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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



Cayetano backs probe on 'fake news' in SEAG

By EDU PUNAY

Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano yesterday expressed support for the plan of his colleagues in the House of Representatives to investigate the spread of fake news on the country's hosting of the 30th Southeast Asian Games (SEAG) following the successful opening ceremony last Saturday night.

Cayetano proposed that personalities behind several Facebook pages and websites where the fake news reportedly originated, as well as public relations people who helped them in spreading the posts, be summoned by Congress for the legislative probe set after the conclusion of the biennial event on Dec. 11.

"We will be digging deeper into this, but so far we already found the digital footprint obviously showing that these

people were responsible for inventing and spreading such fake news," he said.

"It's a political group that's behind those Facebook pages and websites. So those people behind as well as their PR man should prepare because they will be invited in the investigation," he said.

Cayetano, however, did not identify the personalities involved so as not to preempt the investigation.

Last week, Kabayan party-list Rep. Ron Salo, chair of the committee on public information, pushed for a legislative inquiry on the spread of such fake news on the country's hosting of the SEAG.

He cited what appeared to be a "concerted, deliberate, organized and seemingly malicious disinformation campaign in the media" to discredit the SEAG, its organizers and the Philippines itself.

Salo said he found an emerging "pattern of fake news" on the Games, including the *kikiam* supposedly given to the Philippine women's football team for breakfast when in fact it was chicken sausage, and the circulating photo of the Biñan Sports Complex still being constructed when it was actually a different picture.

"As a result of these fake news, the Philippines is painted as a complete failure in its hosting, with foreign media calling it 'Muddle in Manila,'" the lawmaker lamented.

Cayetano reiterated his belief that the spread of fake news in social media by certain groups has "political" motives, particularly to sabotage the country's SEAG hosting.

The Speaker specifically cited false information that spread on social media on *kikiam* served as breakfast to athletes, pork served to Mus-

lim athletes, desecration of flag, the venue in Biñan and the swimming pool in Nepal.

Cayetano earlier vowed to address issues involving the P55-million cauldron and reported blunders on venues and reception of athletes after the closing of the games on Dec. 11.

"Zero-waste SEAG"

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) called on the organizers of the SEAG and host local government units to ensure proper waste management and implement "zero-waste-to-landfill" policy throughout the sports events.

Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said the target should be no biodegradable or recyclable waste will be sent to landfills from the games' venues.

The appeal was made in

anticipation of the large volume of waste to be generated at the venues where food and drinks are sold.

The DENR expects plastic food and beverage containers, aluminum cans and cardboard as among the wastes to be produced at the sporting event.

Antiporda said the SEAG organizers and host LGUs could tap concerned city and municipality environment and natural resources officers and mobilize volunteers to ensure that the waste to be generated during the event will be properly segregated and sent to materials recovery facilities.

The DENR is hopeful that the 12-day event will be an opportunity to promote waste segregation and recycling, and that such practices would "go beyond the Games."

Antiporda said the systems for implementing waste segregation and recycling

have been in place from the provincial down to the barangay levels, as laid out in their approved 10-year Solid Waste Management Plans (SWMP).

Records showed that 20 out of 23 cities and towns hosting the SEAG have approved SWMPs, while the remaining three are under evaluation.

Host LGUs with approved SWMPs are the cities of Makati, Mandaluyong, Manila, Muntinlupa, Pasay, Pasig, Quezon and San Juan in Metro Manila; Angeles, Lubao, Mabalacat and San Fernando in Pampanga; Capas and Tarlac City in Tarlac; San Juan in La Union; Imus and Tagaytay in Cavite; and Biñan, Los Baños and Sta. Rosa in Laguna.

Those whose SWMPs are under evaluation are Calatagan in Batangas, Bocaue in Bulacan and Subic in Zambales.

— With Louise Maureen Simeon



'Zero-waste' SEA Games hiling ng DENR

Nanawagan ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa mga organizer ng Southeast Asian (SEA) Games at sa mga host na local government unit (LGU) na siguraduhin ang proper waste management at ipatupad ang 'zero-waste-to-landfill' policy sa kabuuan ng pagdaraos ng dalawang linggong biennial sports event.

Sinabi ni DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Benny Antiporda na wala dapat dadalhin na biodegradable o recyclable na basura mula sa mga pagdarausan ng SEA Games sa mga landfill.

"We call on the SEA Games organizers to use the event as a venue to showcase our best practices on solid waste management," sabi ni Antiporda na siya ring chair ng National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC).

Ang apila ay bunsod ng inaasahang dami ng basura na magmunula sa mga lugar kung saan magtitinda ng pagkain at inumin. Kabilang sa mga magiging basura ng palaro ay mga plastic at food beverage container, aluminum can at cardboard.

Sabi ni Antiporda na maaaring hilingin ng mga SEA Games

organizer at host LGU ang tulong ng mga kinaauukulang city and municipality environment and natural resources officer at magpakilos ng mga volunteer para masiguro na ang mga basura ay maayos na maipaghiwalay at maipadala sa mga materials recovery facility.

Umaasa si Antiporda na ang 12 araw na palaro ay magsisilbing pagkakataon na maisulong ang waste segregation at recycling, at ang mga ito ay manatili 'beyond the games'.

Idinagdag pa niya na ang mga pamamaraan sa pagpapatupad ng waste segregation at recycling ay nakalatag na mula sa antas ng probinsya hanggang sa barangay batay sa kanilang mga naaprubahang 10-year Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP).

Ang mga SWMP ay alinsunod sa Republic Act 9003 o ang Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 na nag-aatas sa mga LGU bilang pangunahing may responsibilidad sa waste segregation at disposal.

Ayon sa tala ng NSWMC, 20 sa 23 siyudad at bayan na host ng SEA Games ang mayroon nang aprubadong SWMP, samantalang ang tatlo ay kasalukuyang sinusuri. **(Riz Dominquez)**



Sweeping plastics ban worries QC traders

City gov't says it will soon hold a briefing on details of ordinances

By Matthew Reysio-Cruz
@MatthewINQ

As the Quezon City government moves forward with a far-reaching plan to cut plastic waste by prohibiting single-use materials at dine-in establishments, some business owners said the three-month transition period was unfeasible and could devastate certain retailers.

On Sunday, Mayor Joy Belmonte announced two ordinances that were signed in October—City Ordinances SP-2868 and SP-2876—which would impose a wider ban on plastic bags and all single-use plastic and paper materials for dine-in customers, respectively.

The plastic bag ban—which also removes the option of letting shoppers buy a bag for P2—will begin in January 2020, while the prohibition on disposable materials will start in February.

Jesse Livingston, who co-runs a small restaurant in the city, said he was shocked to find out about the new policy through the media without prior notice from city officials.

“Business will suffer, which will trickle down to the employee level and into the small communities,” he said. “There will be a big pushback from business on this.”

‘Complete cultural change’

While Livingston lauded the intent of the ordinance to reduce the city’s immense plastic waste, he said it would ultimately require a “complete cultural change” to succeed.

This was a sentiment shared by Miguel Barnes, owner of a burger shop in Barangay Tangdang Sora with his wife, Karen. The transition to nonsingle-use materials will be difficult because of “the existing mentality

and practices of the society we live in nowadays,” he said.

“Customers heavily rely on these disposable or single-use materials, not only for the convenience of transporting food and not having to wash dishes, but also for personal food hygiene and sanitation,” he said.

Because the public had come to expect some of these materials as part of customer service, (those eating at the couple’s burger shop, for example, are provided with grease paper, plastic gloves and aluminum foil), taking them away could lead to their overall brand taking a big hit. Barnes said.

Alex Adiaz, manager of a restaurant on Katipunan Avenue, also cited the potentially high cost of transitioning to nonsingle-use items as well as the durability of certain recyclable materials.

“The problem is durability

since we have items that have sauce that can leak out,” Adiaz said. “This is why we haven’t fully transitioned to recyclable materials.”

Contacted by the Inquirer, Andrea Villaroman, head of the Quezon City Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department, said the local government would meet with business owners to “properly brief them on the details” of the ordinance “in the next few days.”

Councilor Dorothy Delarmente, who introduced the two ordinances, said on Sunday that two public hearings were held. She said the idea of imposing a total ban on plastic bags came from business owners themselves, around 300 of which attended a committee hearing.

“It was fully accepted by the business owners [and] retailers, because the suggestion came from them,” she said. INQ

Excise tax on single-use plastic may hurt economy, groups warn

By JOVEE MARIE N. DELA CRUZ [@loveemarie](#)

STAKEHOLDERS on Monday appealed to the House Committee on Ways and Means to consider the economic impact of the bill imposing excise tax on single-use plastic bags produced in the Philippines.

During the hearing on the proposal imposing excise tax on single-use plastic bags, Philippine Plastics Industry Association Inc. (PPIA) President Willy Go said the proposal would hurt and eventually kill the industry.

Go said members of the industry are currently facing the negative impact of local ordinances banning the use of plastic bag in their areas.

Several local government units have already issued ordinances against the single-use plastic bags.

"We are one with the government when it comes to saving the environment but the P10 [per kilo] increase

is very detrimental to low-income earners," Go said.

According to Go, the government can still find ways to manage the environment without imposing excise tax on plastic.

"We should instead strengthen the information, education and communication campaigns on the use of plastic bags," he said.

"But plastics have satisfied all requirements. It is reusable-recyclable, nontoxic and biodegradable. Plastic has become a punching bag," he added.

Go said plastic is better compared to paper bags and "the most undesirable is paper."

For his part, Philippine Amalgamated Supermarkets Association President Steven Cua, in the same hearing, said the proposal might hit the economy.

"We always maintained that it's always a problem between disposable and reusable. How do you expect people to shop during Christmas? Plastic is irreplaceable, sad to say," he pointed out.

"There's a way, there has to be some balance, otherwise how [would] people or consumers shop?" Cua said.

But Cua said big supermarkets can comply with the proposal but it would be difficult in the case of small stores, which uses thin single-use plastic bags.

In House Bill 178, or the Single-Use Plastic Bag Tax Act, House Committee on Ways and Means Vice Chairman Estrellita B. Susansing of Nueva Ecija said her proposal aims to impose excise tax on plastic bags used in supermarkets, malls, shops, stores, sales outlets and similar establishments.

"It is a known fact that plastic bags contaminate soil and waterways. Based on available data, 4 trillion to 5 trillion plastic bags are utilized



worldwide each year, and billions of these end up as litter," she said.

"These are, likewise, toxic to both humans and animals, especially, when accidentally ingested. Plastic marine debris have been documented to harm at least 267 species, among which are sea turtles and dolphins," Suansing added.

However, House Minority Leader Bienvenido Abante Jr. pushed for the total ban of single-use plastic.

"What if we ban the single-use plastics and impose a higher tax on reusable plastics?" he said.

The bill proposes an excise tax of P10 per kilo to be charged at the point of sale of goods or products for every plastic bag provided by the supermarket, malls, shops, stores, sales outlets and other similar establishments.

The measure said 50 percent of the revenues from the excise tax on single-use plastic bags shall be allocated to the solid waste management fund provided under the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

The same measure was passed on third and final reading during the 17th Congress.

Malacañang, meanwhile, said it expects all local governments to emulate Quezon City after it banned the distribution and utilization of single-use plastics in the city starting February 2020.

Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte on October 15 signed Ordinance SP-2876, which prohibits the distribution and utilization of single-use plastics in hotels, restaurants, and other similar establishments.

President Duterte earlier raised the idea of prohibiting the use of single-use plastics in the country during a Cabinet meeting early this month.

While Duterte has yet to comment on Quezon City's move, Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo said he expects all local governments to follow Quezon City's example.

"Wala pang sinasabi si Presidente [The President has not said anything yet]. But I suppose all local governments would follow suit, since the President has already made a stand on that," Panelo said in a Palace briefing on Monday.

Asked if the President planned to certify bills on the ban of single-use plastics in the country as urgent,

Panelo said he would leave it to the discretion of Congress.

"Well, that depends on the members of Congress. The President has already made a stand, definitive stand on that; all they have to do is to pursue that line," Panelo said.

During the 35th Association of Southeast Asian Nations plenary summit in Thailand, the President issued the call to the developed countries to be "more circumspect" with their trash disposal.

He lamented that the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia have turned into "among those who become dumping grounds for hazardous shipments."

"If we are talking about improving the ecology of the place, the environment, then we must take into account what we dump," Duterte said.

"This is as good as any other time and any place to tell the other countries, the Western countries, to be more circumspect," he added.

In May, Duterte ordered a total ban of waste materials from any foreign countries after a waste dispute with Canada. *With PNA*



Single use plastic tax mulled

He noted that use of single use plastics is continuing despite bans by local government units due to difficulty in monitoring its use

By Keith Calayag
@tribunephil_kit

The House Committee on Ways and Means yesterday began its discussion on the bill that would impose excise tax on single use plastic bags.

The discussion came a week after the House Committee on Ecology began tackling bills banning single use plastic following pronouncements of President Rodrigo Duterte against its use.

House Bill (HB) 178 filed by Sultan Kudarat 2nd District Rep. Horacio Suansing Jr. and Nueva Ecija 1st District Rep. Estrellita Suansing seeks to impose P10 per kilo excise tax on plastic bags.

In her sponsorship speech, Suansing said higher excise tax rates on single use plastics is being imposed in other countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

According to her, excise tax on plastic bags in Hong Kong is P3.25 per piece, in Indonesia P18.07 per piece, in Malaysia P2.44 per piece and in Cambodia P5 per piece.

Suansing said HB 178 or the "Single use Plastic Bag Tax Act" would encourage utilization of environment-friendly alternatives to single use plastic bags.

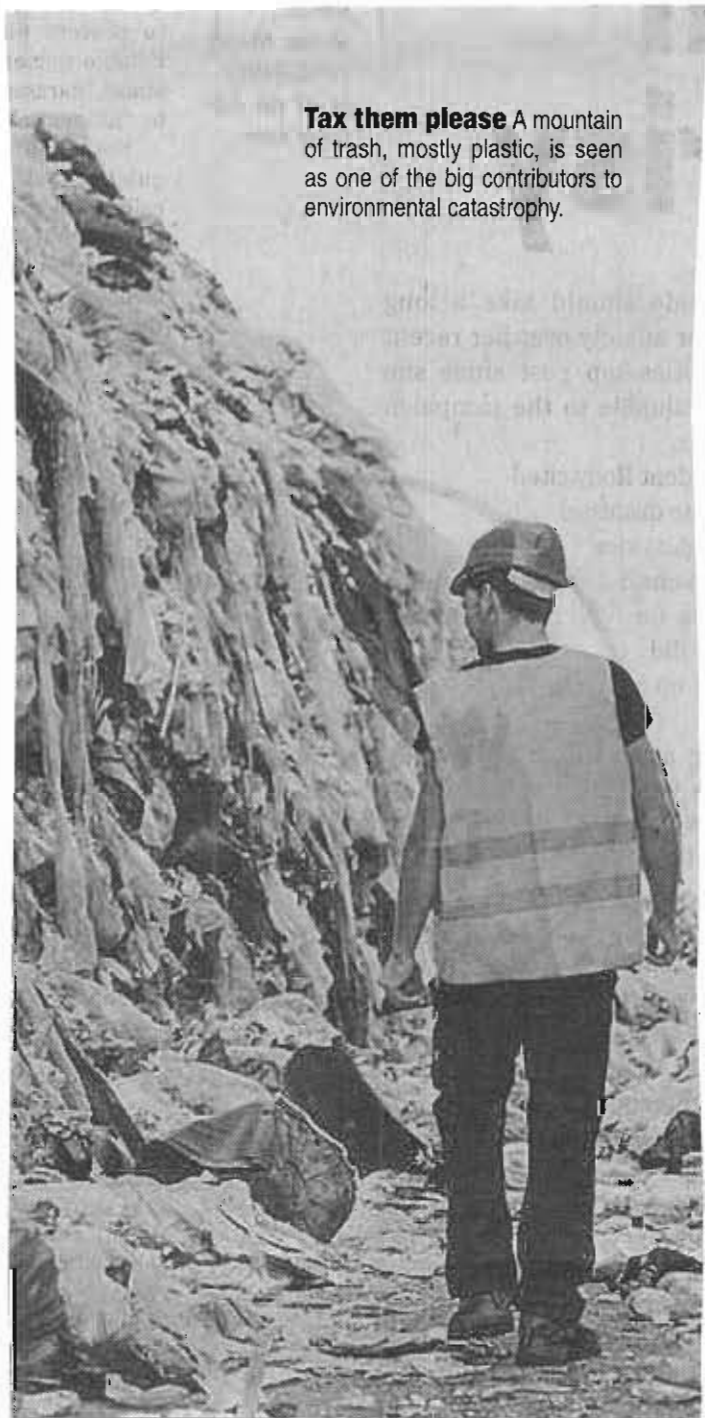
According to Suansing, 50 percent of the revenues that will be generated from the taxes shall be allocated to the Solid Waste Management Fund while the remaining 50 percent will go to the general fund.

Proposals

Philippine Plastics Industry Association president Willy Go during the hearing proposed that instead of taxing single use plastics, there should be measures that should set its minimum thickness.

He noted that use of single use plastics is continuing despite bans by local government units due to difficulty in monitoring its use.

"Most of the time, what is penalized is reusable plastic bags, even if it's thick, it is being considered single use."



Tax them please A mountain of trash, mostly plastic, is seen as one of the big contributors to environmental catastrophe.



Quezon City bans single-use plastics

QUEZON CITY will ban single-use plastics and disposable materials in hotels and restaurants, the local government said in a statement.

Mayor Ma. Josefina G. Belmonte signed an ordinance that prohibits the distribution and use of single-use plastics and disposable materials, including cutlery for dine-in purposes in all hotels and restaurants in the city.

Materials covered by the ban for dine-in customers of hotels and restaurants are plastic spoons, forks and knives, plastic and paper cups, plates, straws, stirrers and styrofoam.

Hotels, meanwhile, are prohibited from providing bar and liquid soaps, shampoos and conditioners, shower gels and other items in sachets and single-use containers.

"The local government of Quezon City is taking this action to prevent and reduce the generation of waste materials that are hardly recovered and recycled, and to promote sustainable practices, especially in the city's thriving hotel and restaurant industry," Ms. Belmonte said in the statement.

She said she expects a significant drop in the volume of residual and plastic wastes once the rules that will implement the ordinance are issued.

"This will be beneficial for the environment and the people as these avoidable wastes are known to add to the city's huge waste production and to littering and flooding problems," Ms. Belmonte said.

The Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department and the Business Permits and Licensing Department will monitor compliance.

First-time offenders will be fined P1,000. A P3,000 fine will be imposed on second offense, and their environmental permits will be revoked. Third-time offenders will be fined P5,000 and their business permits will be revoked and their establishments will closed.

In an interview, Steven T. Cua, president of the Philippine Amalgamate Supermarkets Association, Inc., said the ban on plastic bags might affect businesses. He added that the law should be enforced gradually and the public should be educated on the use of plastics.

Quezon City's waste study in 2013 said 0.81% of the 9.64% "recyclable plastic wastes" from the city are composed of single-use cutlery. The city said this was equivalent to 2.6 tons a day or about one truckload of a mini-dump truck.

Meanwhile, Congressman Bienvenido M. Abante, Jr. proposed at a ways and means committee meeting on Monday to ban single-use plastic bags and impose higher taxes on reusable plastics, noting that such measures will be more effective in "helping the environment."

The panel tackled the proposed Single-Use Plastic Bag Tax Act, which seeks to tax P10 for every kilo of single-use plastic bag removed from the place of production or release from the Customs house.

Willy Go of the Philippine Plastics Industry Association Inc. opposed the tax. "A plastic bag is only P1 per piece and if we calculate P10 per kilo, that will add up to around 20% of the cost." — **Vann Mario M. Villegas and Genshen L. Espedido**



House body tackles tax bill on single-use plastics

THE House committee on ways and means on Monday began deliberations on a proposed law imposing P10 excise tax on every kilo of single-use plastic bags, which is being blamed behind severe flooding in the country and deaths of marine animals.

The Couple Nueva Ecija Rep. Estrellita Suansing and Sultan Kudarat Rep. Horacio Suansing Jr. filed House Bill (HB) No. 781 imposing P10 excise tax

for every kilo of single-use plastic bag removed from the place of production or released from the customs house.

Estrellita Suansing underscored the need to solve the alarming plastic pollution in the country, saying almost 48 million shopping bags are used throughout the Philippines every day.

"The mass consumption of plastic in the Philippines further magnifies the flooding problem that Filipinos experience, especially dur-

ing the typhoon season. To reduce its costly environmental impact, several countries have already imposed taxes on plastic bag," said Estrellita Suansing.

But during the hearing, Estrellita said their new proposal would be a measly P10 per kilo of single-use carrier plastic bag with or without a handle where 50 percent of the revenues shall be allocated to the Solid Waste Management Fund.

Ryan Ponce Pacpaco



Solons propose tax on single-use plastic

By Ryan Ponce Pacpaco

THE House Committee on Ways and Means yesterday began deliberations on a proposed law imposing P10 excise tax on every kilo of single-use plastic bags, which is being blamed for severe flooding in the country and deaths of marine animals.

Couple Nueva Ecija Rep. Estrellita Suansing and Sultan Kudarat Rep. Horacio Suansing Jr. filed House Bill (HB) No. 731 imposing P10 excise tax for every kilo of single-use plastic bag removed from the place of production or released from the customs house.

Estrellita Suansing underscored the need to solve the alarming plastic pollution in the country, saying almost 48 million shopping bags are used throughout the Philippines every day.

"The mass consumption of plastic in the Philippines further magnifies the flooding problem that Fil-

ipinos experience, especially during the typhoon season. To reduce its costly environmental impact, several countries have already imposed taxes on plastic bag," she said.

But during the hearing, Estrellita said their new proposal would be a measly P10 per kilo of single-use carrier plastic bag with or without a handle and 50 percent of the revenues shall be allocated to the Solid Waste Management Fund.

"By imposing this levy, this bill endeavors to encourage the exploration and utilization of environment-friendly alternatives to single-use plastic bags," Estrellita said.

"Furthermore, this proposed measure aims to generate additional revenues for the government which could be used to finance programs and projects to counter the harmful effects of plastic pollution in the Philippines," said Estrellita Suansing.

Willy Go, president of the Philippine Plastics In-

dustry Association (PPIA), told the panel chaired by Albay Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda that plastic production has been reduced by 20 percent after some local government units (LGUs) banned its use.

"Probably the plastic bag industry will just disappear. So we think no need to legislate this bill as we are already dying," said Go in opposing the proposal as he appealed to lawmakers to carefully study the measure.

"The cost will be higher. The root cause is the lack of discipline. What happened is we are penalizing the product and the consumer bears the impact," Go added.

Steven Cua, president of the Philippine Amalgamated Supermarkets Association (PACASA), appealed to Congress to ensure a balancing act in deliberating the measure.

"There has to be some balance. How would people shop?" said Cua who maintained that plastics are useful.



PALASYO UMAASA NA IBABAWAL NA SA IBANG LUGAR ANG SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

UMAASA ang Malacañang na ipagbabawal na rin ng iba pang lokal na pamahalaan ang paggamit ng single-use plastics.

Ito ay matapos aprubahan ng lokal na pamahalaan ng Quezon City ang ban sa single-use plastics sa kanilang lungsod para sa susunod na taon.

Ayon kay Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo, matagal nang nais ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na ipatupad ang ban sa single-use plastics sa buong bansa dahil sa masamang epekto nito sa kalikasan.

Matatandaang, una nang sinabi ni Panelo na posibleng sertipikahan bilang urgent bill

ni Pangulong Duterte ang panukala na magbabawal sa paggamit ng single-use plastics sa bansa.

Sa ngayon, nakabinbin pa rin sa Senado ang Senate bill 333 na naglalayong i-regulate ang manufacturing, importation, at paggamit ng single-use plastics sa bansa. **DWIZ882**



Ban sa plastik sa QC suportado ng environmental group

SUPORTADO ng isang environmental group ang hakbang ng Quezon City government na nagbabawal sa paggamit ng single-use utensils at ban sa paggamit ng single-use plastic sa mga retail store.

Simula sa Enero 1, 2020 ay ipagbabawal ng Ordinance 2868 ang pagbenta ng plastic bag ng mga retailer sa mga kustomer nito. Sa kasalukuyan ay pinagbabayad ng P2 kada plastic bag ang mga retailer gaya ng supermarket at department store.

"The promulgation of these twin pollution

prevention ordinances against plastic and paper disposables is as a step in the right direction," ani Aileen Lucero, National Coordinator ng EcoWaste Coalition.

Inanunsyo ni QC Mayor Joy Belmonte ang promulgasyon ng Ordinance 2876 at 2868 na akda ni QC Councilor Dorothy Delarmente.

Sa ilalim naman ng Ordinance 2876, ang mga single-use at disposable utensils gaya ng plastic spoon, forks at knives; plastic/paper cups, plates, straws, stirrers; at Styrofoam ay

ipagbabawal na sa mga dine-in customers ng mga hotel at restaurant.

Pagbabawalan na rin ang hotel sa pamimigay ng naka-sachet o na-ka-single use plastic na sabon, shampoo, conditioner at shower gels.

Ang mga lalabag sa dalawang ordinansa ay pagmumultahin ng P1,000 sa unang paglabag, P3,000 at kanselasyon ng Environmental Clearance sa ikalawa at P5,000 multa at kanselasyon ng Business Permit at pagpapasara ng tindahan o restaurant sa ikatlo.—**Leibilly Begas**



Gumulong na sa Kamara **EXCISE TAX SA SINGLE-USE PLASTICS**

TINALAKAY na sa House Committee on Ways and Means ang panukala na nagpapataw ng buwis sa single-use plastics.

Sa ilalim ng House Bill 178 na inihain nina Nueva Ecija Rep. Estrelita Suansing at Sultan Kudarat Rep. Horacio Suansing, papatawan ng P10 excise tax ang bawat kilo ng single-use plastics simula sa Enero 1, 2020.

Ayon kay Suansing, layunin ng panukala na makalikom ng dagdag na kita sa pamahalaan na gagamitin naman sa mga proyekto at programa para sa solid waste management.

Pero iginiiit ni House Minority Leader Benny Abante na sa halip na pagpapataw ng excise tax sa single-used plastic bag ay dapat na magkaroon ng total ban dito.

Inirekomenda naman ni Philippine Plastic Industry Association President Willy Go na pag-aralan munang mabuti ang panukala dahil sa economic impact nito.

Naniniwala si Go na kapag natuloy ang pagpapataw ng buwis sa single-used plastics ay ipapasa ang ginastos ng mga manufacturer sa mga consumer.

Aniya, hindi na kakailanganin ang paghubuwis sa single-used plastics kapag naaprubahan ang mga panukala na magpatupad ng total ban sa plastics.

Giit nila, kahit anong pagbubuwis ang gawin ng pamahalaan ay kailangang palakasin ang information and education campaign sa publiko sa negatibong epekto ng plastics sa tao at sa kapaligiran.

CONDE BATA



4

RONNIE M. HALOS • Editor

Punto Mo

Editorial

Single-use plastics ibabawal na sa QC

WALA pang lungsod sa Metro Manila na nagbabawal sa single-use plastics. Kaya naman patuloy ang problema sa basurang plastics. Ito ang dahilan kaya may pagbaha. Bumabara ang mga plastics sa daluyan ng tubig. Hindi nabubulok ang mga ito kaya forever ang problema. Kahit na sundutin nang sundutin ng MMDA ang mga imburnal, wa-epek sapagkat patuloy ang paggamit ng single-use plastics.

Pero sa susunod na taon, bawal na sa Quezon City ang single-use plastics. Sabi ni QC Mayor Joy Belmonte, mahigpit nang ipagbabawal ang paggamit ng utensils na gawa sa plastic at maging ang plastic bags. Ayon kay Belmonte, dalawang ordinansa ang ipinasa noong nakaraang Oktubre na nagbabawal sa single-use plastics. Magsisimula ang ban sa Pebrero 2020.



DISYEMBRE 3, 2019

Napakamakabuluhan ang hakbang na ito ni Belmonte. Dito magsisimula ang paglaya ng lungsod sa paggamit ng plastic na banta sa pagkasira ng kapaligiran. Nararapat gayahin ng iba pang lungsod ang sisimulang pakikipaglaban ng QC sa single-use plastics.

Karaniwang sachets ng shampoo, hair conditioner, 3 in 1 coffee, catsup, toothpaste at kasama rin ang mga plastic straws na ginagamit sa softdrinks, milktea at iba pa ang makikitang iniwan ng baha. Namulaklak din ang sachets sa mga estero at kanal. Kahit abutin ng 10 taon ay hindi mabubulok o masisira ang mga plastic sachets. Mas matibay ang mga sachets kaysa karaniwang plastic bag. Ayon sa environmental groups tinatayang 59.7 bilyong sachets ang umaapaw sa mga estero sa Metro Manila. Malulunod ang mga residente sa basurang plastic sachets.

Hindi lamang pagbaha ang dulot ng mga basurang plastic kundi banta rin sa buhay ng mga lamandagat. Dahil sa maling pagtatapon ng basurang plastic, humahantong sa dagat at nakakain ng mga balyena.

Magkaroon ng ordinansa ang bawat lungsod na nagbabawal sa plastic. Sundan ang QC sa kanilang hakbang. Dito magsisimula ang paglaya sa plastics.



**AKSYON
AGAD**
ALMAR DANGUILAN

**Single-use plastics
ban sa QC, sana'y
'di papogi lang**

HINDI ko alam kung matatawa tayo sa bagong inaprobahang ordinansa ng Quezon City government hinggil sa ban ng single-use plastics sa mga restaurant at hotel sa lungsod.

"Ordinance No. 287...prohibiting the distribution and use of single-use plastics including cutlery for dine-in purposes."

Halimbawa ng single-use plastics ay throw-away plates, spoons, forks at cups.

Pero ba't natin nasabing nakatatawa ang ordinansa? Una'y hanggang simula o masasabing purong papogi lang ang lahat. Bakit?

Saan na ba umabot ang naunang ordinansa ng lungsod hinggil sa pag-ban ng paggamit ng plastik na supot - sa palengke at groceries/supermarkets?

"Quezon City Ordinance No. SP-2140 or the Plastic Bag Reduction Ordinance." Inumpisahan ang implementasyon sa ordinansa noong 1 Oktubre 2012. Ano na ang narating ng ordinansang ito QC Mayor Joy Belmonte?

Mayor Joy, oo nga't hindi kayo ang alkalde nang maaprobahan ang kampanya laban sa plastic bag pero kayo ang bise po noon, ibig sabihin dumaan din sa kamay ninyo ang ordinansa bilang presiding officer ng City Council. Tama po ba madame?

Kaya, bago ninyo sana inaprobahan o pinirmahan ang ordinansa na lumusot sa City Council - ang Ordinance No. 287 sana man lang ay binuhay n'yo muna o estriktong inimplementa ang naunang ordinansa laban sa mga plastik

plastik na 'yan. Ang nangyayari tuloy kaplastikan na lamang ang ordinansa.

Pero sana Madame Joy, hindi maging 'kapiastikan' ang bagong ordinansa at sa halip, estriktong maipatupad hindi lang hanggang simula kung hindi, talagang giyera ang pagpapatupad.

Ngayon, alam n'yo na kung bakit nasabi natin kung bakit maaaring magiging katawatawa ang ordinansa?

Teka, hindi ba mas maganda na hindi lang sa resto at hotel ipatupad ang giyera laban sa single-use plastics, sa halip ay sa lahat na - sa mamamayan. Ipagbawal na rin ang pagbebenta nito sa palengke at supermarket para talagang wala nang lumusot o tuluyan nang wala ng gagamit nito.

At sa pagbabawal ng pagbebenta, malaking kontribusyon ito sa problema sa basura, maging sa pagbabara sa mga kanal na nagdudulot ng pagbaha.

Katunayan, noong unang panahon naman, talagang mga tunay na kutsara at tinidor na gawa sa metal ang gamit. Hindi lamang sa handaan kung hind maging sa outings. Talagang nagdadala ang mga magulang namin noon ng babasaging plato at iba pa, walang plastik plastic noon.

Hindi naman tayo tutol sa dalawang ordinansa ng QC kung hindi suportado natin ito pero, ang nangyayari kasi hindi kayang panindigan ng pamahalaan ang kanilang batas. Hanggang simula lang.

Iyon ngang ordinansa laban sa plastic bag, katunayan may butas ang batas. Sa supermarkets at groceries kapag walang dalang eco bag ang kanilang mga kustomer, ito ay kanilang binebentahan ng plastic bag ng P4.00 bawat isa. Ang dapat walang ganitong uring alok. Totaly ang nararapat ay talagang walang plastic bag - walang ibebentang plastic bag kung mayroon man, ecobag ang dapat na inaalok ng groceries/supermarket.

Sana Madame Joy, hindi magiging katawatawa ang city government sa bagong ordinansa laban sa single-use plastic tulad ng unang ordinansa na may butas.

Teka hindi ba mas maganda rin isama sa ordinansa ang tuluyang pababawal ng pagbebenta nito sa palengke, groceries at supermarket...o ang paggawa nito?



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Dagdag-buwis sa paggamit ng plastic, may pondo na, bawas-basura pa

SINALUBONG ng bagyo ang Disyembre. Kung hahataw si 'Tisoy', tiyak na lulubog na naman ang ilang lugar. At tulad ng dati, isa sa mga dahilan ay basura. Tone-toneladang basura ang bumabara sa mga estero at waterways. Kaya sa halip na tuluy-tuloy ang tubig ay naiipon at nagiging mabagal ang pagdaloy papunta sa mga ilog.

Kung susuriin kung anong uri ng mga basura ang sanhi ng pagbaha ay mga plastik — mula sa malalaki hanggang sa maliliit. Kung hindi mga sirang gamit ay mga pinagbalatan ng iba't ibang produkto. Bagama't, napakatagal na itong problema, hanggang ngayon ay hindi pa rin nasosolb nang tuluyan. Sadyang marami pa rin ang pasaway.

Kaya ngayon ay sinusubukan nang daanin sa batas ang problema.

Isang panukala ang isinusulong upang mapatawan ng buwis ang mga produktong disposable o single-use plastic. Layon nitong mahikayat ang mga Pinoy na tigilan na ang paggamit ng single-use plastics na labis na umanong nakasisira sa kapaligiran.

Sa ilalim ng panukala, madaragdagan ng 10-sentimong buwis ang bawat sando plastic bag. Ang nakikita natin ditong problema ay tiyak na papalag ang industriya na apektado nito. Nauunawaan natin na may mga mang-gagawa na talagang matatamaan. Kaya malaking hamon sa ating gobyerno kung paano mapapangalagaan ang ating kapaligiran nang hindi malalagay sa alanganin ang ibang bagay.

Siguro, puwedeng magpatupad ng total ban sa single-use plastics. Ito 'yung mga sachet ng shampoo, toothpaste, creams, soaps, crackers, nuts at iba pang foodstuffs. Habang buwisan naman ang mga reusable plastic at ang pondong malilikom ay gamitin naman sa pagsalba sa ating kalikasan. Bumuo rin ng mga programa na magpapaigting ng mga kampanya kontra plastik. Patunayan natin na nagpapataw tayo ng buwis hindi para may maibulsa kundi upang may magamit para sa ikabubuti ng lahat.

Samantala, puwede namang ituloy ang 'tingi culture' sa buhay nating mga Pinoy lalo na at may mga mamimili na hindi kayang bumili nang maramihan, pero gawin natin ito sa ibang paraan. Alisin ang mga plastic sachet at gumamit ng mga lagayan na puwedeng magamit nang pangmatagalan at paulit-ulit.

Kung hindi natin ito gagawin ngayon, pare-pareho tayong mafulunod sa baha at basura.



TACKLING PLASTIC WASTES: NESTLÉ, VALENZUELA CITY PROGRAM MAY BALIK SA PLASTIK AT 100 DAYS

Plastic 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 soft plastics and used 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 retrofit 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.

Jairabai 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.

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.



May Balik Sa Plastik, an environmental partnership between Nestlé Philippines and Valenzuela City, seeks to reduce residual plastic wastes in the city's transfer station and landfill. In photo are Nestlé Philippines and Valenzuela City LGU representatives during a collection day.

Barangay Ugong staffer Mercedes Balangui, 52, at the barangay materials recovery facility inspecting collected plastic wastes under *May Balik Sa Plastik*.



UN CHIEF: 'POINT OF NO RETURN' NEARS AMID DISMAL

CLIMATE ACTION

MADRID—The world's efforts to stop climate change have been "utterly inadequate" so far and there is a danger global warming could pass the "point of no return," UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said on Sunday.

Speaking before the start on Monday of a two-week international climate conference in Madrid, the UN chief said the impact of rising temperatures—including more extreme weather—was already being felt around the world, with dramatic consequences for humans and other species.

Over the last decade, more than 20 million people have been driven from their homes by fiercer weather and worsening wildfires—a problem set to worsen unless leaders act swiftly to head off surging climate threats, antipoverty charity Ox-

fam said on Monday.

Much of the displacement caused by cyclones, floods and fires appeared temporary and, in some cases, due to better efforts to evacuate people ahead of danger, Oxfam researchers said.

But its "sheer scale" was a surprise, said Tim Gore, Oxfam's climate policy leader, with island nations like Cuba, Dominica and Tuvalu seeing on average close to 5 percent of their people out of their homes in any given year.

Political will lacking

"This is the warming world we have long been warning about. Now we're seeing it play out before our eyes," Gore said.

Guterres noted that the world had the scientific knowledge and the technical means to limit global warming, but "what

is lacking is political will."

"The point of no return is no longer over the horizon," he told reporters in the Spanish capital. "It is in sight and hurtling toward us."

Stop war on nature

Delegates from almost 200 countries will try to put the finishing touches on the rules governing the 2015 Paris climate accord at the Dec. 2-13 meeting. These included how to create functioning international emissions trading systems and compensate poor countries for losses they suffer from rising sea levels and other consequences of climate change.

Guterres cited mounting scientific evidence for the impact that man-made emissions of greenhouse gases were already having on the planet, including record temperatures and melt-

ing polar ice.

But he insisted that his message was "one of hope, not of despair. Our war against nature must stop and we know that that is possible."

Countries agreed in Paris four years ago to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius, ideally 1.5 C by the end of the century compared with preindustrial times.

Already, average temperatures have increased by about 1 C, leaving little room for the more ambitious target to be met.

Growing demands from citizens, particularly young people, have shown that there is widespread desire for climate action, according to Guterres. "What is still lacking is political will," he said.

He noted that some 70 countries—many of them among the

most vulnerable to climate change—had pledged to stop emitting more greenhouse gases by 2050.

"But we also see clearly that the world's largest emitters are not pulling their weight. And without them, our goal is unreachable," he said.

The UN chief said he hoped the meeting in Madrid would see governments make more ambitious pledges ahead of a deadline to do so next year.

Market for emissions

He also said that creating a worldwide market for emissions, which is a key element of the sixth article of the Paris accord, remained one of the most contentious issues for negotiators.

The Oxfam study, released as the UN climate negotiations start in Madrid, examined the

numbers of people displaced inside their home countries by climate-fueled disasters between 2008 and 2018, based on government and international agency data, as well as media reports.

Seven of the top 10 countries with the highest displacement by proportion of their population were developing island states, largely in the Pacific and the Caribbean, the report found.

But around 80 percent of all people forced from their homes by weather disasters over the last decade were in Asia, where large populations in countries from the Philippines to Sri Lanka live in areas threatened by cyclones or flooding, it said.

Overall, the number of weather disasters considered extreme grew fivefold over the last decade, researchers said.

—REPORTS FROM AP AND REUTERS



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NEWS

UN: Climate 'point of no return' nears

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres says on the eve of a two-week international climate conference in Madrid that efforts to stop climate change have been "utterly inadequate" so far. Growing demands from citizens, particularly young people, have shown that there is widespread desire for climate action, but what is lacking is "political will," says the UN chief. —STORY BY AP AND REUTERS

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Climate crisis has reached 'point of no return' — UN chief

MADRID (AFP) — The devastating impacts of global warming that threaten humanity are a pushback from Nature under assault, UN chief Antonio Guterres warned Sunday ahead of a key climate conference.

"For many decades the human species has been at war with the planet, and now the planet is fighting back," he said, decrying "utterly

inadequate" efforts of the world's major economies to curb carbon pollution.

"We are confronted with a global climate crisis and the point of no return is no longer over the horizon, it is in sight and hurtling towards us."

Guterres flagged a UN report to be released Tuesday confirming the last five years are the warmest on record, with 2019



Climate crisis has reached... 1◀

likely to be the second hottest ever.

"Climate-related disasters are becoming more frequent, more deadly, more destructive," he said on the eve of the 196-nation COP25 climate change talks in Madrid.

Human health and food security are at risk, he added, noting that air pollution associated with climate change accounts for seven million premature deaths every year.

The Paris Agreement calls for capping global warming at under two degrees Celsius, but recent science has made clear that the treaty's aspiration goal of 1.5C is a far safer threshold.

A UN Environment Programme report last week concluded that CO2 emissions would need to drop by a vertiginously steep 7.6 percent per year over the next decade to stay within that limit.

But Guterres insisted that the 1.5C goal is doable. All that is missing, he said, is political will.

"Let's be clear -- up to now, our efforts to reach this target have been utterly inadequate," he said.

"The world's largest emitters are not pulling their weight."

Current national pledges -- if carried out -- would see global temperatures rise by at least 3C, a recipe for human misery, according to scientists.

Pelosi in Madrid

The UN chief's comments were clearly aimed at the handful of countries responsible for more than half of global greenhouse gas emissions, though he did not call them out by name.

President Donald Trump has set in motion the process that will see the United States withdraw from the Paris deal by year's end.

At the same time, a US Congressional delegation going to Madrid will be headed by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, listed by the Spanish government among heads of state and VIPs.

"We want to give every opportunity to the US to remain within the commitments in the fight against climate change," a spokesperson for

the Spanish prime minister's office told AFP.

Other major emitters -- China, India, Russia and Brazil -- have given scant indication that they will deepen their commitments in the near term.

Guterres did single out the European Union as playing a constructive role.

"Europe has an absolutely essential role to play, and must be a cornerstone in the global negotiations leading to carbon neutrality," he said.

The European Commission's new president Ursula Von der Leyen is trying to steer the bloc towards a target of "zero net emission" by 2050, but continues to face resistance from some members, including Poland and Hungary.

To help speed the transition of the financial sector, which continues to invest heavily in the fossil fuels driving global warming, Guterres announced the appointment of current Bank of England governor Mark Carney as special envoy on climate action and finance, effective January. (With a report from Thomson Reuters Foundation)



FROM THE STANDS

DOMINI M. TORREVILLAS



Climate change petition

Filipinos are among the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate emergency. They are, however, also leading the fight to attain climate justice and solutions.

The good news is that Filipinos are awaiting the Resolution to a four-year National Inquiry on Climate Change (NICC), triggered by a Petition filed at the Commission on Human Rights (CHR). The Petition was filed in 2015 by a group of Filipinos and civil society organizations, including Greenpeace. They all seek CHR to conduct investigation on how the world's investor-owned fossil fuel companies significantly contributed to climate change and its human rights impacts.

According to a Greenpeace report, this is significant for two reasons.

First, it is "a first-of-its-kind effort – investigating the responsibility of fossil fuel companies for human rights violations stemming from climate change. Among the tasks in the Petition are finding companies' responsibility, recommending that policymakers develop and adopt clear and implementable objective standards for corporate reporting of human rights issues in relation to the environment, as well as monitoring vulnerable communities to the impacts of climate change.

"Second, some of the Petitioners and resource persons for this effort are typhoon survivors and representatives from vulnerable populations. These brave Filipinos are using their experiences and stories to call on major companies to relax their "business-as-usual" stance and to consider the welfare of communities.

CHR is expected to release the Resolution before the year ends in time for the International Human Rights Day and United Nations Climate Change Conference in Madrid.

* * *

Last Nov. 8 to 10, a group of media practitioners went to Panglao island in Bohol for a weekend respite and to write about the various developments in that province especially about its booming tourism industry. They were received well by the management and officials of the Bohol sites that they visited – Bluewater Panglao accommodations capped by a tree-planting activity within the hotel compound, the dolphin-watching trip, sightseeing at Isola de Francesco island, looking for fireflies in the dark along the Abatan River in Cortes, a trip to the Bohol Museum in Loay and the exciting river cruise with dinner on the boat in Loboc, with Mayor Leon Calipusan.

This particular trip was so blissful and relaxing, thanks to the hospitality and forward-looking preparations of Pete

in tourism who knows his job and does it well.

Here's Pete's report: "We reached the check-in counter of Air Asia in Panglao International Airport some 45 minutes before closing time. We were just in time for Z2 355, a 13:25 flight Sunday Nov. 10, 2019.

"We had a group ticket for Flight Z2 355 from Tagbilaran to Manila, with these names – Pedro "Boo" Chanco, Theresa Chanco, Diego Cagahastian, Corazon Cagahastian, Pete Dacuycuy (all senior citizens) and Benjamin Layug, Via Marie Claire Baroma, Grace Louise Santiago, Kristelle Bechayda, and Leica Dacuycuy.

"The Air Asia counter in-charge in Panglao Airport said due to a glitch in their computer system only FOUR passengers could be accommodated – Via Marie Claire Baroma, Grace Louise Santiago, Kristelle Bechayda and Leica Dacuycuy. The seniors and Layug had to wait for the next flight some 2 hours later."

"The irregular thing here," writes Pete Dacuycuy is that being the host during the trip "I was made to pay at least P10,000 for a rebooking fee for the six passengers not accommodated or shall we say off-loaded by Air Asia. They were at the airport ready to board but were not accepted, then charged again with rebooking fee to be able to make it on the next flight to Manila.

"While seated for almost one hour in this succeeding flight, Diego Cagahastian on Seat No. 41 was even challenged to produce his boarding pass which he did, presumably because there is another passenger with the same seat number. 'Double seating,' he heard the steward-

ess tell her colleague. Does this mean that in these 2 flights of Air Asia from Panglao to Manila, the management or ground staff are selling seats for favored passengers, thus off-loading other unsuspecting customers?"

Pete's report ends with: "Requesting for a refund but no reply."

Calling, calling Air Asia management.

It's an impossible task – stopping teen-aged girls from getting pregnant. First thing is that they are too young to be married lawfully. But the itch to get hitched is extremely strong.

My househelp's family has multiple teen marriages. Starting with her, the mother herself got pregnant at age 17, her daughter at 16, and her granddaughter at 12, all three pregnancies occurring outside of marriage. Why was this so, I asked the mother. "It's fate," she told me. She also had three husbands, her daughter also three, and the granddaughter has just entered into a second relationship at age 14

I've heard of many impregnations taking place in shacks where the families sleep in cramp spaces, resulting in incest and pregnancies. So, is it poverty that is the cause of such ill relationships?

Not just poverty, reports the Commission on Population and Development, but rather, "a complex web of factors (that) is causing the increase in incidences of teenage pregnancy around the country, and thus cannot be attributed to a single factor alone."

POPCOM issued the statement after news articles pointed to moral decadence as the reason for the rise in the numbers of girls who have begun to give birth, particularly those as young as 10 years old.

The lead population management agency of the country pointed out that "policy and program interventions which will address the issue require

interagency and multisectoral collaboration."

Undersecretary Juan Antonio Perez III, POPCOM's executive director, said that based on various studies, "the interplay of various factors –from personal to the community level – explains the incidence of teenage pregnancies.

"All these factors should be considered in formulating an integrated series of strategies and interventions."

Perez said institutional partners such as the immediate family, schools and religious organizations could help address the interplay of numerous factors, including morals and values formation that influence the decision-making of adolescents.

According to Philippine civil registration data in 2017, more than 500 babies were born every day to adolescents 10 to 19 years old.

According to empirical evidences, exposure to sexually explicit content from the Internet, lack of access to reproductive health information and services, ineffective parental guidance, negative peer pressure, engagement in risky behaviors, as well as the changing attitudes of adolescents toward their sexuality are among the crucial factors attributable to teenage pregnancies.

The role of parents and adult guardians are important in developing positive values among adolescents.



Perez likewise cited the urgency of a number of pending legislations on reproductive health to be enacted. "Given the complexity of the phenomenon of teenage pregnancy and its life-long implications, there is a need for a comprehensive policy solution."

As such, POPCOM strongly supports the signing of bills authored by Senators Ana Theresia 'Risa' Hontiveros and Juan Edgar "Sonny" Angara aimed at establishing a national policy on the prevention of adolescent pregnancy through comprehensive strategies.

While these bills are pending, Perez said there is a need to implement multisectoral strategies to drastically arrest the prevalence of teenage pregnancies.

For this purpose, POPCOM supports the call to declare this alarming state as a "national emergency" to foster more focused collaborations among stakeholders.

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Bagyo magpapataas 2 ng tubig sa Angat Dam

Bagyo magpapataas ng tubig sa Angat Dam

MAKATUTULONG ang bagyong Tisoy para tumaas ang level ng tubig sa Angat Dam na magagamit sa darating na summer season, ayon sa National Water Resources Board (NWRB).

Sa ngayon ay nasa 189 meter ang water level sa Angat, nasa 16 meter ang kailangan para maabot ang normal operating level na 205 meter.

Ayon kay NWRB Executive Director Seville David Jr. nasa papasok pa na bagyo bago matapos ang taon nakasalalay ang seguridad ng water supply hanggang sa pagpasok ng summer sa susunod na taon, umaasa umano ang ahensiya na magkakaroon ng pag-uulan sa Luzon para madagdagan ang antas ng tubig sa dam.

"Itong bagyong Tisoy, kahit may pangariba sa mga epekto nito sa mga kababayan natin, sa punto naman po ng water supply e makaka-

buti po ito kung saka-sakali," paliwanag ni David.

Ang Angat Dam ang siyang pangunahing nagsu-supply ng tubig sa Metro Manila, una nang sinabi ng NWRB na kung hindi madaragdagan ang tubig sa dam ay asahan na ang kakapusa ng tubig pagsapit ng buwan ng Marso hanggang Mayo, gayunpaman, maganda ang forecast ng Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) sa bagyong Tisoy na magdadala ng pag-uulan sa Bulacan at Pampanga kaya positibo ang ahensiya na makatutulong ito para maibsan ang problema sa supply ng tubig.

Ang bagyong Tisoy ang ika-20 bagyo na pumasok sa bansa, sa tala ng Pagasa ay maaring may isa pa na bagyo na pumasok sa bansa ngayong buwan ng Disyembre. **(Tina Mendoza)**



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NGAT Dam's dangerously low levels will be hopefully doused by the arrival of typhoon "Tisoy," which is expected to dump rainwater and increase the metro's water supply.



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NICKEL ASIA SHINES IN NATIONAL MINE SAFETY, ENVIRONMENT AWARD

BAGUIO CITY – Nickel Asia Corporation subsidiaries took the spotlight in the recently-concluded 66th Annual National Mine Safety and Environment Conference (ANMSEC) here, with one affiliate taking the most coveted Presidential Mineral Industry Environmental Award (PMIEA).

Cagdianao Mining Corporation (CMC), based in Valencia, Dinagat Islands province, bagged the top Presidential award and the 2 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 during the November 19-22 ANMSEC, the largest annual gathering of the country's minerals sector that also feature safety competitions, mining equipment exhibits, and a symposium tackling industry issues.

Likewise, other NAC affiliated also harvested awards. Hinatuan Mining Corporation (HMC) based in Tagana-an town, Surigao del Norte, took home the Platinum Award in

the surface mining category and as first runner up in the Best Forest Award.

Two of HMC's miners, James Wilkins Asio and Angelo Cañada, were conferred the Best Mine

Supervisor Award and Best Miner Award, respectively.

Meanwhile, NAC subsidiary Rio Tuba Nickel Mining Corporation (RTNMC) captured the championship crown Mine Safety Field Demonstration and Field Competition on First Aid held during the last day of the conference.

It was the second time in a row for the Bataraza, Palawan-based RTNC to win the title, demonstrating the unrivaled competence of its emergency

response team.

Receiving the major PMIEA award, CMC resident mine manager, Engr. Arnilo Milaor, said the recognition further strengthened their resolve to operate well beyond the regulatory standards.

"This Presidential award only solidifies our zeal, conviction, commitment, courage, and readiness to face future challenges and respond to the ever-evolving regulatory environment," Milaor said.

"More than that, the honor that has been bestowed to us this evening will only strengthen our determination to improve the lives of our community stakeholders, protect and preserve the environ-

ment, and make Cagdianao Mining the healthiest and safest mine in the entire country," he added.

Milaor echoed the call of Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu at the start of the awarding ceremony for the institutionalization of the "culture of care" in all aspects of mining operations.

"Through various programs being implemented by mining companies, which include the social development and management program, support and services have consistently been provided to ensure sustained improvement in the living standards of host and neighboring communities," Cimatu said in a speech delivered by

Environment Undersecretary Analiza Teh.

The annual mine safety and environment conference is organized by the Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association (PMSEA) 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 (PSEM).

The PMIEA, meanwhile, 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.



Foreign chambers nix add'l taxes on mining

By LOUELLA DESIDERIO

Foreign businessmen in the country are against a plan to impose additional taxes on the mining industry, saying this would be counterproductive to government's aim of increasing its revenue take from the sector.

The Joint Foreign Chambers (JFC) of the Philippines said in a position paper on the additional taxes to be imposed on the mining industry through House Bills 00288, 00560, 01867, 02557, 04541, 04874 and 05022 that while it recognizes government's aim to increase its share from revenues of mining operations, the proposals would be costly to the mining industry and in the long run decrease rather than increase government's revenues.

Through the mining bills, government is looking to establish various fiscal regimes for the mining industry by imposing several sliding scale royalty rates on both metallic and non-metallic mining operations.

In some cases, the proposal involves sliding scale government share based on margins with most adding additional shares on windfall profits.

The Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion Law or the first package of the government's tax reform program which took effect last year, already increased the excise tax rate on all minerals by 100 percent.

In addition, the Philippine Mining Act requires mining companies to set aside a minimum of 1.5 percent of their

operating costs to fund and implement social development and management programs, and one percent royalty on gross sales for indigenous cultural communities.

As such, JFC is of the view additional taxes would be an added burden and in the long-term, could discourage mining investments and lead mining firms to go to other countries with more attractive regimes.

Without the recent doubling of the excise tax, JFC said the country's existing mining taxes were already uncompetitive internationally, based on the International Monetary Fund's 2012 report to the Philippine government.

Citing the calculations of the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines, JFC said the recent doubling of excise tax has made the average effective tax rate or AETR reach over 73 percent, higher than tax regimes of major mineral producing countries such as Canada and Australia.

"JFC believes that extending the royalty rates of existing mines outside the mineral reservations by any margin would make the fiscal regime unattractive for new mining investments and may cause the shutdown of existing mines with low profitability," it said.

As some of the bills treat metallic and non-metallic mining equally or without distinction, JFC said it is important to note the differences.

It said applying uniform taxation may adversely affect other related industries. For instance, additional taxes on non-

metallic minerals could have an impact on the cement industry which has a role in the government's flagship Build Build Build program for infrastructure development.

'While we appreciate the need for the administration to fund the many bold and innovative programs outlined in the 10-point socioeconomic agenda, we also believe that additional taxes over and above the current levels would not accomplish the goals of raising government's share of mining revenues but rather reduce them. In our view, the result would likely be; curtailment of mine expansions, closing of low profit mines and limited or no new mining investments due to regional competition. The result would lead to falling employment and income in remote rural areas where it is needed the most,' JFC said.



Casting away coal addiction for survival

By HEHERSON ALVAREZ

Climate Change Consciousness week is held through the proclamation by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo every November, through my recommendation as Presidential Adviser on Climate Change to raise awareness and generate action to respond to global warming threats. This year, its observance becomes even more significant because an Emergency Climate Alert for a higher ambition to fulfill the PARIS ACCORD has been underscored by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and other well-acknowledged Science Research Institutes.

The COP 25 will be held from Dec. 2-13, in Spain due to certain political disturbances in Chile, Spain with the UNFCCC secretariat has generously provided the crucial global platform to form together a resilient and responsive global will to mitigate and adapt to the deepening climate change catastrophes.

It is imperative that the Climate Change Commission in defining our Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) provides a doable climate program that supports the administration's job-creation, even industrialization programs. A joint congressional public hearing is essential for a fully transparent harmonized process with vital inputs from all concerned agencies and relevant civil society sectors.

One of the keys to the Philippines' long-term industrial growth – sustainable development and resiliency, is a mix of energy sources which is job-creating, that become less expensive over time, and which also has fewer negative impacts on climate and the environment, that threatens food security, health, infrastructure, lives and livelihood.

We are entering a new era of grave disruptions that include increasingly destructive impacts of an overheating earth with climate change, of super typhoons, ocean surges and super drought, raging forest fires, landslides consequently deepening poverty and hunger. Carbon dioxide and fossil polluting gases have been the culprit of global warming. Fortunately, the rise of alternative clean energy technologies as solar, wind, hydro waste, and geothermal are readily accessible. UN Secretary General Guterres in the recent ASEAN meeting stressed the need to STOP our Coal Addiction.

It is auspicious that the President underscored his concern for Climate Change in his speech in Russia. In ASEAN, the President underscored the value of protecting biodiversity as we address climate change. He has also manifested political will in rehabilitating our polluted water bodies, in particular, Boracay and Manila bay. The President also expressed his openness to address the plastic crisis that identifies the Philippines as no. 3 in the list of the most guilty polluting countries. COP 25 is particularly directed to the blue planet concerns, confronting global warming destruction of the corals, acidification of our seas, plastic pollution, sea level rise and ocean surges.

The enormous popularity of the President can provide the opportunity for him to serve as a caring guru to protect our highly vulnerable archipelago, and seek the Senate ratification of a UNESCO covenant for the underwater heritage protection.

What can be realistically accomplished within the remaining 2 1/2-year term of the Duterte administration focused on specific policies, actions and programs that are doable and achievable?

The twin pillars of eliminating the scourge of drugs and corruption while preventing further environmental degradation through decarbonization will lift the nation and its leadership to a rendezvous with destiny.

I. The basic problem

1. The Philippines is one of the top three countries most threatened by climate change. We need to CLIMATE PROOF our people against its inevitable impacts and risks, to take full advantage of new financing, technology and other job opportunities that it will create and attract green investments, clean technologies and green building.

2. We also need to manage properly the ongoing shift in energy technologies to minimize stranded costs, technology lock-in and other risks as well so as to take full advantage of the decreasing costs, lower pollution, more green jobs and businesses, and other benefits as well as opportunities these newer technologies will create.

To attain the administration's "Ambisyon Natin 2040 (Malasakit, Pagbabago at Kaunlaran)" under this new era, the Philippine energy sector faces a fundamental dilemma:

- Should it continue to rely mainly on traditional sources and planning methods like coal and baseload planning, which planners are already familiar and comfortable with? or

- Should it adopt newer technologies and planning methods such as new renewables and storage, and flexible power plant planning which are cleaner, which create more jobs, and which are becoming increasingly cheaper over time?

Our energy sector today unfortunately inherited from the previous Aquino administration a bias for the first option, despite its disadvantages especially under the new alternative energy era. The previous administration's Philippine Energy Plan 2012-2030 had energy efficiency and renewable energy targets that would have propelled the country toward this transition. Unfortunately, it failed to attain the energy efficiency and renewable energy targets, but overachieved on its coal targets instead, revealing its hidden bias. We will work closely with the Department of Energy on a climate-smart approach to the energy transition and seek to assist that the Duterte Administration does not repeat the egregious error of the Aquino Administration.

II. Addressing the problem

Our answer to the problem must be a two-track energy policy. One that does not disrupt our economic growth while it builds up national capacity for sustainable development through increasing reliance on renewable energy. It allows us to fulfil our commitments under the Paris Climate Accord based on CLIMATE JUSTICE and the principle of COMMON BUT DIFFERENTIATED RESPONSIBILITIES. It also allows us the resiliency to chart a low-carbon path according to our Intended Nationally Determined Contribution of Priorities (INDC).

This two-track policy will create jobs, pull down electricity prices, and provide ordinary people with a cleaner,

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healthier living environment. It will also avoid locking in our country for the next 40 years to power plants which are highly polluting and whose increasing costs can derail the industrialization efforts of the administration, over malnutrition and/or poverty reduction.

This can be accomplished by a simultaneous approach that builds on existing and committed (Construction on-going) conventional power plants to make them more dependable, more efficient and less polluting and builds up new power capacity for sustainable growth through gains in energy efficiency and increasing reliance on renewable energy.

III. Basic objectives:

1. To promote specific climate actions, policies, and programs (APPs) to help sustain a strong economy through job growth and lower electricity prices over the next five (5) years.

2. To use these APPs to leverage investment, tech-

nology and capacity-building in order to capture large-scale mitigation and adaptation opportunities for the country.

3. To bolster biodiversity conservation through protection of the forest and oceans as carbon sinks to help reduce greenhouse gases.

4. To increase via riverbank solar or river basins another 1.5 million hectares from the 6 million existing hectares of irrigable land. Currently, only 1.5 hectares are irrigated. By irrigating 1 hectare of

land, it is as if you have 3 hectares harvesting 3 times a year instead of merely depending on rainfall.

IV. Proposed response

A. Mitigation initiatives: Reducing greenhouse gas emissions

The following prototypical mitigation projects can be prioritized for carbon capture and reduction to meet our international climate change commitments. They, at the same time in adaptation by creating jobs, alleviating poverty,

enhancing food security, and promoting biodiversity conservation, confronting vector borne and climate caused respiratory, gastro-intestinal diseases, cancer and heart ailments.

1. Expand a forestation and reforestation projects by another 1.5 million hectares, with improved monitoring and evaluation component and by stopping deforestation. Forests provide economic, social and environmental benefits. As a bonus, they also sequester huge amounts of carbon dioxide. Deforestation produces almost twice as much carbon dioxide

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as the energy sector.

2. Upscale low-carbon farming methods in irrigation systems nationwide such as organic farming, which eliminates the use of fossil fuel-based agro-chemical, and the system of rice intensification (SRI) which reduces agricultural methane by minimizing rice field flooding. These systems also improve farmers' income and health.

3. Mandate segregation and recycling projects in municipalities and cities to control pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from solid and liquid wastes while turning them into source of local jobs and income.

4. Manage the ongoing energy transition from fossil fuels to new renewables

to reduce carbon emissions and at the same time maximize flexibility, preserve potentially game-changing options, enhance job creation, and minimize the cost of electricity to consumers. Pilot proven energy efficiency and renewable technologies in government buildings and other structures, to set the example for the rest of the country. Solarizing a Malacañang building would be a model of inspiring government offices to follow the lead of the Palace.

5. Acquire electric vehicles (EVs) for some government offices, to initiate the necessary infrastructure of charging stations that can spur other early adopters to shift to EVs.

6. Provide a comprehensive cultural, science-based communications and effective education with inclusive, transformative lifelong learning involving all disciplines of the arts and forms of media through a focused program with the support an interagency cluster of tourism, social welfare and NEDA including the rehabilitation of climate refugees.

7. Direct DOST, Department of Information and Communications Technology, Climate Change Commission and the Civil Service Commission to conduct a joint study to adopt internet protocol that will permit at least 35 percent of public and private employees to work at home, three days a week. This will help reduce transport traffic, cut pollution and improve efficiency.

8. Tax appropriately and fairly COAL to excise its hidden and overt subsidy to level the playing field as one of the incentives for the entry of renewable energy.

B. Adaptation initiatives:

Preparing ourselves to cope with the risks of climate change

1. Direct all cities in NCR to propose 20 initiatives to protect and strengthen their cities, including three key actions: managing the risk of flooding, increasing areas for parks and vegetation, and improving water and energy efficiency. Proposals must be based on identified hazards and assessed risk of climate change impacts on the most vulnerable areas and infrastructure within their territories.

2. Implement job-creating agroforestry programs for enhancing the resilience of farms to climate impacts, reducing land degradation and improving soil quality and productivity to ensure diversified and secure food production in various parts of the country.



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3. Provide special funding to highly vulnerable LGUs, like Cagayan de Oro and Ilagan and local universities Pagasa and nrrdc for the development and implementation of adaptation plans based on multi-hazard scenario-based assessment of risks and vulnerabilities.

4. For food security, direct the Department of Agriculture to include more resilient crops than rice and corn in its programs and enhance the adaptive capacity of small-scale agriculture especially in the Cordillera Region, the Cagayan valley and parts of Mindanao.

5. Direct the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to promote and provide support for the cultivation of mangrove forests by coastal communities for protection from storm surges and opportunities for food, income and recreation.

6. Allocate appropriate fund and direct the Commission on Higher Education, the Department of Education and the Technical Education and Skills

Development Authority (TESDA) to implement nationwide roll out, information dissemination and training of teachers and students in integrating climate change and disaster risk issues in the K to 12 and other curricula. This can spark a nationwide trend for innovation and promotion of science-based solutions in communities and LGUs.

7. Require and assist DepEd and DOH to provide schools and clinics in distant barangays with supplementary power from local renewable energy sources. Incentives for installing and operating back-up RE power sources by government agencies and units, medical facilities and schools should also be provided.

8. Declare the 175-hectare Las Piñas-Paranaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area of NCR and similar critical areas as Climate Change Adaptation Projects and commit PAGCOR funding for their planning, beautification, and clean-up.

9. Support the call of LGUs for the reform of the People's Survival Fund. The PSF was created in 2012 but remains generally dormant due to weak organizational mechanisms.

President Rodrigo Roa Duterte supported the recent global strike on Climate Justice, Peace and Clean up kicked off in the Philippines by the Earth-savers UNESCO Dream Center, Climate Institute and its partners that created the unique Gallery of the Sea that was applauded by him in his message.

"This administration recognizes that armed conflict and climate change are among the greatest challenges our society faces today. I thus commend your organization for being our reliable partner in upholding our peace-building efforts and environmental conservation programs. I also hope that you will encourage others to take concrete steps in preserving our natural resources and leading a more sustainable and responsible lifestyle."

The President therefore is in a unique position to initiate a cultural revolution to bring about a regime of plenty by protecting the nation from the ravages of inevitable, intensified extreme weather occurrence that will submerge our coastal towns, threatening the survival of our nation.

(Heherson T. Alvarez is former Senator and Isabela Congressman who served as Secretary of Environment as well as Climate Change Secretary. He is the founder of Earthsavers honored as a UNESCO Dream Center and is currently Chairman of the Advisory Board of Climate Institute, among the oldest International NGO based in Washington D.C. tel. 09158983947 or 09178711161)



Judiciary ends AFP run in UNTV Cup

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

Upsets marred the eighth UNTV Cup last Sunday as defending champion and erstwhile unbeaten Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and two other frontrunners suffered heartbreaking defeats at the San Juan City gym.

First to fall were the AFP Cavaliers who lost to the Judiciary Magis, 78-72, in Group A elims of the event organized by UNTV president Dr. Daniel Razon for public servants.

Former Ginebra player Chester Tolomia and Jearomel Serrano waxed hot from afar, scoring 17 and 15 points, respectively, as the Magis snapped AFP's six-game winning streak dating back to the elims.

The two-time champions Magis evened their record at 3-3 while leaving the Department

of Environment and Natural Resources as the only unbeaten team in the eight-team second round with a 6-0 mark.

Also falling by the wayside were Malacañang-Philippine Sports Commission and Department of Agriculture.

The Kamao dropped to 5-2 in Group B after losing to the Philippine International Trading Corporation Global Traders, 68-58, while the DA Food Masters lost for the second straight game after being nipped by the National Housing Authority Builders, 74-72.

The win improved PITC's record to 4-2 while the Builders likewise enhanced their bid for a quarterfinal berth with a 4-3 mark - the same record of the Food Masters in Group A.

The top two finishers after the second will advance outright to the semis while the third to sixth placers play another round in the quarters where the bottom two will be eliminated.



FILE:

NALULUNGKOT tayo sa pagkamatay ni Benjie Caballero na naging bahagi ng ating pahayagang Remate bilang dating correspondent nito sa Mindanao.

Hindi nakayanan ni kapatid na Benjie ang grabeng sugat sa dibdib at baga nang burnaon dito ang dalawang bala kalibre .45 na ginamit ng mga killer.

Namatay si Benjie, station manager ng Radyo ni Juan sa Tacurong City, sa umaga nitong nagdaang Linggo sa Southern Philippines Medical Center sa Davao City.

Una siyang itinakbo sa St. Louie Hospital sa Tacurong City ngunit nang lumala ang kanyang kalagayan ay inilapat siya sa SPMC.

SA HARAP NG BAHAY

Mapangahas ang mga killer ni Benjie dahil pinagbabaril siya mismo sa harapan ng kanilang bahay sa Sampaguita Street Tacurong City noong Oktubre 30.

Naghihintay noon ito ng traysikel papasok sa kanyang trabaho sa Radyo ni Juan.

Hindi pa alam hanggang ngayon kung ano ang motibo sa pagpatay sa kanya.

Subalit masidhi ang pagkapit niya sa pagiging isang brodkaster at mamamahayag makaraang makaligtas siya sa Ampatuan massacre nang ma-delay ito sa pagbiyahe kasama ang mga biktima.

At upang matigil ito sa pagiging mamamahayag, masasabing pinatay siya ng riding-intandem o kaya'y pinapatay siya ng sinomang kanyang nasagasaan sa trabaho.

SUSPEK ARESTADO

Lumalabas namang may naaresto na sa mga suspek at sinasabing ito ang gunman.

Malalaman natin sa mga susunod na araw kung totoong suspek ang nadakip na ng pulisya.

Dapat ilabas ng pulisya ang ngalan at mukha sa media ng suspek para malaman ng mga posibleng testigo kung totoo o hindi fall guy ito.

At sana, bukod sa kasama ng nadakip na RIT, maisasama rin ang utak ng pagpatay, kung meron man.

At panagutin sila lahat sa batas anoman ang mga lalabas na motibo.



ULTIMATUM

NI BENNY ANTIPORDA

PAALAM, BENJIE CABALLERO AT AMPATUAN MASSACRE

Ang mahalaga, kinitil ang buhay ni Caballero at nararapat lang na makamit ng kanyang pamilya ang katarungan.

Mami-miss' ng mga taga-Remate ang paminsang-minsang pagtulog nito sa opisina tuwing lumuluwas siya mula sa Mindanao.

Paalam, kapatid na Datu Benjie Abdul Caballero.

DESIYON SA AMPATUAN MASSACRE

Sinasabing ilalabas na ni Quezon City Regional Trial Court Judge Jocelyn Solis-Reyes ang desisyon nito sa kasong Ampatuan massacre sa dating na Disyembre 19.

Gagawin ang paglalabas ng desisyon sa ganap na 9:00 ng umaga sa Quezon City Jail Annex, Camp Bagong Diwa, Bicutan, Taguig City.

Ito'y makaraan ang 10 taong paglilitis sa 58 pinatay, kabilang na ang 32 mamamahayag; nasa mahigit sa 100 akusado at nasa 200 testigo kontra at pabor sa mga biktima.

Pangunahing akusado sina ex-Maguindanao Governor Andal Ampatuan Sr.; ex-Datu Unsay, Maguindanao Mayor Andal Ampatuan Jr.; ex-Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao Zaldy Ampatuan; at Datu Sahid Islam Ampatuan.

Kabilang naman sa mga naging pangunahing saksi sina Vice Mayor Sukarno Badal at isang Lakmodin Saliao na nagsabing ang tatlong magkakapatid, kasama ang yumao na nilang ama na si Andal Sr. ang umano'y nagplano para sa masaker.

Si Datu Sajid Islam Ampatuan pansamantalang nakalalaya sa piyansang P11.6 million.

UMAASA NG KATARUNGAN

Siyempre pa, umaasa ang lahat ng mga biktima na magkaroon ng katarungan at sa anyo ito ng deklarasyong guilty ng mga akusado, lalo na ang mga pangunahing akusado, nag-checkpoint sa mga biktima, kumalabit ng mga gatilyo ng baril at

nagbaon ng bangkay ng biktima sa pamamagitan ng backhoe.

Ngunit wala talagang nakaaalam kung may idedeklarang guilty o pagpapawalang-sala dahil normal sa mga desisyon ng hukuman na hindi dapat pakialaman o pangunahan ng kahit sino.

Maaari ring may hatulang guilty habang ang iba ay hindi.

Magkagayunman, mga Bro, malayo pa bago talaga makamit ang tunay na katarungan dahil daraan pa sa Court of Appeals, lalo na sa Korte Suprema ang kaso... kung aapela ang mga akusado na mai-dedeklarang guilty... kung meron man.

Kung inabot ng mahigit 10 taon si Judge Solis sa paglilitis at paglalabas ng desisyon, gaano katagal naman kaya karaming taon ang uubusin ng Court of Appeals, lalo na ang Supreme Court, sa pagdedesisyon?

Ang Vizconde massacre ay inabot ng mahigit 20 taon habang ang double murder case na Olalia-Alay-ay ay 30 taon mula sa RTC hanggang SC, ang Ampatuan massacre kaya?

MANGUDADATU MAGBIBITIW

Inihayag kamakailan ni Maguindanao Congressman Esmael 'Toto' Mangudadatu na magbibitiw siya bilang kongresman kung mapawalang-sala ang mga Ampatuan sa kaso.

Kasama kasi sa mga biktima ang kanyang pamilya sa mga namatay, kabilang ang ilan niyang abogado, at nadamay rin ang iba pa na dumaraan at nasama sa checkpoint.

Kung ano ang kahirinatnan ng lahat kaugnay ng pahayag ni Cong. Toto, walang nakaaalam ngunit maaaring ipagdasal na wala sanang masamang maganap.

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