wastes under *May Balik Sa Plastik*.



TITLE:

PAGE 1/

191-29-12

DATE

## DENR Bataan, Mariveles ink beach cleanup pact

By Butch Gunio

MARIVELES, Bataan—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources Bataan and the municipal government of Mariveles have agreed to remove and dispose solid waste material deposits in the Aguawan River that leads to the popular Aguawan Beach.

Raul H. Mamac, Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer, and Mariveles Mayor Jocelyn P. Castaneda signed the memorandum of agreement at the latter's office on Monday.

Based on the agreement, the DENR will provide P1 million for the project under the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program. The municipal government prepared the program of work and financial plan.

The DENR will conduct testing of extracted waste to determine presence of heavy metals and contaminants, and identify a third party for the extraction, transportation, and placement of solid waste material deposits.

The local government of Mariveles will closely coordinate with the DENR Bataan technical personnel in the implementation and completion of the project.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu had declared Aguawan as the first swimmable beach along the 192 kilometers of Manila Bay shoreline last April.





# Six firms bag top awards for responsible mining

By LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON

BAGUIO CITY – Six out of the 22 shortlisted mining firms in the country bagged the Presidential Mineral Industry Environmental Award (PMIEA), the industry's most prestigious award, given as part of efforts to promote responsible extraction of minerals.

Daet-based Mt. Labo Exploration and Development Corp. and Mindanao Mineral Processing and Refining Corp. received the PMIEA for their environmentally and socially responsible mineral explorations and mineral processing, respectively.

For quarry operations,

Aboitiz-owned Republic Cement and Building Materials Inc. and listed building solution company Holcim Mining and Development Corp. bagged the PMIEA.

Further, Agata Mining Ventures Inc. secured a back-to-back PMIEA for surface mining.

Agata Mining, a joint venture company of TVI Resource Development Philippines Inc. and MRL Nickel Philippines, is located in the municipalities of Jabonga, Santiago and Tubay in Agusan del Norte primarily involved in the development and mining of nickel laterite direct shipping ore.

Also for surface mining, Nickel

Asia Corp. subsidiary Cagdianao Mining Corp. got the PMIEA. CMC operates in Dinagat Islands within the Surigao Mineral Reservation and it exports saprolite and limonite ore.

Other minor awardees include Coral Bay Nickel Corp. and Taganito HPAL Nickel Corp., both under Nickel Asia, for mineral processing.

Awardees for quarry operations include LafargeHolcim Aggregates Inc., and Eagle Cement Corp.

For surface mining, PMSEA also recognized Hinatuan Mining Corp. Carmen Copper Corp., Platinum Group Metals Corp., and CTP Con-

struction and Mining Corp.

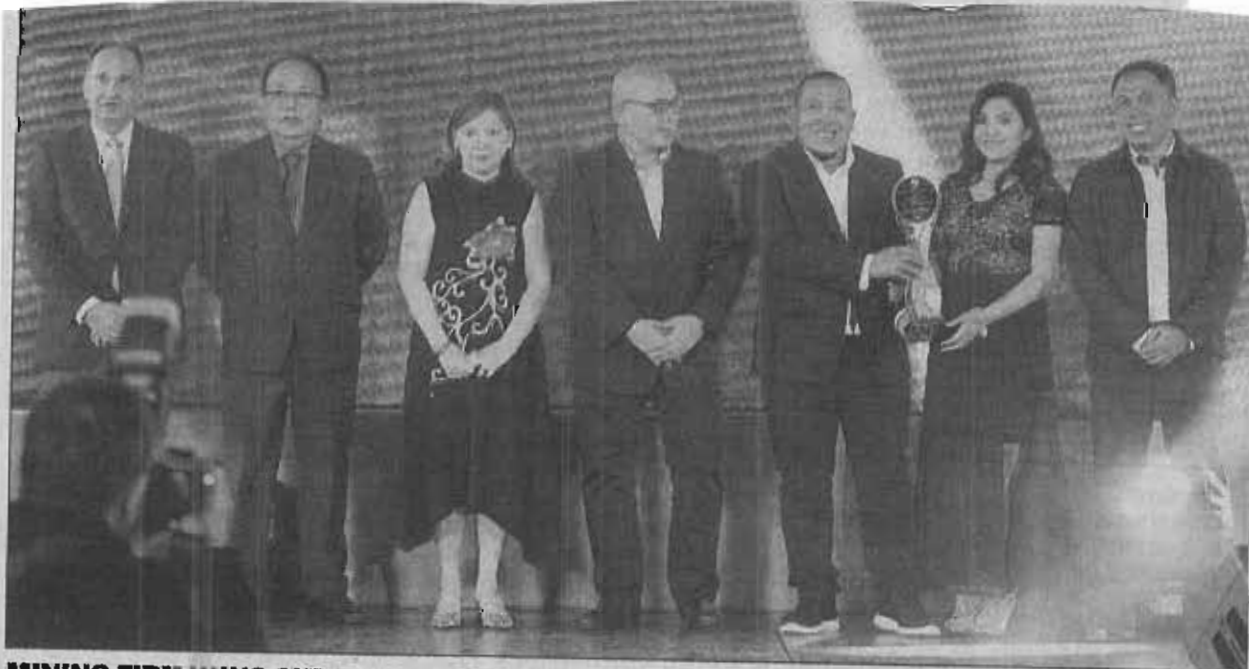
Filminera Resources Corp. was also awarded for mineral exploration and Apex Mining Co. Inc. for underground operations.

The PMIEA was established under Executive Order No. 399 in compliance with the policy that mineral exploration activities and mining operations shall not only be pro-environment, but also pro-people.

The PMIEA Selection Committee is composed of Cabinet secretaries from five government departments and three line agencies led by the Department of

Environment and Natural Resources, as well as officials from three industry organizations composed of the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines, Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association and the Philippine Mineral Exploration Association.

PMIEA is part of the 66th Annual National Mine Safety and Environment Conference, which is hosted by PMSEA, which promotes occupational safety and health, sound environmental management and social responsibility in the minerals industry.



**MINING FIRM WINS 2ND PRESIDENTIAL AWARD:** Agata Mining Ventures Inc. was once again conferred the prestigious Presidential Mineral Industry Environmental Award at the recent Annual National Mine Safety and Environment Conference last week in Baguio City. The awarding ceremony was led by Chamber of Mines of the Philippines chairman Jerry Brimo and DENR Usec. Annaliza Teh (1st and 3rd from left, respectively), while Agata was represented by (from left) general manager Emilio Figueroa III, assistant GM Anthony Quijano, safety superintendent Aldrin Arieta, environment manager Jesalyn Guingging and community relations officer Kahlil Pope Tabernero. The recognition is the highest national honor for safety and environmental excellence in the mining industry.



## Singapore shows off 2 rare eagles loaned from PH

Singapore showed off two critically-endangered eagles 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 me-

ters (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.

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)



A MALE Philippine eagle named Geothermica at Jurong Bird Park in Singapore. (AFP)



## The untapped power of biodiversity

**M**ALAYSIA has finally bid its final farewell to the last Sumatran rhinoceros in its territory. A species that had evolved and survived for some millennia in the once lush jungles of Southeast Asia is now officially declared extinct, never to be seen again in our lifetime and in the years to come in the wildernesses of Malaysia. The Sumatran rhino is just one of the many under-studied and undervalued species that have vanished in the teeming diversity of life in and around the world — animals and creatures that humanity has reluctantly failed. Poaching and hunting these creatures to the brink of extinction for money and greed that would only end up in the foreign pockets of those on the winning end. And losing more in the future for those communities, which live within the vicinity of these abundant natural resources and biodiversity. People fail to clearly see the value and significance of biodiversity, not just in mere shortsighted economic numbers but in terms of the resources and life it brings to every single creature — including humans — now and in centuries to come. From tourism to medicine, from the food that we eat to the



### INTO THE WILD

**GAB MEJIA**

water we drink, biodiversity has given a positive direction to the advancement of civilizations and communities.

How even something as tiny as a yellow bee has revolutionized our food industry by pollinating nearly 85 percent of all food crops for us humans and livestock, which ultimately ends up in our dining table. How recent research on the different species of cone snails has developed a more potent and less addicting drug than morphine that could help millions of cancer patients deal with pain. How a drug from a snail found deep in our oceans, that you may have never even heard of, could help your beloved family member or close friend to ease the severe pain and trauma he or she feels with the many sicknesses and diseases circulating around the world. How the development of this analgesic drug could potentially yield a greater economic gain in the wake of its patent and commercialization, as

well as bring new groundbreaking discoveries in the field of medicine and health. How the plethora of species of trees and plants help in providing us the water that we drink, and even as simple and necessary as the oxygen and air that we breathe to live. How resilient mangroves and coral reefs protect coastal communities from impending disaster from super typhoons, and storm surges that greatly stifle a nation's economy with the money needed to be invested in rebuilding affected communities. And how a sustainable and ethical wildlife sanctuary could help locals through an alternative means of livelihood by protecting and caring for these animals instead of killing them for one-time gain just to sell to foreign markets.

There are more or less around 8.7 million species to be found in the entire world. Millions of species with untapped potential that could bring new feats of discoveries and developments for the benefit of all creatures that inhabit our planet; 8.7 million avenues to provide food and water security, alternative livelihoods, climate crisis mitigation strategies, and the improvement of the general quality of life for people in the world.

What if we further invested in the protection, conservation and research of these unique and distinct yet undervalued animals and plants, especially in megabiodiverse countries like the Philippines, where there is still space for the development of tourism, food, and health sectors that could potentially reboot our economy for the benefit of the people. There is a certain affinity in the integration of biodiversity, technology and a growing economy in the Philippines more than we can truly comprehend. But putting it in terms of statistics and numbers, the Philippines loses about P50 billion a year to the illegal wildlife trade, according to a recent investigation and study. Fifty billion pesos lost every year to a foreign market that could have greatly benefited the local communities of Palawan and Mindanao, where majority of these poached animals can be found. Lost animals and life more valuable than money, now turned into mere remnants like the Sumatran rhino, a reminder of how humanity failed to think and act further for its future.

Email: [jgbmejia@gmail.com](mailto:jgbmejia@gmail.com)  
Instagram: [@gabmejia](https://www.instagram.com/gabmejia)



# Rains continue to fill Angat Dam

By RAMON EFREN LAZARO

**MALOLOS – The water level in Angat Dam continues to increase due to rains spawned by the northeast monsoon.**

Monitoring by the Bulacan provincial disaster risk reduction and management office showed that from 187.80 meters on Tuesday to 188 meters on Wednesday, the dam's water level rose to 188.14 meters yesterday, or an increase of 0.34 meters in the past three days.

Angat Dam's water level yesterday was 8.14 meters above its minimum

operating level of 180 meters. It was 23.86 meters below the ideal level of 212 meters.

Heavy rains from a tropical storm to be locally named Tisoy when it enters the Philippine area of responsibility this weekend are expected to raise the water level in Angat Dam.

The state weather bureau said Tisoy could fall over the Angat watershed.

The National Water Resources Board had cut down the water allocation for Metro Manila's domestic consumption from 46 cubic meters per second to 36 cms when the dam breached the critical level of 160 meters. The move resulted in rotational water service interruptions in Metro Manila.

Angat Dam supplies 97 percent of Metro Manila's water needs.

Allocation for Metro Manila residents increased to 40 cms in September when the dam's water level exceeded 180 cms.

However, rains spawned by Typhoons Ramon and Sarah this month

failed to increase the water level.

Authorities had earlier warned that rice farmers in Bulacan and Pampanga would also be affected if water supply from Angat Dam would not normalize.

Felix Robles, head of the water control and coordinating unit of Bustos Dam, said allocation for irrigation is good only for this month.

Bustos Dam supplies irrigation water to 12,000 hectares of rice fields in Bulacan and 9,000 hectares in Pampanga. The bulk of the allocation comes from Angat Dam.





31-29-18

TITLE:

PAGE 1/

DATE

# Blastik Project Eco-rangers go beyond collecting plastic bottles to empowering communities

Over the summer of 2019, Judelyn Gantes, a 17-year-old senior high school student, spent her vacation in the small farming community of Barangay Enclaro and unlike most of her peers – she became a waste collector. Contrary to the stigma about waste collectors, she proudly took on the role of an eco-ranger for the Blastik Project, a plastic collection and recycling program managed by PeacePond, and supported by the Coca-Cola Foundation Philippines.

Along with her father, she first saw it as a livelihood opportunity, but soon it went beyond from being a job and turned into her personal advocacy. "When I joined the Blastik Project it became dear to me what I had to do. Now, I have more concern for the environment. I know that one single bottle has a tremendous effect on our society, wildlife, our environment and to the people," Judelyn shared.

As part of her responsibilities as an eco-ranger, Judelyn collects bottles with an e-tricycle, segregates the bottles from the caps and the labels, then washes and dries them for recycling. Through these technologies from Alternative Indigenous Development

Foundation, Inc. (AIDFI), the plastic packaging is transformed into useful items such as chairs, bowls, payors, and more.

During the humble beginnings of the Blastik Project, many people did not understand the relevance of segregation, collection, and recycling and the vital role of waste collectors in this system.

"Usually we get comments, like 'That's plastic! Why are you picking up plastics? Why do you collect garbage when you can work in different jobs?' So then, we explain and let them understand the effects instead of controlling them. We know that we can't please people so the very least that we can do is to be a role model to them. We choose to demonstrate to them the positive outcome of what we are doing," she added.

By example and through educating community members, Judelyn and her fellow eco-rangers were able to inspire their neighbors to become waste warriors as well. The Blastik Project now manages a thriving full-circle, waste management system.

According to Judelyn, the members actively participate in the program, segregating their plastics at home for the eco-rangers

to collect, instead of simply discarding them. "Now that I see a lot of people are adapting to Blastik, it feels good that they now have the knowledge about recycling and solid waste management. They have a positive understanding that plastic has value and can be processed into a product that's beneficial to the people."

The Blastik Project is one of the many solid waste management programs supported by Coca-Cola Foundation Philippines all over the country. As part of the Chapter Two program of the Coca-Cola Foundation, the Blastik Project of Peace Pond, a long-time partner of the foundation's water sustainability program, is adding another chapter to the plastic packaging story through the success stories in their communities. Chapter Two program aims to educate, engage, and empower more communities to join the battle against solid waste.

Because of purpose-driven individuals like Judelyn, communities are able to see the value of each and every person taking care of the planet - most especially the waste collectors who work their hardest to create a world without waste.



Judelyn Gantes, a 17-year-old senior student, moves around Barangay Enclaro on a low-carbon e-bike collecting the town's PET bottles as an eco-ranger of the Blastik Project.



Blastik Project volunteers are equipped with tools and machines that shreds collected plastic for recycling.



The Blastik Project by PeacePond spearheads the collection, segregation, and recycling of PET bottles of the small farming town in southern Negros Occidental, creating their own closed-loop community.



11-29-19

TITLE:

PAGE 1/

DATE

## Subic forest sinira para sa SEAG



Nababahala ngayon ang ilang mga dayuhang residente at negosyanteng malapit sa lugar na maaaring makaapekto sa kalikasan at kapaligiran ang isang proyekto na minamadali ng gobyerno na isa para pagdadausan ng isang laro para sa Southeast Asian (SEA) Games at sinasabing pasok sa protected area sa loob ng Freeport Zone sa Subic.

Napag-alaman ng **Tonite** mula sa isang source na ang proyektong minamadali sa Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) sa West Ilanin Forest ay inendorso ng Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) sa Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) para siguraduhing sumusunod sa mga kinakailangan regulasyon sa kapaligiran para gamitin sa firing competition sa SEA Games.

Sa SBMA ay may lumang firing range na ginamit ng dating US Navy na malapit din sa lugar ng pinagtayuan at nasa kontrol ng SBMA.

Kinausap ng **Tonite** ang kontratista ng proyekto na si Loy Arpon, ng CFV Construction upang alamin kung mayroon silang kumpletong dokumento at permit kagaya ng Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) mula sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Ayon kay Arpon, binigyan lang sila ng lugar para trabahuhin at madaliin pero pagdating sa mga dokumento ay iba na umano ang humahawak nito.

Sinabi pa nito na kung mayroon silang violation, ang tanging makakasagot lamang dito ay ang PSC at SBMA.

Wala aniya silang kinalaman dito dahil diretso silang nakikipag-ugnayan sa kanilang procuring entity sa Metro Manila.

Samantala, sinubukang kunan ng pahayag ang pamunuan ng DENR Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) sa Olongapo at CENRO-Bataan subalit wala rin silang alam sa isyu.

Maging ang Ecology Center ng SBMA na nangangalaga sa kalikasan ng freeport ay dedma lang, habang ang chairman and administrator na si Wilma Eisma, na aktibo sa social media ngunit tahimik sa kabila ng pagkalat ng litrato at video sa isyu.

Matatandaan na maagang naglabas ng pahayag si Eisma na ang lahat ng mga lugar para sa pagdarausan ng SEA Games sa Freeport ay handa na.

Nasa 17 mga laro ang nakatakdang ganapin sa Subic, gayong ang ilang mga lugar ay tinatrabaho pa rin.

Sinabi naman ni Robert Gonzaga, President at CEO ng Subic Bay Maritime Exploratorium Inc., silang mga negosyante na mayroong negosyo sa West Ilanin Forest ay sumailalim sa mahigpit na proseso para makakuha ng ECC para mapangalagaan ang kapaligiran dito kabilang ang Ocean Adventure, Zoo-bic Safari at Kamana Resort.

"Wala man lang mga signage sa paligid o babala o nagsasabi na may permit ang itinatayong proyekto na hindi na namin kailangan pang magtanong. Ito ay isang paglabag sa batas, 'yan ba ang masasabing may ECC na dapat tinitiyak nila ang anumang masamang epekto nito sa kapaligiran lalo na pasok ito sa protected area, kaya kailangang may managot dito," ani Gonzaga. **(Randy Datu)**





## Villar seeks rehab of bamboo industry

SENATOR Cynthia Villar, chairman of the Senate agriculture and food committee, said she is open to amend the DENR budget to realign the National Greening Program funds to bamboo-planting programs to rehabilitate the country's denuded forest and respond to lumber demand.

Villar has been crafting and pushing for legislative measures to develop the bamboo industry in the Philippines.

She said that there is a need to aggressively promote the product development and market access of bamboo and rattan products in the ASEAN Region since member-states account for approximately 20 percent or USD393 million of the global trade in these products.

She said NGP's budget allocation of P4.5 billion for next year can be realigned to projects increasing bamboo trees in the country. This is higher than its P2.6-billion 2019 budget.

The senator strongly supports the proposal of Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu to increase funds for bamboo-planting programs.

In backing Cimatu's stand for an increased budget for bamboo, Villar said that "even if you cut it [bamboo], it will regrow."

The senator has maintained that bamboo is a cash crop for Filipino farmers and can be a good source of income and livelihood for poor communities, particularly in rural areas in the country.

She underscored the importance of bamboo, which also prompted the issuance of Executive Order No. 879 that created the Philippine Bamboo

Industry Development Council in 2010.

Executive Order No. 879 directs the use of bamboo for at least 25 percent of the desk and other furniture requirements of public elementary and secondary schools in our country, as well as prioritizing the use of bamboo in furniture, fixtures and other construction requirements of government facilities.

The senator, a known environmental advocate, has sponsored the DENR's recommended budget for next year for amendment and approval in the committee level.

Senator Panfilo Lacson also favored the additional funds for bamboo projects as he questioned the effectiveness of the government's forest rehabilitation program.

According to Lacson, he does not see its output despite annually receiving funds from Congress.

Cimatu said he intends to increase the country's forest coverage, which is currently at 23 percent, and is lowest in Southeast Asia. The global forest coverage average is 30 percent.

While the DENR works on rehabilitating degraded forests, Cimatu, however, said they also have to keep in mind the country's demand for lumber.

The country produces one million cubic meters of lumber per year while the annual lumber demand is at five million cubic meters. The rest would have to be imported from foreign suppliers.

Because of this, Cimatu said he proposes to use bamboo as substitute for lumber.

**Macon Ramos-Araneta**



STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE

MAKING

The Manila Times

All  
PAGE

UPPER  
TOWER

PAGE 1  
STORY

BANNER  
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

PAGE 1/

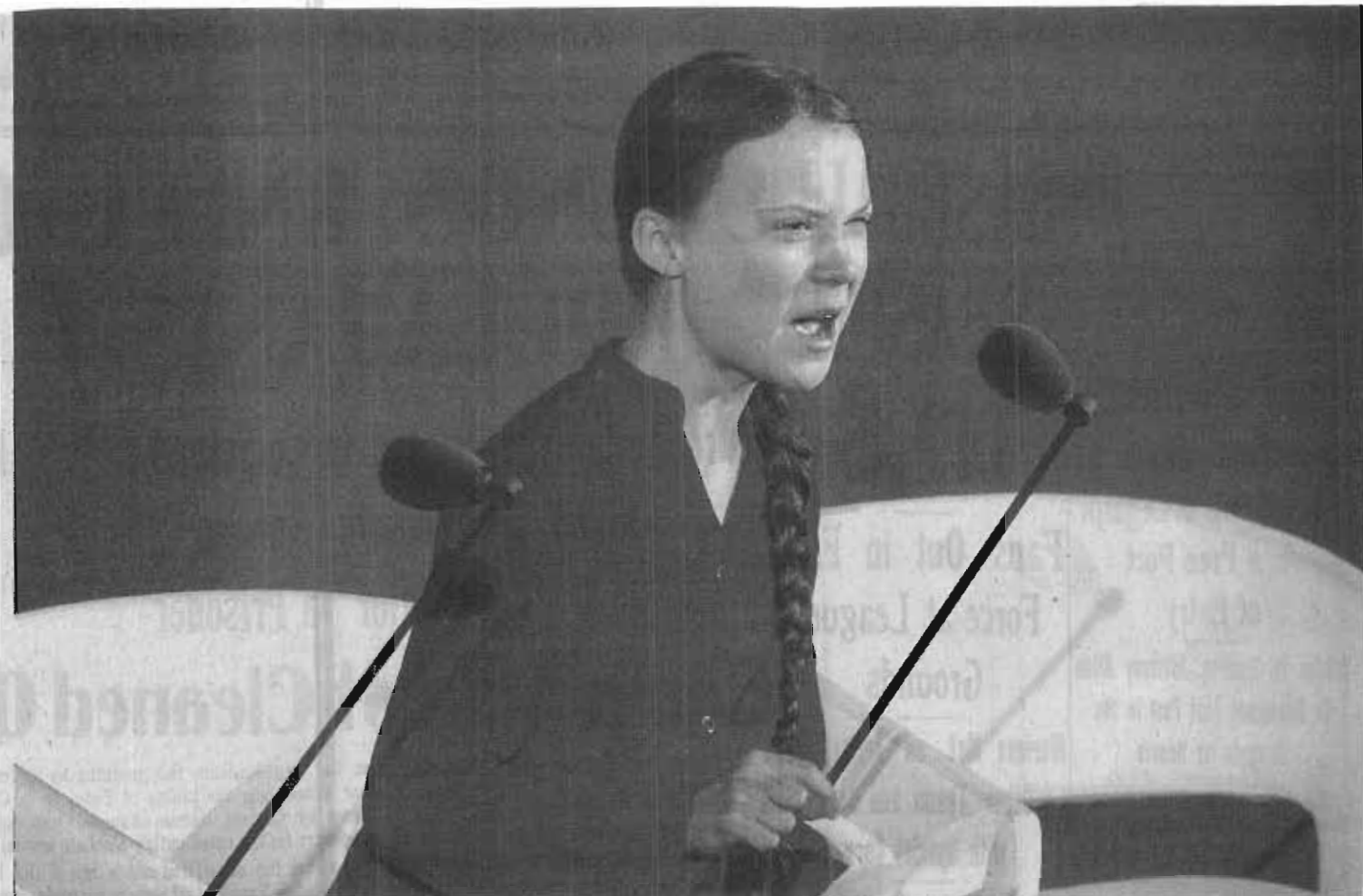
1/2

11-29-19

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## FOCUS

# The climate crisis is here, get used to it



■ Youth Climate activist Greta Thunberg speaks during the UN Climate Action Summit on Sept. 23, 2019 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City. AFP PHOTO



STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE

INCORPORATED

# The Manila Times

All  
PAGE

OFFER  
LOWER

PAGE 1  
STORY

HEADER  
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

11-29-19

THE: The climate crisis is here, get used to it

PAGE 1/

2/2

DATE

**PARIS:** When teen climate activist Greta Thunberg, nominated for the Peace Nobel this year, scolded titans of industry in Davos and heads of state at the United Nations, she told them to look at the science.

Excellent advice, but not for the faint of heart. If economics is the "dismal science," research on global warming has become the science of our dismal future.

Four blockbuster reports from the UN over the last year have made it inescapably clear that the window of opportunity for avoiding serious consequences from our meddling with Earth's climate system has slammed shut.

The impacts, in other words, are already upon us, and will get worse — perhaps far, far worse — before they get better.

With 1 degree Celsius (C) of warming above preindustrial levels, the world has already seen a crescendo of tropical storms swollen with more moisture, and made more deadly by rising seas.

A larger expanse of ocean warm enough to incubate these cyclones has spawned devastation in regions — Mozambique was hit twice this year — rarely affected in the past.

Erratic monsoons in south Asia shedding too much or too little rainfall at the wrong time; deadly heat waves over the last 18 months in East Asia, Europe and North America; warming at the poles twice the global average wreaking havoc on infrastructure and fuelling wildfires — all are a foretaste of things to come, scientists warn.

On current trends, our greenhouse gas emissions will heat the planet's surface another

three or four degrees by 2100.

Even if all nations — gathering Monday in Madrid for another round of UN climate talks — honor their carbon-cutting pledges under the 2015 Paris Agreement, we'll add at least 2 C.

## Sixth mass extinction

The first of the 1,000-page "special reports," delivered by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in October last year, reset the threshold for a climate-safe world from 2 C to 1.5 C.

Across a wide range of impacts, an extra-half degree of warming was found to make a huge difference, even the difference between life and death: 70 percent of the tropical corals upon which half-a-billion people and a quarter of marine species depend are projected to disappear in a 1.5-C world. Half the corals in the Great Barrier Reef are already gone.

In a 2-C world, however, they will all but disappear.

The report concluded humanity must fundamentally change the way we produce, distribute and consume almost everything, starting with energy.

Next, in May, was a UN report revealing that a million species — 1 in 8 — faces extinction.

Five times in the last half-billion years abrupt natural calamities have tipped the planet into a "mass extinction event" with at least two-thirds of all life forms unable to adapt.

Today, it is human activity that has triggered a mass die-off, with species vanishing at 10-to-100 times the normal "background rate" or more.

In August, the IPCC released an assessment of how we use and abuse land: deforestation, unsustainable agriculture, destruction of ecosystems.

The global food system — responsible for a quarter of carbon pollution — must be overhauled from top to bottom, both to ensure that 10 billion people can eat their fill in 2050, and to tame global warming, the UN body warned.

The final tome in the quartet looked at oceans and Earth's frozen spaces, known as the cryosphere.

## Hothouse Earth

The world's two ice sheets — atop Greenland and Antarctica — have shed more than 430 billion tons of mass every year since 2005, and are now the main drivers of rising seas, on track to surge a meter higher by 2100, the report concluded.

Some studies project a 2-meter (6.5-foot) increase by century's end, but all experts agree that sea level rise will accelerate after that and continue for centuries, redrawing the world's coastlines.

Some 300 million people will find themselves in flood zones by 2050, according to even more recent findings.

Most alarming of all, scientists agree, is the threat of runaway global warming — a scenario in which manmade carbon pollution triggers the release of greenhouse gases from natural sources, such as permafrost in Siberia and methane formations in shallow Arctic seas.

Several times in Earth's distant past its climate system has tipped into a new stable state — a "hothouse Earth" — that was 10 C, 12

C even 14 C hotter than today.

None of this, of course, means that humanity should collectively throw up its hands up in despair.

"We are going to have to adapt to some changes that may now be unavoidable," Tim Lenton, director of the Global Systems Institute at the University of Exeter told Agence France-Presse.

"But the fact that we start to see some unexpected shifts in the system should give us an extra impetus to meet the Paris goal of limiting the warming as close to 1.5 C as we can." **AFP**



PAGE



LOWER



STORY



STORY



EDITORIAL



CARTOON

11-29-19

DATE

TITLE:

PAGE 1/

## Misamis grenade blast: 2 dead, 11 wounded

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY – Two persons were killed and 11 others wounded when a grenade exploded at the covered court of a school in Initao, Misamis Oriental yesterday.

Brig. Gen. Rolando Anduyan, Northern Mindanao police director, identified the fatalities as M/Sgt. Jason Magno and Ebrahim Basher, 65.

M/Sgt. Alice Balido and 10 students were wounded. They were brought to various hospitals for treatment.

Initial investigation showed police received a call for assistance when Basher, armed with a grenade and a knife, entered Initao College in Barangay Jampason at around 11:20 a.m.

A video posted on Facebook showed Magno and several other people trying to wrest control of the grenade from Basher.

Prior to the incident, Basher reportedly stormed the municipal environment and natural resources office demanding the release of his logs, which MENRO held for lack of papers.

Basher reportedly pulled a grenade and threatened to blow up the environmental office before he entered the nearby school. – Gerry Lee Gorit, Emmanuel Tupas



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SERVICE



11-29-19

TITLE :

PAGE 1/

DATE



# NATIONAL CLEAN AIR MONTH 2019

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DATE

TITLE:

NGAYON pa lang ay dapat nang maghanda ang buong bansa sa maaaring pagdating ng bagyong Tisoy.

Malakas at malawak ang bagyong ito dahil maulan at may dalang lakas ng hangin na 110 hanggang 135 kilometro kada oras tatamaan nito ang Luzon, Visayas at Mindanao.

Papasok sa Philippine Area of Responsibility si Tisoy sa darating na Linggo at sesentruhan nito ang Gitnang Luzon at Timog Katagalugan.

Kasagsagan ng South East Asian Games ang mga araw ng pagdating ng bagyo na mabagal ang kilos sa 10 kilometro kada oras.

### MAGHANDA LAHAT

Siyempre pa, isa sa dapat na protektahan ang libo-libong dayuhang atleta na kasali sa SEAG.

Dapat na siguruhin ang kanilang kaligtasan at kalusugan.

Ang mga baha at nakagigiba ng mga istruktura ay dapat bantayan.

Sa mga lugar na pagdaraan ng mga palaro at tirahan ng mga lokal at dayuhang atleta ay pagkaisahan nating maging ligtas sa anomang uri ng kalamidad.

Bago pa man dumating ang bagyo, sana handa na tayong lahat para rito lalo't pormal na magsisimula ang palaro sa darating na Sabado.

### KALAMIDAD KAYANG HARAPIN

Kaya nating harapin ang kalamidad gaya ng bunga ng bagyo lalo't aktibo ang mga kinauukulan, lalo na ang Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration na may bagong nang kagamitan at teknolohiya na kumalap ng datos sa bagyo at magbigay ng impormasyon at babala sa mga mamamayan.

Ang mga dati nang pinipinsala ng bagyo ay lalong dapat na maghanda.

Subalit dapat ding maghanda sa mga sitwasyong nararanasan "ngayon lang nangyari ito sa amin."

May mga binago sa mga lugar ng SEAG.

May binago rin ang mga bagong subdibisyon kahit saan.

Karaniwan nang di-



## ULTIMATUM

NI BENNY ANTIPORDA

### AWAY SA SEAG TIGILAN; SI TISOY PAGHANDAAN

to nagaganap ang mga bagong daluyan ng baha na isa sa mga pinakamalalaking problema tuwing may bagyo.

Ang isang tanong: nakahanda ba tayong mamamayan na makipagtulungan sa pamahalaan at iba pa na tiyak na kumilos na sa pagdating ng bagyong malalakas?

Ang isang dalangin natin, eh, sana hindi sasabayan ng ibang mga kilos ng kalikasan ang pagbayo sa atin ng bagyo.

Ang lindol lalo na.

#### MGA POSIBILIDAD

Heto ang mga tiyak na posibilidad sa pagdating ng bagyong Tisoy.

Magkakabaha, walang kuryente, transportasyon mapipinsala at maging ang mga komunikasyon gaya ng mga cellphone at iba pang anyo ng elektronikong komunikasyon.

Dahil sa mga ito, mapipinsala rin ang mga mabills na aksyon ng mga taong maghahatid ng mga emergency na tulong para sa pagkain, gamot, pangkaligtasang kagamitan at iba pa.

Kaya naman, ngayon pa lang ay pailralin muli ng mga kinauukulan ang mga sinasabing "pre-positioning" ng lahat ng tao, kagamitan, suplay sa pagkain, gamot, tubig, palikuran at iba pa.

Dapat na sabayan ang mga ito ng mga mamamayan kahit man lang para sa kanilang mga sarili.

Gaya ng dati, dapat tiyak ng PAGASA na wala itong masirang kagamitan at teknolohiya at may 24 oras na tumatao sa mga posisyon nito para makapagbigay ng ulat at gabay sa lahat ng mamamayan at may katungkulan.

#### ITIGIL ANG AWAYAN

Sa ngayon, walang pinalalampas ang mga kritiko ng pamahalaan na kapintasan, kahit maliit ukol sa SEAG.

Ang mga maliit ay pinalalaki at maging ang mga tama ay minamali

Gaya ng kikiyam na si-

nasabi subalit halal at manok pala na masustansya namang pagkain.

At gustong palabasin ng mga kritiko na mas malalim pa sa mga kapintasan sa SEAG ang mga usapin gaya ng korapsyon at kawalan ng kakayahan ng pamahalaan na magdaos ng world class na pagtitipong internasyonal.

Sa halip na makipagtulungan ang mga kritiko para maging matagumpay ang Pilipinas sa pagtanggap nang maayos sa mga bisita, lumalabas na sinasadyang magtatalak ang mga ito para siraan sa mga dayuhan ang pamahalaan.

Dapat itigil na ang ganitong masamang gawain.

Lalo ngayong haluan ng masamang kilos ng kalikasan ang ating palarong internasyonal.

Nitong nakaraang bagyong Hagibis na ala-Yolanda ang lakas na tumama sa Japan, kinakitaan ang mga Hapon ng mahigpit na pagkakaisa, pagtutulungan at pagmamalasakit sa isa't isa at sa mga dayuhang nagdaraos ng mga internasyonal na larong.

Hindi sila nakitaan at naringgan ng mga naglalaban-labang partido-pulitikal ng siraan sa isa't isa.

Higit na nanaig ang pagtindig nila para sa dangal ng kanilang bansa, kasabay ng buong pwersa ng pamahalaan nila at mamamayan para muli silang makabangon sa trahedyang.

Sana mapairal natin ang ginawa ng mga Hapon alang-alang sa ating dangal na Filipino, sa ating pamahalaan at mamamayan, at mga dayuhang bisita natin ngayon.

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