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IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



Boracay rehab efforts bearing fruit

By **CORY MARTINEZ**

STRICTER implementation of environmental laws and regulation in the world's famous island-resort Boracay will maintain its regained status as one of the best islands in the world.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu said the move is part of their continued rehabilitation efforts on the island even as the months of hard work and tireless efforts of the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF) are already paying off.

Cimatu lauded the BIATF efforts as the island once labeled as a "cesspool" bounced back as one of the best islands in the world this year.

"We couldn't be more proud of what Boracay has become after one and a half years of rehabilitation," said Cimatu who also chairs the BIATF.

The Conde Nast Traveler, which is recognized as one of the most distinguished and trusted au-

thorities on lifestyle travel, named Boracay as "the best island in Asia" and one of the 30 best islands in the world for 2019.

Boracay did not make it to the prestigious list last year due to ongoing rehabilitation, after being crowned as the world's best island for two consecutive years in 2016 and 2017.

This year's rundown of the best islands in the world was broken down into six parts: Asia, Australia and the South Pacific, Caribbean and the Atlantic, Europe, North America, and the United States.

Cimatu said the government's efforts to restore Boracay are bearing fruit with the recognition from a global authority like Conde Nast Traveler.

According to Cimatu, the Boracay rehabilitation is now more than 80 percent complete. The BIATF has until May 2020 to finish the rehabilitation, or two years after it was created by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte under Executive Order No. 53 he issued last year.

After one and a half

years of rehabilitation, Cimatu proudly announced that the water quality in Boracay's world-famous white beach has greatly improved with coliform count now in the range of less than 1 most probable number per 100 milliliters (mpn/100ml) to 11.9 mpn/100ml which is way below the standard quality of 100 mpn/100ml for recreational waters.

The task force, he said, is about to complete the demolition of all structures violating the 25+5-meter beach easement rule after tearing down the 10 remaining illegal structures along Bulabog Beach on November 10.

Also last month, the BIATF Rehabilitation Management Group led by its general manager Natividad Bernardino served the notice to vacate to the owner of a commercial viewpoint located at a forestland on Mt. Luho for violating Presidential Decree 705 of the Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines.

The viewpoint was used for pictorials or photo ses-

sions and was reportedly operated by a Chinese national without the necessary permits.

The BIATF noted that Phase 1 of the rehabilitation of 5 out of 9 wetlands on the island is 100 percent complete. These wetlands were adopted by private firms, namely, Energy Development Corp., San Miguel Corp., Aboitiz Group, Boracay Tubi Systems Inc., and JG Summit.

The task force reported that almost 80 percent of all commercial and residential establishments have already complied with the 12-meter road easement rule along the Circumferential Road.

At an allowable 6,405 persons per day, the tourist arrival in Boracay remains within the allowable carrying capacity of 19,215 a day.

So far, 1.74 million tourists have arrived in Boracay this year. This number is 152 percent higher than last year, with Chinese, Koreans and Taiwanese as the top three foreign tourists.



Christmas season produces biggest amount of garbage in a year – Cimatú

By ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatú on Sunday appealed to the public to practice the basics of proper solid waste management that is to reduce, reuse and recycle to minimize the impact of the holiday season on the environment.

"The Christmas season produces the biggest volume of garbage in the country, especially in Metro Manila, where the waste generation baseline target for 2019 had already been surpassed as early as June," Cimatú said.

The DENR chief earlier revealed that the 66,000 cubic meters of waste generated in Metro Manila in the first half of 2019 had already surpassed the annual target of 58,112.31 cubic

meters.

"Because of this, we really need to cut back on our consumption and waste, and get back to basics to make life easier and to help the environment in the process," he added.

Cimatú recommended the use of eco-friendly wrapping papers and gift bags, such as those made from bamboo, rattan, abaca and buri leaves, as these can be reused.

"The best way to reduce wrapping waste is to wrap a gift in something that's part of the gift like a reusable tote bag," he said.

Instead of giving material gifts which can be easily discarded, Cimatú also suggested giving the gift of memory or experience like going to nature parks or visiting an orphanage, home for the elderly or hospice.



Cimatu urges public: Don't be wasteful during X'mas

By Rio N. Araja

ENVIRONMENT Secretary Roy Cimatu on Sunday urged the public to help lessen the impact of the holiday season on the environment by returning to the basics of solid waste management—reduce, reuse and recycle.

While many consider Christmas as the most wonderful time of the year, it is not so for the environment as the holidays are expected to bring in more waste from all the celebrations, Cimatu said.

"The Christmas season produces the biggest volume of garbage in the country, especially in Metro Manila, where the waste generation baseline target for 2019 had already been surpassed as early as June," he said.

"Because of this, we really need to cut back on our consumption and waste, and get back to basics to make life easier and to help the environment in the process," he added.

Earlier, the DENR chief said the National Capital Region has produced over 66,000 cubic meters of wastes in the first half of 2019, surpassing the agency's annual target of 58,112.31 cubic meters.

In this season of giving, Cimatu recommended the use of eco-friendly wrapping papers and gift bags, such as those made from bamboo, rattan, abaca and buri leaves, as these can be reused.

"The best way to reduce wrapping waste is to wrap a gift in something that's part of the gift like a reusable tote bag," he said.

Since many gifts end up lost, broken or forgotten, he suggested giving the gift of memory or experience, like going to nature parks or visiting an orphanage, home for the elderly or hospice.

"Well-thought presents, such as those that a family member actually needs or has always wanted are also more meaningful and don't go to waste," he said.

In hosting gatherings and parties, Cimatu advised people to use washable dinnerware and cutlery instead of paper plates and plastic cups, spoons and forks.



DENR donates seized lumber

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) issued a directive to its Mindanao offices to release confiscated lumber and wood products to the Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) to help earthquake victims rebuild their homes.

Secretary Roy Cimatu issued the directive as a response to the appeal of MinDA chair Emmanuel Piñol, who expressed the urgency to rebuild Padada which was badly hit with the recent earthquakes that rocked the Mindanao region.

"Unlike in the days of old when requests like this would have been done through formal communications, yesterday's lightning-quick response by Secretary Cimatu to an urgent need is reflective of the new culture of governance introduced by President (Rodrigo) Duterte," he said.

Piñol said in a Facebook post on Sunday that the need for lumber and wood products was raised by Mayor Pedro Caminero Jr. of Padada, Davao del Sur during an assessment visit by MinDA officials on Saturday.

He added that the mayor opened up about the building of a temporary market place beside the ruins of the old market.

Piñol said the MinDA team will immediately assess the wood and lumber requirements on other earthquake-affected areas.

The rebuilding program, he said, will also be supported by the Philippine Business Council in Indonesia (PBCI) which generated P1.2 million.

The PBCI's financial support was turned over to MinDA's partner-non government organization – Don Bosco Foundation.

"The money, raised through the help of Philippine Ambassador to Indonesia Leehiong Wee and PBCI official Mark Castro will be used to buy carpentry tools like saw and hammer along with nails which will be distributed to families whose houses were destroyed by the earthquake," Piñol said.



Five Palawan LGUs pledge P2.5M to conserve Mt. Mantalingahan

THE protection and conservation of Mount Mantalingahan Protected Landscape (MMPL) in Palawan province will be getting the much-needed boost from local government units (LGUs).

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said five municipalities in Southern Palawan have pledged a total of P2.5 million for the protection and conservation of what can be considered the largest protected area of the province.

The MMPL is a protected area by virtue of Presidential Proclamation 1815, dated June 23, 2009.

It is included in the tentative list of Unesco World Heritage Sites, and is vying to be inscribed as such for its exceptional biodiversity and endemism. Like all other biodiversity-rich areas, the MMPL faces various threats, including illegal logging, mining and plantation expansion, such as slash-and-burn farming. The enforcement of environmental laws remains a major challenge because of insufficient number of forest-protection officers currently deployed in the area.

The LGUs of Brooke's Point, Quezon, Rizal, Sofronio Española and Bataraza each committed to allot P500,000 from their respective funds to support forest-protection activities, and stricter enforcement of environmental laws in the main protected area and its buffer zone during the 15th meeting of

the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) en banc of MMPL held in Puerto Princesa City on December 16.

The meeting was attended by other members of the PAMB, which include the village chiefs, representatives from the academe, nongovernment groups, the National Commission on Indigenous People, Philippine National Police, Palawan Council for Sustainable Development and other indigenous peoples groups.

The commitment was made by the five LGUs after a biodiversity assessment and monitoring system report highlighted the urgency to step up forest-protection efforts in MMPL, which include procurement of equipment, supplies and materials, and augmentation of monitoring and patrol personnel.

Currently, there are only three park rangers under the Protected Area Management Office protecting the MMPL, which covers a total of 120,457 hectares.

"Ideally, it should be one forest ranger per 500 hectares. For MMPL, we are in need of 240 more rangers to cover the entire area," Protected Area Superintendent Mildred A. Suza explained.

The financial support coming from the LGUs will help address the limited number of forest protectors, as well as the grant of other benefits to boost the morale of forest-protection officers.



1 MILLION TREE IN ONE DAY PROJECT TAGUMPAY

ISABELA - ITINUTURING na isang tagumpay at maayos na nailunsad ang kauna-unahang at makasaysayang "1 Million Trees in One Day Project" ng pamahalaang panlalawigan ng Isabela sa kabundukan ng Sierra Madre sa kahabaan ng Ilagan-Divilacan Road sa Sindom Bayabo, Ilagan City.

Pinangunahan nina Isabela Governor Rodito Albano III at Vice Governor Faustino "Bojie" Dy III, at Ilagan City Mayor, Jose Mari Diaz, ang tree planting activity, kabilang ang iba pang opisyal at mga kawani ng pamahalaang panlalawigan, pamahalaang lunsod ng Ilagan, mga opisyal ng barangay, mga mag-aaral, mga kabataan at iba pang sector ng lalawigan ng Isabela.

Kabilang din sa nakiisa sa aktibidad ang Department of Education (DepEd) Isabela, tree planting activity sa pamamagitan ng pagtanim ng mga guro ng punla ng punong kahoy sa loob ng kanilang mga paaralan.

Maging ang iba't ibang bayan sa Isabela ay nagsagawa ng pagtanim ng mga punla ng

kahoy sa kanilang lugar para makamit ang target na isang milyong tree seedling sa loob ng isang araw.

Inihayag pa ng gobernador na maaaring gawin na ng pamahalaang panlalawigan ang tree planting activity bawat anim na buwan para tuloy-tuloy ang pagtanim ng mga punla ng kahoy sa mga kabundukan sa Isabela.

Aniya, imo-monitor ng Environment and Natural Resources Office (ENRO) ang mga itanim na tree seedlings upang mapangalagaan ang mga ito at madaling lumaki.

Nagpasalamat sina Albano at si Vice Gov. Bonjie Dy, sa lahat ng mga nakiisa na lumahok sa nasabing tree planting project.

IRENE GONZALES



3 mining company dinenggoy mga IP sa Caraga

Pinare-review ni National Commission on Indigenous Peoples regional director Ferdausi Cerna kay NCIP Chairman Allen Caputan ang lahat ng memorandum of agreement (MOA) na pinasok ng 3 mining firm sa mga katutubo sa Caraga Region dahil sa umano'y lantarang paglabag sa Indigenous People's Rights Act (IPRA) at Mining law.

Sa sulat na ipinadala ni Cerna, inisa-isa nito ang umano'y kuwestiyunablemg MOA na pinasok ng Surigao mining firm na Taganito Mining Corp (TMC) na kinatawan ng presidente nitong si Gerard Brimo; Taganito High Pressure Acid Leaching (ore processing) Corp. ni THPAL president Takanori Fujimora at Platinum Group of Metals Corporation.

Ayon kay Cerna, 30 taon ang umiiral na MOA ng TMC at THPAL na lanratang paglabag sa Article 12 ng 1987 Constitution kung saan pinapayagan lamang hanggang

25-taon ang anumang kasunduan sa pagminina dahil lahat ng lupain, katubigan at minerales ay maituturing na 'public domain'.

Sa nakalap ng Caraga regional office, nakitaan din ng iregularidad ang umano'y onerous agreement ang PGMC na nag-o-operate din sa Claver, Surigao del Sur dahil wala itong nakalagay na petsa, walang lagda ni dating NCIP-Caraga regional director Jake Dumagan at hindi rin notaryado.

Ang nasabing mga kasunduan ay binuo noong panahon nang panunugkulan ni Dumagan kung saan inaatasan ang mga mining firm na magbayad sa NCIP ng 10 percent ng kanilang kita o royalty fee para sa mga IPs, habang P2 milyong kada taon naman ang binabayaran ng TMC at THPAL sa NCIP Caraga hanggang sa kabuuan ng agreement o mining project.

Ayon kay Cerna, bukod sa ilegal, unethical at imoral umano ang pagbabayad dahil mandato ng

NCIP na tulungan at iprayoridad ang kapakanan ng mga IP at hindi ang mga mining company.

"To accept and infact the NCIP has been accepting this money n the past, would only create biases in favor of the mining company," sabi ni Cerna.

May mga illegal insertions din umano sa MOA ng mga IP beneficiary na mga pangalang Datu Renante Boklas at Datu Alicia Patac na hindi kasama sa inaprubahang NCIP en banc resolution No.324 na naglalaman ng mga pangalan ng mga lehitimong IP beneficiary.

Isa pa umanong violation ay ang hindi pagtaas ng 'royalty fee' para sa mga IP subalit simula nang mag-operate noong 2008 ang THPAL at TMC ay hindi pa ito nagtatas alinsu-nod sa nilalaman ng MOA.

Umaasa si Cerna na agad na tutuguan ni NCIP chairman Capuyan ang kanyang liham para malinawan ang mga isyu. **(Ben Serrano)**

BACKED BY COUNCIL RESOLUTION

SAGADA FOLK WARNING: WE WON'T SELL LAND TO OUTSIDERS

BAGUIO CITY—Sagada land is for Sagada folk.

This was the assertion of a municipal council resolution urging Mayor James Pooten to stop the sale or transfer to developers of properties in Sagada, particularly vast tracts of land near natural landmarks.

Backed by a signature petition launched by residents, Resolution No. 203-2019 stipulates that Sagada has “established cultural rules

and procedures in the sale of real properties,” which prohibits land transfers to outsiders or nonindigenous Sagada residents without the consent of relatives, clan members, adjacent owners and the community as a whole.

“The very purpose of this cultural practice is to strictly maintain the identity of Sagada as a village and avoid outside interference that in a way adulterates the simple, culture-based,

socially principled life system of the community,” reads the resolution that was passed on Dec. 2.

Ancestral land

The council also questioned an alleged fraudulent land deal in Barangay Kanipawan within the ancestral land claim of the central and eastern villages, as well as the Sagada ancestral domain. All properties within the domain are communal.

That lot has been purchased by a developer, according to a community statement that was drafted by Sagada residents. “This is our patrimony and must remain so for generations,” it says.

“We have a long historical tradition of fighting for our communal and ancestral lands,” the statement stressed.

Sagada is considered the smallest town in Mountain

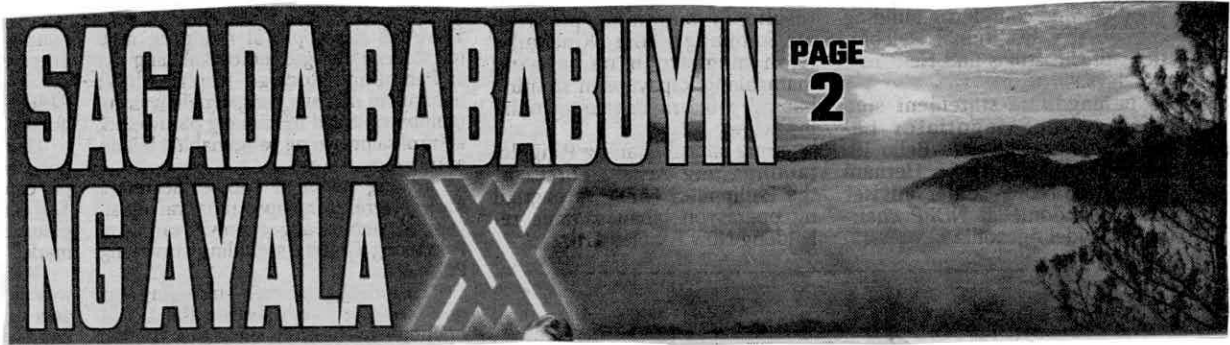
Province, spanning 10.97 hectares of land, but it is “blessed with landscapes that have attracted many tourists locally and internationally,” the community statement says.

Residents have resolved to support the kind of tourism that will highlight the community’s “natural heritage, which Kabunyan (the creator) has bestowed on them,” it says.

Tourism has opened op-

portunities for livelihood, residents acknowledged, citing the benefits derived by tour guides and the attention given to their weaving industry, orchards and coffee production.

However, Sagada’s economic progress may have drawn the interest of businessmen and celebrities who have expressed interest in purchasing or leasing land in Sagada, the statement says. —KIMBERLIE QUITASOL INQ



Sagada bababuyin ng Ayala

INALMAHAN ng mga residente ng Sagada sa Mountain Province ang plano ng Ayala Corp. na magtayo ng mga proyekto para maganda ang mga tourist spot.

Ayon kay Mayor James Poten, plano ng Ayala group na magtayo ng gusali sa 20 ektaryang private property sa Batalaw.

Ang proyekto ay labag umano sa kalakaran ng bentahan ng lupa sa Sagada. Ang mga lupa ay maibebenta lang sa miyembro ng pamilya at kamag-anak at hindi sa taga-labas o yang hindi naninirahan sa Sagada.

"We firmly oppose the entry of Ayala or anybody

who would dispossess us of our ancestral heritage. This is our patrimony and must remain so for generations, this is a statement upholding Sagada customary laws that our land is not for sale, lease, and mortgage, patenting to outside private and corporate entities." diin ng mga residente sa kanilang petisyon.

Ilang mayayamang negosyante at oligarko at mga showbiz personality na ang nagtangkang bumili o magrenta ng kanilang lupain pero tinutulan nila ito.

"We have denied entry of Cellophile, Philcardon, big mining corporate interests. Now once more

dark clouds hover above community, posting danger not only to local businesses but to Sagada's overall social governance by giving way to outside moneyed interests while to eventually pushing local political leaders to margins," ayon pa sa petisyon.

Ang Sagada ang may pinakamaliit na land area sa hanay ng sampung munisipalidad na bumubuo ng Mountain Province. Pero kahit 10,910 ektarya lang ang kabuuan ng kanilang lupain, pinagpala naman ito ng nakamamanghang landscape kaya dinarayo ng mga turista.

Gumawa na rin ng hakbang ang mga residente na hindi mababoy ang lugar dahil sa pagdagsa ng mga turista.

Wala pang pahayag ang Ayala Corp. sa posisyon ng mga residente ng Sagada.



SPECIAL REPORT

The water privatization contracts — respecting the rule of law

By IRIS GONZALES

In a sprawling house in a posh and exclusive village in Metro Manila one recent cold December night, some tycoons gathered to discuss the biggest issue to knock out the business environment under the Duterte administration — the move to cancel the decision extending the existing 1997 water privatization contracts, touted as the world's largest water privatization deal.

Servings of sumptuous food and the finest drinks were endless — and so were the expressions of frustration. For sure, the powerful tycoons — or oligarchs as Duterte likes to call them — aren't happy. It's not surprising, of course. Nothing could irk tycoons more than threats to their businesses.

The rule of law

Is President Duterte within the bounds of the law with his plan to cancel the extended contracts?

The STAR gathered insights from experts in different fields to look into the legal and economic implications of the Duterte administration's moves.

'A mortal sin'

One of the best legal minds in the Philippines, told The STAR that President Duterte is committing a "mortal sin" with his move to rescind the 15-year extension of water concession deals.

The existing 1997 concession contracts will expire in 2022. They were supposed to be extended to 2037.

Regulator Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), acting on Duterte's orders, had revoked the decision extending the water contracts.

"The government cannot just cancel a contract without filing a case in court," said the legal luminary who declined to be named for now because he would also be publishing his position on the issue in early 2020.

Tough stance

Amid the water supply shortage that has been affecting Metro Manila, President Duterte has taken a tough stance against the country's water concessionaires — east zone's Ayala-led Manila Water and west zone provider Maynilad Water Services Inc., the company led by tycoon Manuel V. Pangilinan and the Consunji Group's DMCI Holdings Inc.

The 1997 contract was signed during the administration of Fidel Ramos, while the extension was granted by former president Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

Last month, the Singapore arbitral tribunal ordered the government to pay Manila Water P7.4 billion, and Maynilad P3.4 billion in indemnification supposedly for lost revenue from an unenforced rate hike.

Duterte said he would not honor the Singapore ruling and also moved to cancel the extension of the contract.

But the legal source said the proper way to do it is for the Office of the Solicitor General to file a case seeking to void the decision extending the contract.

Cancelling it outright is simply illegal, said the source. "There should be due process," the source added.

Turn to B9

The water... From B7

Turning off investors

The implications of Duterte's move will also be far reaching.

"Who will now invest in the country? No investor will now invest in the Philippines because contracts are not honored by the government," said the source.

Duterte's move comes at a time when the government is trying to attract investors for its much touted Build Build Build infrastructure program.

"The BBB will be dead," the source added.

Making investors jittery

Indeed, esteemed economist Raul Fabella said investors have become jittery over Duterte's actions.

"In the last few weeks after the Singapore arbitral court ruling awarding P11 billion to the concessionaires Manila Water and Maynilad, the investment environment has just plunged like a brick. Before the ruling, the government implicitly accepted the legitimacy of the Singapore arbitral court and had the ruling been favorable, the same government would have hailed it as fair and based on the rule-of-law," Fabella said in his paper Venezuela East A-borning.

But Fabella said that when the government lost in the Singapore tribunal, it suddenly stopped recognizing the legitimacy of the arbitral court.

"Now the government rhetoric is that the arbitral court is captured by the cabal of capitalists that include Metro-Pacific Group and the Ayala Group," Fabella said.

But Fabella reminds the Duterte administration that even the Supreme Court recognized the Singapore tribunal in 2015 on the PIATCO case.

"Lest we forget, our own Supreme Court decided in 2015 with finality that the Philippine government pay PIATCO P24 billion (as of March 2016) for unlawful expropriation," Fabella said.

Sanctity of contracts

"The concession contract that has served Metro Manilans well for two decades is now onerous and disadvantageous to the Filipino people. Onerous and disadvantageous, but only on the President's say-so! And the same say-so has become the supine Department of Justice's and the Department of Finance's marching order. The sanctity of the contract is onerous to the government? Onerous to violators yes and it better be or there is no contract," he added.

No sweetheart deals

Romeo Bernardo, finance undersecretary during the Cory Aquino and Fidel Ramos administrations, also maintained that the original 1997 contracts weren't "sweetheart deals" and reviewed by many agencies and individuals in both the government and the private sectors.



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"The concessionaires were asked to bid on this contract competitively in both 1996 (there were four highly qualified consortia involving the best names locally, and the leading global water companies which bid) and then again in 2007 when the original west zone concessionaire, the Benpres-Lyonnaise des Eaux consortium, went bankrupt and the contract for Maynilad had to be re-bid. The fact that 50 percent of the original proponents failed is the best demonstration that there was absolutely no guarantee of returns, no sweetheart deal as contended," Bernardo said in a paper sent to **The STAR**.

Bernardo also asserted that the extension of the original contract is allowed under the concession agreement and by law.

"This has been the subject of analysis and review in government for over a year in 2008 to 2009: at MWSS all the way to the board; by the Department of Finance under former secretary Margarito Teves, assisted by then undersecretary Jeremiah Paul and director Soledad Cruz; by the Department of Justice under then secretary Raul Gonzales and government corporate counsel Al Agra. It was also presented to the full Cabinet and went through public consultations before final approval by former president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo," Bernardo said.

He said the rationale for the extension was compelling at the time.

There were new waste water requirements set by the Clean Water Act and later by Supreme Court mandamus requiring

100 percent or full sewerage coverage for the concessions, and thus more investments for these were needed.

Furthermore, he said the tariff rate impacts had to be mitigated.

"By extending the contract through 2037, there is a longer period of recovery of these long life investments, and thus lower annual tariff adjustments," Bernardo said.

Disadvantageous

On the original 1997 contract, the Department of Justice has reported that these agreements contained provisions disadvantageous to the government and the public.

No gov't interference

One particular provision in the original contract deemed onerous is the "prohibition against government interference in rate-setting, and the provision on indemnity for possible losses in the event of such government interference," Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra.

"Due to these twin provisions, the government was ordered by the Singapore arbitration court to pay Maynilad about P3.6 billion and, recently, Manila Water, P7.4 billion as compensation for losses or damages," the Justice Secretary said.

Furthermore, he said the extension of the contracts to 2037 is irregular, considering that the extension was granted 12 to 13 years before the expiration of the original 25-year agreement.

'The original sin'

The legal luminary mentioned in the early part of this piece said the "no government interference" provision is indeed wrong.

"That's the original sin," said the source.

He said it was a provision that violated the Philippine Constitution, particularly Article VII Section 17 which states that "The President shall have control of all the executive departments, bureaus, and offices. He shall ensure that the laws be faithfully executed."

The legal source said the MWSS is counted as one such office.

Furthermore, the source added the government should have created a quasi-judicial body similar to the Energy Regulatory Commission to regulate the water sector. The MWSS is not a quasi-judicial body, the source said.

However, the source said the government could easily remedy the no interference provision in accordance with due process as what succeeding administrations should have done.

FVR speaks

Former president Fidel V. Ramos, the brains behind the privatization of water services in the country, has also expressed concern over the Duterte administration's issues against the water concession contracts.

He also believes that the contract gave government enough control over tariffs.

In a Dec. 4 letter to President Duterte, Ramos essentially said the government should honor the MWSS Concession contract.

"The MWSS Concession Agreement, as with all projects and agreements entered into by government during my administration was anchored on complete staff work, review and consultation with various government agencies, organizations and the concerned public, which resulted in complete transparency all the while negotiating terms most favorable to government," Ramos said.

The former president added that the private sector mobilized funding from both foreign and local sources depending on the word of the Philippine government that the essential conditions of adherence to the sanctity of contracts and rule of law would be observed.

"These are the pillars that hold together any agreement, be it between governments and/or the government and the private sector. Our word must be our bond," said the former president.

Duterte, experts said, is clearly setting a dangerous precedent in its move not to honor the sanctity of government contracts.

It's a move that could give him his wish - "to destroy the oligarchs."

But the collateral damage is huge, experts said, because it could also very well destroy the country's investment environment.



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PARTICIPANTS at the "Training the Trainers" segment of the gender workshop led by the CBD and ACB. ACB PHOTO

ASEAN SHARPENS FOCUS ON GENDER IN BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

FACTORING in gender roles and relations in policy-making is crucial in the success of biodiversity conservation efforts, experts in a regional training workshop conducted in Manila said.

Among the common insights that emerged from the workshop is the role of the special knowledge, skills and experience of women in effective conservation programs.

In fishing communities, for example, women, who fish and gather shells in mangrove areas, would have different inputs from men, who usually fish at far-off coral reefs.

The five-day regional workshop from December 9 to 13 was organized by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Asean Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) as part of their efforts to build a network of gender practitioners in biodiversity.

With representatives from Asean member-states, and government and nongovernment organizations as participants, the workshop sought to deepen understanding and build capacity among policy-makers and stakeholders in addressing gender and biodiversity issues in the Asean region.

Led by Tanya McGregor of the Secretariat of the CBD and CBD Gender Consultant Soma Chakrabarti Fezzardi, the workshop had a "Training the Trainers" in gender mainstreaming, followed by a rollout exercise where the new trainers facilitated a learning session attended by staff members of the ACB and its country partners.

The workshop also sought to gather inputs to ensure the gender responsiveness of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, which charts the long-term direction of biodiversity conservation and takes the vision of the CBD on "Living in Harmony with Nature" by 2050.

In her remarks, ACB Executive Director Theresa Mundita Lim said women are important partners in halting biodiversity loss.

"The CBD also recognizes the vital role that women play in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and affirms the need for the full participation of women at all levels of policy-making and implementation for biodiversity conservation," Lim said, citing from the CBD's preamble.

The CBD is a global agreement signed by 196 parties, including all Asean member-states, with main goals, including biodiversity conservation, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources.

Lim said the gender gaps in the region must be considered, citing the Asean Economic Community report that notes that women's share of employment in agriculture vary from 28 percent to a high 78 percent among the Asean member-states, but their work is usually unpaid and unaccounted for in the value chain, especially in agriculture.

"The gaps are still overwhelming for women. Women are usually the one left behind," Fezzardi, who facilitated the training of trainers, noted.

She added this is why it is important to include a gender lens in looking at biodiversity issues, and ensuring women's voices are included in decision-making.

Fezzardi cited situations in the field where stakeholders are consulted. "We simply sit with the men, women and children, and got each of their visions. In the end, mobilizing a man's potential, a woman's potential, and a child's potential, is good for the entire family and the community," she said.

"Ideally, there is empowering participation where women and men have voice and influence," Fezzardi said.

Lim particularly noted improvements in women's participation in the Asean region.

She said in Indonesia, some women have organized themselves in informal groups to improve their credit access for their farming. In Myanmar, informal linkages among women farmers, likewise, exist.

"In some Asean member-states, like Thailand, many women farmers have the sole or shared decision-making power with their husbands," she said.

A pilot exercise in the region, the training workshop tackled topics, such as gender and biodiversity concepts, gender analysis and gender mainstreaming, relevant international policy commitments and programming practicalities, including gender-responsive planning.

"As we look carefully at biodiversity plans, policies, and program in our organizations with a gender lens, and as we practice and enhance our capacities in gender analysis, we can have more gender-responsive and, in turn, more powerful and effective biodiversity conservation initiatives," Lim said.



WORLD VIEW

BJORN LOMBORG

Empty gestures on climate change

Malmö—Switch to energy-efficient light bulbs, wash your clothes in cold water, eat less meat, recycle more and buy an electric car: we are being bombarded with instructions from climate campaigners, environmentalists and the media about everyday steps we all must take to tackle climate change. Unfortunately, these appeals trivialize the challenge of global warming and divert our attention from the huge technological and policy changes that are needed to combat it.

For example, British nature-documentary presenter and environmental campaigner David Attenborough, when asked what he as an individual would do to fight climate change, promised to unplug his phone charger when it was not in use. Attenborough's heart is no doubt in the right place, but even if he consistently unplugs his charger for a year, the resulting reduction in carbon-dioxide emissions will be equivalent to less than one-half of one-thousandth of the average person's annual CO₂ emissions in the United Kingdom.

Attenborough is far from alone in believing that small gestures can have a meaningful impact on the climate. In fact, even much larger-sounding commitments deliver only limited reductions in CO₂ emissions. For example, environmental activists emphasize the need to give up eating meat and driving fossil-fuel-powered cars.

A systematic peer-reviewed study has shown that a vegetarian diet reduces individual CO₂ emissions by the equivalent of 540 kilograms—or just 4.3 percent of the emissions of the average inhabitant of a developed country. Furthermore, there is a "rebound effect," as money saved on cheaper vegetarian food is spent on goods and services that cause additional greenhouse-gas emissions. Once we account for this, going entirely vegetarian reduces a person's total emissions by only 2 percent.

Likewise, electric cars are branded as environmentally friendly, but generating the electricity they require almost always involves burning fossil fuels. Moreover, producing energy-intensive batteries for these cars invariably generates significant CO₂ emissions. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), an electric car with a range of 400 kilometers has a huge carbon deficit when it hits the road, and will start saving emissions only after being driven 60,000 kilometers. Despite subsidies of about \$10,000 per car, battery-powered electric cars represent less than one-third of 1 percent of the world's 1 billion vehicles. The IEA estimates that with sustained political pressure and subsidies, electric cars could account for 15 percent of the much larger global fleet in 2040, but notes that this increase in share will reduce global CO₂ emissions by just 1 percent. As IEA executive director Fatih Birol has said, "If you think you can save the climate with electric cars, you're completely wrong."

Individual actions to tackle climate change, even when added together, achieve so little because cheap and reliable energy underpins human prosperity. Fossil fuels currently meet 81 percent of our global energy needs. And even if every promised climate policy in the 2015 Paris climate agreement is achieved by 2040, they will still deliver 74 percent of the total.

We already spend \$129 billion per year subsidizing solar and wind energy to try to entice more people to use today's inefficient technology, yet these sources meet just 1.1 percent of our global energy needs. The IEA estimates that by 2040—after we have spent a whopping \$3.5 trillion on additional subsidies—solar and wind will still meet less than 5 percent of our needs.

That's pitiful. Significantly cutting CO₂ emissions without reducing economic growth will require far more than individual actions. It is absurd for middle-class citizens in advanced economies to tell themselves that eating less steak or commuting in a Toyota Prius will rein in rising temperatures. To tackle global warming, we must make collective changes on an unprecedented scale.

By all means, anyone who wants to go vegetarian or buy an electric car should do so, for sound reasons such as killing fewer animals or reducing household energy bills. But such decisions will not solve the problem of global warming.

The one individual action that citizens could take that would make a difference would be to demand a vast increase in spending on green-energy research and development, so that these energy sources eventually become cheap enough to outcompete fossil fuels. That is the real way to help fight climate change. *Project Syndicate*

Bjorn Lomborg, a visiting professor at the Copenhagen Business School, is director of the Copenhagen Consensus Center.



EDITORIAL

Bolder climate action

VARIOUS quarters concede that a key to addressing the worsening problem of climate change, which is brought about by society's continued addiction to fossil fuels, is emissions avoidance.

In fact, emissions avoidance is now a serious option for climate mitigation strategy instead of just the constraining emissions reduction, according to House Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda.

Legarda called for bolder climate action amid disappointing outcome of the 25th Session of the Conference of Parties (COP25) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

COP25 failed to conclude key matters and adopt critical decisions on financing for developing countries, loss and damage, and the rules on carbon markets, said Legarda, a certified environmentalist.

Based on the outcomes of the summit, it appears that most of the developed countries do not see the urgency of taking action now to keep to the 1.5 degrees target of the Paris Agreement.

But the Philippine Delegation to COP25 should be commended for asserting the rights of developing nations to development in terms of emission avoidance and access to long-term climate finance.

The Legarda-headed delegation championed the continued consideration of the long-term finance needs of developing nations across the globe.

Note that although the Philippines contributes only 0.3% -- one-third of one percent -- to the total global carbon emissions, it has been a vocal champion for the world's most vulnerable countries.

People throughout the world must act now -- and fast. This, if we want to break society's continued addiction to expensive fossil fuels, which is being perpetuated by governments and industry.

Without doubt, the worsening of the problem of climate change is causing great concern among health and other concerned government authorities not only in the Philippines but elsewhere.



TITLE:

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DATE

Republika ng Pilipinas
Kagawaran ng Kapaligiran at Likas Yaman
PAMBANSANG PUNONG REHIYON
National Ecology Center, East Avenue, Diliman, Lungsod ng Quezon

PAGBEBENTA NG PAMPUBLIKONG LUPA

Ang pabatid na ito ay ipinagkaloob bilang patunay na ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources-National Capital Region, Patents and Deeds Section, alinsunod sa Department Administrative Order No. 38, 19 April 1990, ay magkakaroon ng bilhan sa DENR-NCR, National Ecology Center, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City, sa pamamagitan ng isang sealed bidding, na makakapagbigay ng pinakamataas na halaga sa ika-10 ng umaga ng _____ ng lupang matatagpuan sa Barangay Western Bicutan (Pnagsama), Taguig City Inilarawan ng mga sumusunod:

BILANG NG APLIKASYON	PANGALAN NG APLIKANTE	BILANG NG LOTE/PLANO	SUKAT NG LOTE SA METRO KUWADRADO	HALAGA NG LUPA KADA METRO KUWADRADO	KABUANG HALAGA NG LUPA	KABUANG HALAGA NG MGA ISTRUKTURA
IGPSA No. 007607-1994	TRINIDAD C. CARMONA	Lot 8, Block 13 Psd-00-036894	60 sq.m.	Php140.00	Php 8,400.00	Php 300,000.00

Ang mga bid ay dapat na selyado at dapat isumite sa nasabing Dibisyon, mismo o bago sa itinalagang oras at petsa sa itaas at minarkahan na "Bid for Land Described in IGPSA No. 007607-1994". Ang mga bid sa pagbili ay dapat isumite sa pamamagitan ng pera, money order, treasury warrant, sertipikadong tseke, cashier's check o manager's check na nagkakahalaga ng humigit kumulang sa sampung porsiyento (10%) ng isinumiteng turing. Kung ang bumibili ay nais bawin ang kanilang dinepositong halaga bilang alok sa pagbili, ngunit natukoy na ang pinakamataas na bidder, ang katumbas na deposito ay makukumpiska pabor sa pamahalaan. Ang mga alok sa pagbili ay hindi dapat bababa sa kabuuang halaga ng nasabing lupa. Ang pamahalaan ay may karapatang tanggihan ang isa o lahat ng alok sa pagbili kung kinakailangan.

Lungsod ng Quezon, Republika ng Pilipinas

ATTY. ALVIN JOSEPH G. CONSTANTINO
Chief, Licensed Patents and Deeds Division

PT - Nov. 18, 25, Dec. 2, 9, 16 & 23, 2019

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National Ecology Center, East Avenue, Diliman, Lungsod ng Quezon

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BILANG NG APLIKASYON	PANGALAN NG APLIKANTE	BILANG NG LOTE/PLANO	SUKAT NG LOTE SA METRO KUWADRADO	HALAGA NG LUPA KADA METRO KUWADRADO	KABUANG HALAGA NG LUPA	KABUANG HALAGA NG MGA ISTRUKTURA
IGPSA No. 007607-2087	JOSIEMA L. FRAYCO	Lot 8, Block 2 Psd-00-036894	116.90 sq.m.	Php140.00	Php 16,366.00	Php 3,800,000.00

Ang mga bid ay dapat na selyado at dapat isumite sa nasabing Dibisyon, mismo o bago sa itinalagang oras at petsa sa itaas at minarkahan na "Bid for Land Described in MSA/IGPSA No. 007607-2087". Ang mga bid sa pagbili ay dapat isumite sa pamamagitan ng pera, money order, treasury warrant, sertipikadong tseke, cashier's check o manager's check na nagkakahalaga ng humigit kumulang sa sampung porsiyento (10%) ng isinumiteng turing. Kung ang bumibili ay nais bawin ang kanilang dinepositong halaga bilang alok sa pagbili, ngunit natukoy na ang pinakamataas na bidder, ang katumbas na deposito ay makukumpiska pabor sa pamahalaan. Ang mga alok sa pagbili ay hindi dapat bababa sa kabuuang halaga ng nasabing lupa. Ang pamahalaan ay may karapatang tanggihan ang isa o lahat ng alok sa pagbili kung kinakailangan.

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BILANG NG APLIKASYON	PANGALAN NG APLIKANTE	BILANG NG LOTE/PLANO	SUKAT NG LOTE SA METRO KUWADRADO	HALAGA NG LUPA KADA METRO KUWADRADO	KABUANG HALAGA NG LUPA	KABUANG HALAGA NG MGA ISTRUKTURA
IGPSA No. 007607-870	VERMINA D. MCKENNA	Lot 16, Block 1 Psd-00-036894	84 sq.m.	Php140.00	Php 11,760.00	Php 200,000.00

Ang mga bid ay dapat na selyado at dapat isumite sa nasabing Dibisyon, mismo o bago sa itinalagang oras at petsa sa itaas at minarkahan na "Bid for Land Described in MSA/IGPSA No. 007607-870". Ang mga bid sa pagbili ay dapat isumite sa pamamagitan ng pera, money order, treasury warrant, sertipikadong tseke, cashier's check o manager's check na nagkakahalaga ng humigit kumulang sa sampung porsiyento (10%) ng isinumiteng turing. Kung ang bumibili ay nais bawin ang kanilang dinepositong halaga bilang alok sa pagbili, ngunit natukoy na ang pinakamataas na bidder, ang katumbas na deposito ay makukumpiska pabor sa pamahalaan. Ang mga alok sa pagbili ay hindi dapat bababa sa kabuuang halaga ng nasabing lupa. Ang pamahalaan ay may karapatang tanggihan ang isa o lahat ng alok sa pagbili kung kinakailangan.

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National Ecology Center, East Avenue, Diliman, Lungsod ng Quezon

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BILANG NG APLIKASYON	PANGALAN NG APLIKANTE	BILANG NG LOTE/PLANO	SUKAT NG LOTE SA METRO KUWADRADO	HALAGA NG LUPA KADA METRO KUWADRADO	KABUANG HALAGA NG LUPA	KABUANG HALAGA NG MGA ISTRUKTURA
IGPSA No. 007607-1931	EDUARDO J. EROSIDO	Lot 23, Block 22 Psd-00-036894	60 sq.m.	Php140.00	Php 8,400.00	Php 200,000.00

Ang mga bid ay dapat na selyado at dapat isumite sa nasabing Dibisyon, mismo o bago sa itinalagang oras at petsa sa itaas at minarkahan na "Bid for Land Described in MSA/IGPSA No. 007607-1931". Ang mga bid sa pagbili ay dapat isumite sa pamamagitan ng pera, money order, treasury warrant, sertipikadong tseke, cashier's check o manager's check na nagkakahalaga ng humigit kumulang sa sampung porsiyento (10%) ng isinumiteng turing. Kung ang bumibili ay nais bawin ang kanilang dinepositong halaga bilang alok sa pagbili, ngunit natukoy na ang pinakamataas na bidder, ang katumbas na deposito ay makukumpiska pabor sa pamahalaan. Ang mga alok sa pagbili ay hindi dapat bababa sa kabuuang halaga ng nasabing lupa. Ang pamahalaan ay may karapatang tanggihan ang isa o lahat ng alok sa pagbili kung kinakailangan.

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BILANG NG APLIKASYON	PANGALAN NG APLIKANTE	BILANG NG LOTE/PLANO	SUKAT NG LOTE SA METRO KUWADRADO	HALAGA NG LUPA KADA METRO KUWADRADO	KABUANG HALAGA NG LUPA	KABUANG HALAGA NG MGA ISTRUKTURA
IGPSA No. 007607-2049	ANALYN C. LANTICAN	Lot 13, Block 10 Psd-00-036894	60 sq.m.	Php140.00	Php 8,400.00	Php 80,000.00

Ang mga bid ay dapat na selyado at dapat isumite sa nasabing Dibisyon, mismo o bago sa itinalagang oras at petsa sa itaas at minarkahan na "Bid for Land Described in MSA/IGPSA No. 007607-2049". Ang mga bid sa pagbili ay dapat isumite sa pamamagitan ng pera, money order, treasury warrant, sertipikadong tseke, cashier's check o manager's check na nagkakahalaga ng humigit kumulang sa sampung porsiyento (10%) ng isinumiteng turing. Kung ang bumibili ay nais bawin ang kanilang dinepositong halaga bilang alok sa pagbili, ngunit natukoy na ang pinakamataas na bidder, ang katumbas na deposito ay makukumpiska pabor sa pamahalaan. Ang mga alok sa pagbili ay hindi dapat bababa sa kabuuang halaga ng nasabing lupa. Ang pamahalaan ay may karapatang tanggihan ang isa o lahat ng alok sa pagbili kung kinakailangan.

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PT - Nov. 18, 25, Dec. 2, 9, 16 & 23, 2019



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION
National Ecology Center East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

SALE OF PUBLIC LANDS

Notice is hereby given that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, National Capital Region, Patents and Deeds Section, in pursuance to Administrative Order No. 38 dated 19 April 1990, will sell at *DENR-NCR, Licenses, Patents and Deeds Division, National Ecology Center, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City*, through **sealed bidding** to the highest bidder at 10:00 A.M. on **24 MAR 2020**, the tract of land situated in **Brgy. Western Bicutan (Pignagsama), Taguig City** which are specifically described below to wit:

APPLICATION NUMBER	NAME OF APPLICANT	LOT NO./BLK NO./PLAN NO.	AREA IN SQ.M	APPRAISED VALUED PER SQ.M	TOTAL VALUE OF LAND	TOTAL VALUE OF IMPROVEMENT
IGPSA NO. 007607-2049	ANALYN C. LANTICAN	Lot 13, Block 10, Psd-00-036894	60 sq.m.	P140.00	P8,400.00	P80,000.00

All bids must be sealed and submitted to the above-mentioned Division on or before the hour and date stated above and plainly marked "Bid for Land Described in MSA/SA/IGPSA No. 007607-2049" Bids must be accompanied with cash, money order, treasury warrant, certified check, cashier's check or manager's check for a sum equivalent to 10% of the bid. Then a bid is withdrawn after the highest bidder is determined, the corresponding deposit therefore shall be forfeited to the government. No bid shall be less than the appraised value of the land. The right is reserved to reject any or all bids.

Quezon City, Philippines _____
ATTY. ALVIN JOSEPH G. CONSTANTINO
OIC, Licenses, Patents and Deeds Division

PJ - Nov. 18, 25 Dec. 2, 9, 16 and 23, 2019

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION
National Ecology Center East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

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IGPSA NO. 007607-1931	EDUARDO J. EROSIDO	Lot 23, Block 22 Psd-00-036894	60 sq.m.	Php140.00	Php 8,400.00	Php 200,000.00

All bids must be sealed and submitted to the above-mentioned Division on or before the hour and date stated above and plainly marked "Bid for Land Described in MSA/SA/IGPSA No. 007607-1931" Bids must be accompanied with cash, money order, treasury warrant, certified check, cashier's check or manager's check for a sum equivalent to 10% of the bid. Then a bid is withdrawn after the highest bidder is determined, the corresponding deposit therefore shall be forfeited to the government. No bid shall be less than the appraised value of the land. The right is reserved to reject any or all bids.

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IGPSA NO. 007607-1994	TRINIDAD C. CARMONA	Lot 28/ Blk.13 Psd-00-036894	60 sq.m.	Php140.00	Php 8,400.00	Php 300,000.00

All bids must be sealed and submitted to the above-mentioned Division on or before the hour and date stated above and plainly marked "Bid for Land Described in MSA/SA/IGPSA No. 007607-1994" Bids must be accompanied with cash, money order, treasury warrant, certified check, cashier's check or manager's check for a sum equivalent to 10% of the bid. Then a bid is withdrawn after the highest bidder is determined, the corresponding deposit therefore shall be forfeited to the government. No bid shall be less than the appraised value of the land. The right is reserved to reject any or all bids.

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