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**DENR**

**IN THE NEWS**

**Strategic Communication and Initiative Service**



## DENR issues waste-to-energy guidelines

By **LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON**

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has issued the guidelines on the establishment and operation of waste-to-energy (WTE) facilities for the treatment of municipal solid waste in the country.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu recently signed DENR administrative order 2019-21 which contained the guidelines for the WTE establishment.

"We hope that we will be able to demonstrate in a pilot basis one solution to the waste problem using WTE method without the Philippine Clean Air Act of 1999," Cimatu said.

WTE refers to the energy recovered from waste, usually the conversion of non-recyclable waste materials into useable heat, electricity or fuel through a variety of processes.

The DAO provides guidelines on environmentally-sound evaluation, establishment, operation and decommissioning or closure of WTE

technologies for municipal solid waste management.

Municipal solid waste is produced from activities within local government units, which include a combination of residential, commercial, institutional and industrial trash and street litters.

The DENR is looking at WTE as a cleaner and more sustainable alternative to the traditional sanitary landfill, which is the waste disposal method allowed by the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

Cimatu said the country's garbage woes are only getting worse, especially in Metro Manila, which generates about 56,000 cubic meters of trash per day.

"The problem on solid waste is one of the primary issues that we must address immediately," he said.

Cimatu assured that the WTE guidelines "adhere to the policy of the government to ensure the protection of public health and environment."



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## DENR should craft measures on garbage problem

The ban should include the timed phase-out of single-use packaging, starting with the most problematic types such as multi-layer single-serve sachets

A number of environmental groups have urged the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to address the garbage problem in Metro Manila and the rest of the country through pollution prevention policies and systems toward building a zero-waste and toxics-free society.

DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu announced on Thursday the issuance of DENR Administrative Order 2019-21, which provides for the guidelines on the establishment of waste-to-energy (WtE) facilities for the disposal of municipal solid waste, as well as the department's plan to issue a separate directive banning single-use plastics (SUP).

In response to Cimatu's declaration, various environmental groups expressed their views and suggestions to prevent waste from being produced, dumped, incinerated or spilled into the environment, including the world's oceans.

"The experience of our partner communities is telling us that the massive production and consumption of wasteful single-use items such as sachet packaging and the failure of big companies to own up to the plastic and chemical mess we're in is the main obstacle to the envisaged zero-waste and toxics-free society," said Jove Benosa, a zero-waste campaigner.

"While it's easy to solely put the blame on wasteful and undisciplined consumers, the authorities should ask companies to take full responsibility for the unrestrained production of SUP that are quickly used and disposed of, and to direct such companies into

adopting sustainable product packaging and delivery systems," Benosa added.

Chinkie Pelño-Golle, executive director of the Davao City-based Interfacing Development Interventions for Sustainability (IDIS), stressed that "while local government units (LGU) are mandated to act on the garbage problem, the national government should target the plastics producers and big companies to start phasing out the production of plastics and for them to produce and use environment-friendly packaging."

Regarding the anticipated DENR order on SUP, "The ban should include the timed phase-out of single-use packaging, starting with the most

problematic types such as multi-layer single-serve sachets; contain provisions for polluter pays principle; exclude the adoption of false solutions such as 'oxo-biodegradable' plastic, 'biodegradable' plastic, and single-use paper packaging; encourage LGU to incentivize refill and reuse and other delivery systems adopted by businesses and establishments; and that the order should be used to strengthen implementation of Republic Act 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, particularly the provisions for strict segregation at source," said Lea Guerrero. She added that "above all, the ban should be crafted within national zero-waste framework, using RA 9003 as a starting point." **JC @tribunephil\_jc**



## AWARD PARA SA MUNTI AT BASURA SA MAYNILA

GINAWARAN nga pala ng Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) ng 2019 Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG) ang lungsod ng Muntinlupa bunsod nang pagpapakita ng kahusayan at katapatan sa serbisyo at pamamahala.

Ang SGLG awarding ceremony ay ginanap sa Manila Hotel kamakailan.

Iprinesenta naman ni MAYOR JAIME FRESNEDI, kasama si CONG RUFFY BIAZON at iba pang local officials ang "seal" sa mga opisyal at kawani ng lokal na pamahalaan sa isang flag raising ceremony noong nakaraang linggo.

Kasama ang Munti sa 380 local government units (LGU) sa buong bansa na nakatanggap ng naturang award.

Siyempre, pasado ang Muntinlupa LGU sa "all-in" assessment criteria o pamantayan ng DILG na kinabibilangan ng financial administration; disaster preparedness; social protection; peace and order; business friendliness and competitiveness; environmental protection; at tourism, culture, and the arts.

Sinasabing ang pinakamaraming pumasang lokal na pamahalaan ay mula sa Region 1 na may 65, sinundan ng Region 3 na may 63, Region 2 na may 40, CALABARZON na may 33 at Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) na umabot sa 28 LGUs.

Congrats, Munti LGU at Mayor Fresnedi!

### MAY KRISIS NGA BA SA BASURA?

KAHIT saan, kahit kailan, marami pa rin ang walang disiplina sa pagtatapon ng basura sa iba't ibang panig ng bansa.

Sabi nga, "tapon dito, tapon doon."

Ang nakakabanas pa, kahit ang mga pasahero o nasa loob ng tumatakbong susakyan ay nagtatapon ng basura sa labas ng bintana.

Pagpapakita ito ng kawalan ng disiplina at kamangmangan sa epektong dulot ng basura sa ating kalikasan.

Maliban tuloy sa masikip na daloy ng trapiko at madalas ireklamang hirap ng buhay, ibinabala ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang bagong krisis daw na nararanasan ng mga taga-Metro Manila—ang krisis sa basura.

Pagbubunyag ni ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY ROY CIMATU, sa unang anim na buwan pa lamang ng 2019, halos 67,000 cubic meters nang basura ang nakuha sa buong Kamaynilaan, higit sa estimated target sa buong taon na dapat lampas 58,000 cubic meters lamang.

Tsk, tsk, tsk.

Kaya sa gitna ng problemang ito, iminungkahi ni SEN. CYNTHIA VILLAR sa mga lokal na opisyal na gamitin ang plastic recycling at composting facilities mula sa DENR.

Para naman kay MANILA MAYOR ISKO MORENO, kung anong itinatakda ng batas ay ito raw ang kanilang susundin.

Sa 2020, sisimulan naman daw sa lungsod ng Quezon ang pagbabawal sa single-use plastic, ayon kay CITY MAYOR JOY BELMONTE.

Hindi nagsasawa ang mga awtoridad sa pagpapaalala sa 12.8 milyon populasyon sa Metro Manila na huwag mag-iwan ng basura kung saan-saan.

Mayroon namang mga basurahan sa paligid na paglalagyan ng mga ito.

Hindi nakapagtataka kung magkuroon man ng baha sapagkat mga tao na rin ang gumagawa nito.

Ang mga basurang itinatapon natin ay bumabalik at nagpapakita sa mga daanan o daluyan ng tubig na nagdudulot ng grabeng pagbaha sa iba't ibang lugar sa Kamaynilaan.

Kailan matututo ang mga Pilipino sa tamang pagtatapon ng basura?



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# Cimatu vows to issue moratorium

By Aldwin Quitasol

**BAGUIO CITY** – Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu committed to fast-track the issuance of an Executive Order (EO) imposing a moratorium on the construction of commercial buildings and tree-cutting in Baguio City.

Cimatu said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) made some recommendations to the proposed moratorium and will make a

follow-through with Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea soon.

"We all know that Baguio City's carrying capacity had been exceeded and the executive order granting a moratorium may be the right key to stop once and for all the congestion problem caused by commercial constructions and residential constructions in hazardous areas," he said.

Cimatu said implementing the

moratorium is a non-issue as there are built-in policies and procedures being applied by the DENR and the local government unit that can readily be applied.

Baguio City Mayor Magalong pushed for the moratorium at the start of his term, citing serious environmental issues already being faced by the city.

The moratorium was proposed to cover a one-year period and include a funding component to enable the city to implement rehabilitative programs particularly on the upgrading and expansion of its sewerage treatment system.

Earlier in October this year, the city government started to lay out the grounds for the possible implementation of EO imposing the moratorium, which was acknowledged by the city administration that the concerned departments should convene as the Implementing Rules and Regulations are being formulated.



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## Grabeng pagbaha sa Cagayan at Isabela; illegal logging buking

**GRABENG** pagbaha ang nararanasan ngayon ng mga lalawigan ng Cagayan at Isabela.

Simula kasi nang pumasok ang mga bagyo sa taong ito ay halos sinalo lahat ng mga Bikolano at Ilokano. Tila galit na galit sa kanila ang kalikasan eh. Kawawa talaga sila...

Ang pinakamasaklap ay itong ber months, lahat ng sama ng panahon ay pumasok kundi man ay lumabas sa mga naturang lalawigan.

Sabi ni Cagayan Governor Manuel Bamba, tatlong linggo nang walang tigil ang buhos ng ulan sa kanilang lalawigan, kahit nakalapas na ng Philippine area of responsibility (PAR) ang bagyo. Resulta: Lubog sa baha, abot hanggang 2nd floor ng kabahayan ang tubig. Kaya wasak lahat ng agricultural products sa lalawigan. Pati mga bahay dapa, napuno ng putik at binarahin ng mga troso!

Oo! TROSO!!! sangkatutak na troso ang bumara, lumutang sa mga ilog ng Cagayan at Isabela pagkahupa ng bagyong Tisoy.

Galit na galit, umuusok ang kukute ni Gov. Mamba sa kanyang nasaksihang ito. Grabe raw kasi ang illegal logging sa kanilang kabundukan, na ang mga nasa likod ay mga politiko din tulad ng mayors at mga pulis na kasabwat ng ilang ahas sa DENR. Mismo!!

Kaya paiimbestigahan aniya ito ng todo. Dapat lang, Gov. Bamba! Birahin mo na. Political will lang ang kailangan dyan, Sir!!!

Nakarating narin ito kay DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu. Kaya isasagawa aniya ang masusing imbestigasyon sa illegal logging. Ehem!!! Baka ningas koton lang yang imbestigasyong sinasabi mo, Sec!

Sa totoo lang, mga pare't mare, napakatagal nang isyu ang illegal logging sa Cagayan at Isabela. Maraming beses nang bumulaga sa mata ng mga Bikolano at Ilokano ang tantam bak na troso sa kanilang bakuran at mga ilog tuwing huhupa ang malawakang pagbaha. Nagkakaroon din namang imbestigasyon, pero alaws namang nangyayari eh... Nagkakaperahan lang. Ehck!

Tama si Gov. Bamba, mga politiko at pulis talaga ang mostly nasa likod ng illegal logging. Op kors kasabwat nila rito ang mga tiwali sa DENR. Yes! Hindi naman magtatagumpay ang illegal kung hindi kasali ang mga awtoridad rito eh. Mismo!

Kaya dapat... i-require din ni Pangulong Rody Duterte sa kanyang binahanap sa itatagalang Chief PNP ang marunong ding pumatay ng mga sangkot sa illegal logging, hindi yung tutok lang sa drug lords at korap. Yes!

Tutal ipinangangalandakan ni Pangulong Dizon ang kanyang pagkamuhi sa katiwalian, ibuhos nya na ito sa kanyang huling higat dalawang taon sa Malakanyang. Ipa-tokh ang nya narin ang illegal loggers at mga protektor nito. Now na!!!



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## Cimatu eyes DENR office in Puerto Galera

**ENVIRONMENT** Secretary Roy Cimatu wants to have a Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR office in Puerto Galera.

Puerto Galera, famous for its dive sites and beaches, is one of the prime tourist destinations in the country.

Rehabilitation efforts are in place in a bid to protect and preserve the place.

In his visit to Puerto Galera last week, Cimatu ordered DENR-MIMAROPA (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan) executive director Henry Adornado to put

up an office in the area to ensure that it is properly managed.

The DENR chief also instructed Adornado to facilitate the transfer of the regional office from Roxas Boulevard in Manila to Calapan City in Oriental Mindoro pursuant to the provisions of Republic Act 10879 that makes the city the regional center for MIMAROPA.

"It will never be easy. But I can already see the strengthened collaboration between the DENR regional task force and the local government unit in saving Puerto Galera," he said.

In commending the sacrifices of his men, Cimatu also emphasized that the government is not only protecting Puerto Galera and themselves but more importantly the next generations to come.

Task Force Puerto Galera was created in February 2018 to spearhead the cleanup of the island and ensure strict implementation of environmental laws, including Republic Act 9275 or the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004, and Presidential Decree 705 or the Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines.

**Joel dela Torre**



HELLO, Bulgarians! Mahalagang ingatan natin ang ating kalikasan, kaya naman nagkaroon ng kolaborasyon ang Clean Air Asia at UN Environment para suportahan ang International Climate Initiative (IKI) ng German Federal Ministry for the Environment at Nature Conservatory and Nuclear Safety (BMU) para mabuo ang electric 2 and 3-wheeler bilang urban transport modes.

Sinusuportahan ng UN Environment ang iba't ibang bansa sa pagbibigay ng mga electric mobile wheelers. Samantala, ang Clean Air Asia naman ay international non-government organization na ang misyon ay makapagbigay ng sariwang hangin at magandang kalikasan sa buong Asya.

Bukod sa Pilipinas, ilang bansa na rin ang tinutulungan ng Clean Air Asia tulad ng Indo-

nesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Sri Lanka at Vietnam. Ang kanilang headquarter ay matatagpuan sa Manila. Philippines at mayroon din silang opisina sa Beijing, China at New Delhi, India.

Kaya naman, nauna na ang Pasig City sa pagpapalaganap ng paraan kung paano makaiwas sa pagsira ng kalikasan at sa mas pinadaling pagtanggap ng ating mga sulat at package. Ang programang E-Mobility ay nakipagtulungan sa PHLPost bilang Green Delivery para magamit sa pagpapadala ng sulat at package. Mata-tanaw na natin sa kalsada ang mga 2-wheeler at 3-wheeler mobile vehicle na gawa ng TAILG.

Kasama sa paglunsad ng 2 & 3-wheeler mobile vehicle sina Pasig City Mayor Vico Sotto; Manager for Operations-NCR Mega Manila Area PHLPost, Ms. Olive Valderama; Head of



### E-MOBILE VEHICLE, GAGAMITIN NA PARA IWAS-AIR POLLUTION

City Transportation and Development Management Office of Pasig City Robert Anthony Siy III; Deputy Director of

Clean Air Asia Glynda Bathan-Baterina at marami pang iba.

Lubos na nagpapasalamat ang TAILG dahil

sa suportang ibinigay ng munisipalidad ng Pasig City. Inaasahan ng TAILG na marami pang makikipagtulungan munisipalidad dito sa ating bansa sa pagpapalaganap ng paraan sa pag-iwas sa pagsira ng kalikasan.

For event invitations, please, email bulgarific@gmail.com or PM us on our Facebook page.

**Got to go! It's so  
Bulgarific!  
xoxo**







# Sangkot sa illegal quarrying - NBI PLANTA NG SEMENTO SINALAKAY

**BULACAN - SINALAKAY** ng mga tauhan ng National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) mula sa Metro Manila at Mines Geosciences Bureau (MGB-3) ang isang planta ng Cemento (Holcim) sa Norzagaray kamakailan.

Kinumpirma ni Elizabeth Apresto ng Bulacan Environment and Natural Resources Office (BENRO) na walang permit mula sa kanilang tanggapan ang MGD Enterprises na pinatatakbo ng isang

alyas Redentor M. Du, na residente ng Lores Executive Homes, Antipolo City.

Nadiskubre rin ng NBI na ginagamit ng kompanya ng MGD ang delivery receipt para mag-supply ng silica sa nasabing cement company.

Nabatid na natukoy ang ilegal na transaksyon nang mahuli ng NBI ang 10 dump truck na may "JMarie" logo, na huln ang Silica, na dadalhin sana at nakapagdala na sa kompanya

ng semento.

Kung saan nakita sa dokumento ang expired delivery receipt na nakasulat sa kompanya ng Holcim Phils Inc. (Cement Plant).

Base naman sa record ng Environment and Management Bureau (EMB-3) hindi rin nabigyan o walang Environment Compliance Certificate (ECC) ang MGD Enterprises kabilang ang Arakk Ventures Corporation, Top Rock (Tuff Rock), Giga RSB, at li-

mang iba pa.

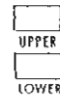
Samantala, ipatatawag umano ni Bulacan Gov. Daniel Fernando ang lahat ng negosyanteng sangkot sa isyu ng illegal quarry operations upang pagpalitanin kung bakit kailangan nilang gumamit ng expired documents.

Kaugnay nito ay kasalukuyang nasa Barangay Poblacion ng stockpile sa bayan ng Norzagaray ang mga nakumpiskang silica, dump truck, backhoe, at iba pang mga heavy equipment na gamit sa ilegal na transaksyon.

**THONY ARCENAL**



*HULI sa akto ng mga tauhan ng National Bureau of Investigation-National Capital Region, ang backhoe habang nagkakarga ng silica sa dump truck sa isang stockpile ng MGD Enterprises.*



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**PAMASKONG HANDOG 2019**-Maluwalhati at matagumpay na naisagawa ng Pasay City Host Lions Club, MJF, sa pamumuno ni President Lydia Bueno, MJF kasama sina District 301-A2 First Vice District Governor Usec. Benny Antiporda; SVDG Ma. Jesusa Antiporda; PPs Steve and Betty Sia; Pamaskong Handog Chairperson Baby de Leon, iba pang mga opisyal at miyembro nito, ang taunang Pamaskong Handog sa may 300 benepisyaryo sa PCHLC Clubhouse, Lions Road, Pasay City.





# Editorial

## Long-term solutions required to resolve national water crisis

**W**E welcome the tough stance that President Rodrigo Duterte has taken against water utilities in the capital region, Manila Water Company Inc. and Maynilad Water Services Inc. Even before the President's televised tirade, we have argued in this space that those firms have failed to deliver on parts of their contractual obligations to consumers. We have also mentioned in previous editorials that the country faces a water crisis. Demanding better service from Maynilad and Manila Water should only be the beginning of a series of measures that need to be taken. And our aim should be on achieving long-term solutions.

Onerous contracts are just part of the problem. Rightly so, they should be reviewed. Alleged graft and other crimes should be investigated. No one should be spared. But, again, further action should be taken.

In fairness to Manila Water and Maynilad, they seem willing to talk with the government. If meetings do happen, there should be transparency. Let us be vigilant against backroom deals. Many regulators have been captured by big business.

Also, we urge the President to hold firm against paying the P11 billion or so awarded to Maynilad and Manila Water by the recent arbitration ruling. Under those utilities' contracts, the government pays for their losses. As our columnist Rigoberto Tiglao pointed out recently, they cannot claim to have lost money when they reported some P13 billion in combined income just in 2018. Between 2009 and 2018, the combined income of Manila Water and Maynilad comes to almost P120 billion. As an aside, the government should hire better lawyers moving forward.

### All points of view

We have to ask ourselves, what if the government wins? Are we guaranteed better service if another firm or the government takes over water distribution? While we have said before that nationalization should be part of a broad set of options that should be studied, we should not forget that corruption and mismanagement in government made it possible for people to accept privatization decades ago. As President Rodrigo Duterte himself has pointed out, corruption remains as a scourge today.

Also, the authorities should be mindful of how the President's actions might be perceived by foreign investors, particularly prospective ones. Remember that there is a contract in place. It may be lopsided, but it is still a legal agreement.

Even if the President gets his way through legal means, what does the government do about the water situation elsewhere in the country? Metro Cebu is contemplating importing water from Bohol to address its shortage. We heard that the situation in Zamboanga City is more dire than that of Metro Manila. And similar shortages are being experienced in Iloilo, Bacolod, Cagayan de Oro and elsewhere across the Philippines.

Returning to Metro Manila, its population has grown 1.78 percent from 2000 to 2015. But during that period, the capacity to supply water to its residents has roughly remained the same.

The popular remedy these days is to build Kaliwa Dam, which we have also argued is fraught with danger to both people, including indigenous communities that will be displaced, and the environment. If built, that dam will reduce the already shrunken Sierra Madre area and ruin the habitat for endangered species, including the Philippine Eagle. To limit our options to either/or (as in, either drinking water or the environment) is lazy thinking. It can also be dangerous and can lead long-term consequences.

For starters, we urge President Duterte to convene a national summit to address the looming water crisis across the country. And as he does so, we hope that he maintains pressure on Maynilad Water and Manila Water to moderate their greed and to provide better service. We are not against private companies making profits. We are against exploiting people, especially for the sake of making money.

Lastly, we should keep in mind that President Duterte will remain in office only until 2022. And given the scale of our water problem, it will take a decade or longer to address this issue. Our point is, the water problem is also bigger than the President. But for now, he can get things started.



## FROM A DISTANCE

CARMEN N. PEDROSA

# Water, water everywhere but not a drop to drink

This comes from "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. The speaker, a sailor on a becalmed ship, is surrounded by salt water that he cannot drink. ...

But it is true with the Philippines today. Foreign countries are surprised when they see pictures of floods, rising water side by side with stories of no water for citizens use.

It did not happen during Duterte's time but from the neglect of other governments before him. It is his misfortune that the problem reached crisis point during his tenure.

The Permanent Court of Arbitration in Singapore ordered the Philippine government to pay Manila Water P7.4 billion (\$145 million) to recoup foregone revenues from rate increases that were rejected by regulators. Maynilad won a separate arbitration last year.

The two firms argued that the rate hikes were necessary to improve utility service coverage and water pressure in homes. The losses were aggravated by not allowing the two groups to raise their rates, they claimed.

As far as the public is concerned we need water efficiently delivered to our homes. That will not happen if the water companies and the government cannot agree to negotiations. A middle ground must be found.

The two firms argued that the rate hikes were necessary to improve utility service coverage and water pressure in homes.

"The arbitration award issued in our favor is for acts in breach of the procedure committed by officials of the previous administration, not the Duterte administration," Manila Water said in a statement, adding that it was willing to cooperate with Duterte's government. Manila Water serves seven million customers through a concession valid until 2037.

Maynilad caters to nine million customers.

The contracts were made during earlier administrations and were based more on politics than on providing public service efficiently. The private sector basically saved Metro Manila from the water crisis, but problems seem to have caught up with them this year.

It is my personal view that public services are better privatized if governments are corrupt and inefficient.

To understand the intricacies of the issue, we go all the way back to the '90s, when the government handled water badly.

In the mid-1990s under the Ramos administration, Metro Manila had rotational water shortages. The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) simply could not keep up with the demand of an overpopulated Metro Manila.

The MWSS was only able to cover less than 70 percent of the entire Metro Manila. Non-revenue water or the volume of water lost due to leakages was very high. Supply was intermittent and lasted less than 16 hours a day.

Then-president Fidel Ramos believed that privatization of the MWSS was the best way to improve services and at the same time ease pressure on the government to handle the daunting task.

With all these problems, Ramos eventually signed Republic Act No. 8041 or the National Water Crisis Act.

The legislation paved the way for the private sector to come in and take over the construction and operations of water utilities.



To me, businesses which seek profits from public service industries is a contradiction. But they do with an optimistic view that it does not have to sell to make money. It makes money because it is a necessity unless someone invents how to make water.

Duterte ordered new water concessions contracts will file charges against 'all those involved' in the concession agreements with Manila Water and Maynilad, claiming the deals are studded with provisions that harm Filipinos.

Through cash analysis, the government will look whether the water concessionaires were over-accumulating profits and losses. Rates would be adjusted upward once every 5 years.

The concession agreements were supposed to end by 2022, but were extended by the Arroyo administration to 2037.

These allegations eventually led to a conflict between the companies and had to seek international arbitration in Singapore.

Manila Water won their case against the government in a case it filed with the arbitration court over the non-implementation of water rate hikes starting in 2015. It's because of this ruling that the Duterte government is being ordered to pay P7.39 billion.

Duterte also ordered the filing of criminal, civil, and administrative charges against "all those involved" in the concession agreements of Manila Water and Maynilad with the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), a government corporation.

The charges would cover the owners of the water concessionaires, their "agents," and even government lawyers who helped craft the deals.

Can Duterte just cancel existing agreements? The Manila Water and Maynilad concession agreements are valid until 2037. They were originally 25-year agreements signed in 1997, during the Fidel Ramos administration.

But in 2009, 13 years before they were set to expire in 2022, the deals were extended for another 15 years.

According to Malacañang, Duterte is empowered to cancel these deals because Manila Water and Maynilad have "abused" their arrangement with government and are treating it as a "money-making venture."

The President, took issue against two of the biggest names in Philippine business - the Ayalas and tycoon Manny V. Pangilinan.

The Ayala Corp. counts Manila Water as its subsidiary while Pangilinan's Metro Pacific Investments Corp. own a controlling stake in Maynilad Water Services.

The Department of Justice has been reviewing the concession agreements, concluding that a dozen of its provisions are onerous and put the consuming public and government at a disadvantage.

The court ruled that the government must pay Manila Water P7.39 billion for losses it incurred when the government stopped the concessionaire from raising water rates starting in 2015, during the administration of Benigno Aquino III.

It is not only the Philippines that resorted to privatization of public services.

"By the end of the 1980s, sales of state enterprises worldwide had reached a total of over \$185 billion - with no signs of a slowdown. In 1990 alone, the world's governments sold off \$25 billion in state-owned enterprises - with continents vying to see who could claim the privatization title. The largest single sale occurred in Britain, where investors paid over \$10 billion for 12 regional electricity companies. New Zealand sold more than 7 state-owned companies, including the government's telecommunications company and printing office, for a price that topped \$3 billion."



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COMMUNICATION  
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**A WARNING**

**WITH CLIMATE DISCONTENT RISING,  
SCIENTISTS WARN OF SOCIAL 'TIPPING POINT'**

MADRID—With young climate activists taking to the streets of Madrid on Friday, the UN climate chief and a leading scientist warned of a growing risk of social unrest as the effects of a warming world worsen inequality and poverty worldwide.

Speaking on the sidelines of a UN climate summit in the Spanish capital, they said governments were so far failing to meet growing public demands for urgent action to halt rising global temperatures and curb the damage as extreme weather intensifies and melting ice pushes up sea-levels.

"It's clear—and this is very painful to recognize—that the political leadership in the world

is lagging behind the sentiments among youth (as well as) the state of science and even what business leadership thinks," said Johan Rockström, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research.

Swedish teenage climate activist Greta Thunberg said the global movement she inspired had raised public awareness "but basically nothing has happened."

Rockström, as part of an international team of scientists, highlighted how the world may be nearing a "social tipping point" on climate change that could bring about rapid and exponential changes in behavior, lifestyles and technologies. —REUTERS



## Second most vulnerable

Typhoon Tisoy left 17 people dead and destroyed over P800 million worth of crops as it roared across Luzon this week. Filipinos are used to such late-season powerful tropical cyclones, but this does not minimize the concern over reports that the Philippines is among the most vulnerable to climate change and extreme weather events.

The latest such study is the Global Climate Risk Index 2020, which was released by Germany-based environmental think tank Germanwatch during the United Nations Climate Change Conference or COP25 in Spanish capital Madrid on Dec. 4.

The study showed that in 2018, the Philippines ranked second only to Japan among countries most affected by extreme weather events. Japan ranked alongside Germany as the hardest hit by heat waves and drought, while the Philippines ranked second among those battered by tropical cyclones.

Japan and Germany are members of the Group of Seven most advanced economies, and can cope better with natural calamities. On the other hand, the Philippines, with its limited resources, must be more innovative in disaster preparedness

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and climate change adaptation.

COP25 is currently discussing measures to assist lower- and middle-income economies particularly in terms of financial and technical resources. The Duterte administration, however, has been cool to receiving foreign aid from some of the biggest members of the global donor community. This stance must be backed up by intensified efforts to make the Philippines more resilient, not only to extreme weather events but also to the numerous natural calamities that hit the country regularly.

Earthquakes and even ordinary typhoons in this country can cause extensive destruction and displace thousands, sometimes permanently. Authorities say approximately 1,700 schools nationwide currently need rebuilding or major repairs due to such disasters, disrupting education. Extensive crop damage undermines food security. Extreme heat damages coral reefs and threatens aquatic resources. Periodic droughts destroy rice harvests.

The impact of extreme weather is widely known in this country. With experts raising the alarm over the extreme vulnerability of the country, complacency is not an option.



# 4 dead in Isabela, Cagayan floods

By RAYMUND CATINDIG

**TUGUEGARAO CITY, Cagayan – Massive flooding in Isabela and Cagayan since Wednesday left four persons dead.**

Police said the body of 63-year-old farmer Hilario Bersamin was recovered in a corn field in Barangay Sto. Tomas in Ilagan City, Isabela yesterday.

Bersamin reportedly drowned while trying to save his belongings from his house, which was submerged in floodwater.

The bodies of two other

victims were recovered in Tumauni on Friday.

In Cagayan, the body of an unidentified victim was recovered along the seashore in Barangay Linao, Aparri.

At least 13,098 persons were displaced by flashfloods in this province.

The Cagayan Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (CDRRMO) said 3,591

families in 15 towns and this city are staying at 117 evacuation centers.

The CDRRMO said 167 barangays remain flooded.

## Landslides

Ricardo Jalad, National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council executive director, said 31 road sections and 29 bridges damaged by floods and landslides in Cagayan and the Cordilleras remained closed to traffic yesterday.

Jalad and local disaster officials conducted an aerial inspection to assess the extent

of the damage.

In Sta. Ana, five houses were buried in a landslide in Barangay Rapuli.

Power has yet to be restored in Sanchez Mira, Sta. Praxedes, Bagao and this city.

Marines and Coast Guard personnel were deployed to conduct search, rescue and retrieval operations in flooded and landslide-hit areas.

Additional military personnel are on standby for deployment in Cagayan Valley.

Edwin Viernes of the National Irrigation Administration denied claims that flashfloods

were due to the release of water from Magat Dam.

Viernes said notices of water release on Tuesday and Friday were aborted after the dam managed to contain the rainfall.

"There are 20 river tributaries of Cagayan River. Magat River is one of them, but it has a gated dam to contain flood flow," he said.

## Cloudy skies

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said the tail-end of a cold front would continue

to affect the eastern section of Northern Luzon.

"Cagayan, Babuyan Islands, Isabela and Apayao will have cloudy skies with scattered rains and thunderstorms due to the tail-end of a cold front," the state weather bureau said.

The Cordilleras, Ilocos, Northern Aurora and the rest of Cagayan Valley will experience cloudy skies with scattered light rains due to the northeast monsoon.

PAGASA said coastal waters in Northern Luzon would be rough. – With Jaime Laude, Rhodina Villanueva