

DATE :

12 AUG 2019

DAY :

Monday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



DAVAO:
NABUNTURAN,
COMPOSTELA
VALLEY

Naboc River dredging to start October

DREDGING
OF the Naboc
River, which is
contaminated
with mercury
and cyanide
due to mining
activities in
Mt. Diwalawal,
is targeted to
start by Octo-
ber as part of
the ongoing
rehabilita-
tion program.



MONKAYO MAYOR RAMIL LAO GENTUGAYA

THIS PHOTO posted March 22 shows, according to Compostela Valley Governor Jayvee Tyrone L. Uy, "efforts to clean up Naboc River is bearing fruit." The Department of Environment and Natural Resources, together with the provincial government and the Monkayo municipal government have been working since 2017 on the relocation of mining plants that have been polluting the river.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Davao (DENR-11) Regional Executive Director Ruth M. Tawantawan, in a statement Friday, said the "dredging activity will start on October this year and we aim to finish it before July of next year." DENR-11 and the Compostela Valley provincial government have signed a Joint Special Order creating a technical working group (TWG) and working committees tasked to formulate and implement the Naboc River Rehabilitation Master Plan. The rehabilitation program, a priority project of Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, was formally launched last July 16 through the signing of a memorandum of agreement between the DENR and the provincial government. Compostela Valley Provincial Governor Jayvee Tyrone L. Uy, for his part, said, "We hope that our timeline will be met so we could finally gain a step ahead in rehabilitating Naboc River." In March this year, ball mill facilities for gold ore extracted from Mt. Diwalwal were given the final notice to move out and transfer to the government-designated site. The ball mill operators were first ordered to transfer in 2003 following the issuance of Executive Order No. 217. The Department of Science and Technology-Region 11, together with the University of the Philippines, is also setting up a mineral processing plant in Nabunturan that does not use mercury and cyanide.



REHABILITASYON NG NABOC RIVER PANGANGASIWAAN AT TUTUTUKAN NG DENR

NOONG Hulyo 17, nilagdaan ang Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) sa pagitan ni Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) OIC Assistant Secretary for Field Operations-Eastern Mindanao at kasalukuyan ding Region 11 Executive Director Ruth Tawantawan at Compostela Valley Governor Jayvee Tyron Uy sa opisina ng DENR Region 11 sa Davao City.

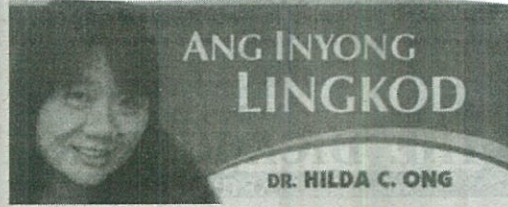
Bilang tugon sa Pangulo, sinabi ni Secretary Roy A. Cimatu na bumuo ng plano ang DENR upang mabigyan ng solusyon ang problemang ito.

Inatasan na rin ang Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) na magsagawa ng 500-meter sampling interval mula sa Barangay Diwata hanggang sa Barangay Babag

sa Monkayo upang matukoy ang kalagayan ng ilog. Nakumpirma rin sa pag-aaral ang mataas na antas ng mercury at fecal coliform sa kaha-baan ng ilog.

Noong Hulyo ng nakalipas na taon ay naglabas ng Special Order No. 2018-593 ang kalihim na bumubuo sa Provincial Task Force Naboc River (PTFNR) sa Region 11. Ito ay bahagi ng Executive Order No. 217 ni Pangulong Duterte na nagtatatag sa National Task Force Diwalwal.

Ang PTFNR ay nakapagbigay na ng 1,797 cease and desist orders sa mga may-ari ng ball mills at planta ng carbon-in-pulp nitong nakalipas na Marso. Dahil naman sa "Lihok Alang sa Naboc" ay naging madali ang operasyon sa paglipat ng mga informal settlers at processing plants mula sa



Mt. Diwata patungo sa Sitio Mabatias upang matugunan ang environmental concerns sa Diwalwal.

Bukod sa paglilinis ay nagkaroon na rin ng information, education at communication activities sa nasabing lugar.

Nagpasalamat din si Cimatu sa mga barangay official sa lugar na tumutulong sa kampanya upang malinis ang Naboc River sa pamamagitan ng kanilang solid waste management.

Nakapaloob sa MOA na ang DENR at ang Compostela LGU ay magtataguyod at pananatilihin ang pag-unlad ng komunidad sa pamamagitan ng "rational exploration, development, utilization at con-

servation" ng mga mineral resources sa ilog.

Pangangasiwaan din ng DENR ang lahat ng aktibidad para sa rehabilitasyon ng ilog upang matiyak na sumusunod ang mga ito sa environmental laws, rules and regulation at sa rehabilitation Master Plan sa pakikipagtulungan ng DPWH.

Regular ding magsasagawa ng periodic monitoring ng ilog bilang Water Quality Management Area na nakapaloob sa Republic Act 9275 (RA) o mas kilala sa tawag na Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004 upang masuri ang epekto ng gagawing paglilinis sa ilog.

Titiyakin naman ng MGB at ng provincial local government na ang lahat ng buhangin at graba kabilang na ang metallic materials na makukuha sa ilog na may kaukulang permits ay maitatapon ng maayos batay sa RA 7942 o Philippine Mining Act of 1995, Department Administrative Order 2010-21 o ang Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 7942 at ibang kahalintulad na batas.



(Photo taken from the facebook of Gov. Jayvee Tyron Uy)



Pirma na lang ang kulang **TOTAL BAN SA WASTE IMPORTS**

NATAPOS na ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang pagbuo ng polisiya na pansamantalang magbabawal sa lahat ng waste imports sa gitna ng pagdating ng misdeclared shipments na naglalaman ng mga basura.

Mula sa pahina 1

Ayon kay DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Benny Antiporda, ang moratorium, sa pamamagitan ng isang department order na ipalalabas ngayong linggo, ay magiging epektibo sa loob ng tatlong buwan.

Ani Antiporda, pirma na lamang ni DENR Sec. Roy

Cimatu ang hinihintay para maipatupad na ang total ban sa waste imports.

"The moratorium will give way to the drafting of guidelines that will tighten the government's grip on garbage being shipped to the Philippines," aniya.

Isang inter-agency council, na kabilangan ng National Solid Waste Management Commission

ng DENR at Bureau of Customs (BOC), ang nakatakda ring buuin.

"I, personally, will propose for a ban doon sa mga import na [illegal] para if in case na palusutan mo kami, haluan mo ng basura talaga, kukumpiskahin namin 'yung van at the same time, kakasuhan pa namin," wika ni Antiporda.

"Doon naman sa mis-declaration, 'pag nalusutan ang Bureau of Customs naman, we will have no choice but to run after the issuing party," dagdag pa niya.



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Total ban sa imported basura , pirma na lang ang kulang – DENR

Inihayag ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na lagda na lamang ang hinhintay sa ginawang patakaran na pansamantalang pagbabawal sa lahat ng mga pag-import ng basura sa gitna ng mga nakaraang pagdating ng mga mis-declared shipment na naglalaman ng mga basura.

Ayon kay DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Beny Antiporda ang moratorium, sa pamamagitan ng isang department order na nakatakang ilabas sa mga susunod na araw, ay magiging epektibo sa loob ng 3 buwan.

Aniya pirma na lamang ni DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu ang kulang upang matigil na ang waste importation.

Ang moratorium, ay

magbibigay daan sa pagbalangkas ng mga patakaran sa paghihigpit ng gobyerno sa mga basurang ipinadadala sa Pilipinas.

Isang inter-agency council, na kinabibilangan ng National Solid Waste Management Commission ng DENR at Bureau of Customs (BOC), ang itatatag.

Sinabi ni Antiporda na personal niyang imumungkahi para sa pagbabawal sa mga import na [illegal], sakaling malusutan sila, haluan ng basura, ay kukumpiskahin ang van at kakasuhan pa ang mga ito.

“Doon naman sa mis-declaration, pag nalusutan ang Bureau of Customs, we will have no choice but to run after the issuing party.”

Pinapayagan ng Pilipinas ang pag-import ng recyclable waste, tulad ng mga scrap metals, solid plastic materials, and

electronic assemblies at scrap, used oil at fly ash.

Samantala ang importation ng recyclable materials na naglalaman ng mga mapanganib na sangkap, ay nangangailangan ng written approval ng DENR, alinsunod sa Administrative Order 2013-22 ng ahen-siya.

Una nito, ang BOC ay nagtatag ng bagong yunit na susubaybay sa pagpasok ng mga mapanganib na basura sa bansa.

Sa ilalim ng Customs Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 38-2019, ang bagong tatag na Environmental Protection and Compliance Division ang magmo-monitor sa pagproseso ng mga shipment na mapanganib na sangkap, waste products, nuclear wastes, recyclable products o mga sangkap sa ilalim ng regulatory control ng DENR. **(Mina Aquino)**



Cebu town landfill allowed to reopen

By **MINERVA BC NEWMAN**

CEBU CITY – The Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) in Central Visayas lifted its Cease and Desist Order (CDO) on August 9 against Asian Energy Systems Corporation (AEC), the operator of the sanitary landfill in Polog, Consolacion, Cebu, after the firm completed the rehabilitation of the facility.

AEC was issued the order after the EMB found that it failed to implement the Environmental Management Plan (EMP) that resulted to a landslide last May 4.

The landfill was shut down. During a technical conference with the EMB on May 8, AEC was ordered to address the pollution and environmental concerns.

The company has since complied with all the requirements. It submitted to EMB a project to convert methane gas into energy. The project is scheduled to be completed on Dec. 15, 2020.

EMB Regional Director William Cuñado witnessed the signing of the memorandum of agreement for the project between AEC, Alterna Verde Corporation, and SERRS Technology of Thailand.



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New MWSS administrator unaware of Kaliwa Dam project

By LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON

The new administrator of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) has admitted that he has no personal knowledge of the controversial Kaliwa Dam project, which is expected to help augment water supply in Metro Manila.

Asked whether he supported the project prior to his ap-

pointment, MWSS administrator Emmanuel Salamat said he has yet to get the details of the P12.2-billion Kaliwa Dam.

"I have yet to see and subscribe to all the projects. No, I have no idea," he said.

"But we have to make a lot of collaborative engagements with all stakeholders and affected communities," Salamat said.

Civil society and non-government organizations have

been supporting the call of the Agta-Dumagat-Remontado tribes in Quezon and Rizal who are opposing the Kaliwa Dam project.

The project is said to displace the indigenous communities, threaten the already endangered flora and fauna in the Sierra Madre mountain range, and compromise the farms and food sources of thousands of families in the areas.

The Kaliwa Dam project has yet to move forward following the lack of environmental compliance certificate (ECC) from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and another permit from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP).

Several groups are urging the DENR to withhold the issuance of the ECC and the

NCIP to ensure that meaningful and genuine processes of securing the free, prior and informed consent of the affected indigenous communities are implemented.

MWSS chairman Reynaldo Velasco assured that the government would not start the project unless all requirements are completed.

"These are all ongoing, simultaneous with the efforts of

the bidder to clear the design. So hopefully before the design is approved by the MWSS Board, the requirements are done," Velasco said.

"We will not start the project unless we comply with everything because that is required by the law. We will not violate any laws or any rights of anybody before we implement," he said.

The MWSS has been targeting to secure the ECC and finish the design until March to immediately proceed with the construction of the dam.

The construction of the New Centennial Water Supply Project can only take off once the DENR issues the ECC, a requirement needed to be secured by any project in the country that poses potential environmental risk or impact.

Last year, the MWSS has already released an initial P565 million paid to the Department

of Public Works and Highways for road construction from the P2 billion government share for the project.

Of the P12.2 billion construction cost of the project, 85 percent will be funded by the official development assistance from China amounting to P10.2 billion, while 15 percent or P2 billion will be shouldered by MWSS.

After 34 years, Kaliwa Dam is set to fully take off following the formal signing of the contract between President Duterte and Chinese President Xi Jinping last November.

The project, which would supply additional 600 million liters of water per day to Metro Manila, will be undertaken by China Energy Engineering Corp.

The construction of the multi-billion water project was first approved by NEDA in 2014. Financing scheme was changed in 2017 from a public-private partnership to official development assistance.

MWSS said the benefits of the project also include tourism boom, opening of new roads, employment opportunities and improved economy in the areas.



Angat Dam rises anew; DSWD gives aid

By Korinah Saromines

The water level at the Angat Dam continued to rise as monsoon rains brought about by Typhoon "Hanna" poured over parts of Luzon over the past few days. As of 6 a.m. yesterday, it stood at 172.31 meters which was higher than the 170.88 meters recorded at the same time on Friday.

According to state weather bureau PAGASA, La Mesa Dam's water level also slightly went up on Saturday to 76.34 meters from the 76.05 meters recorded on Friday.

PAGASA also reported status of the following dams — Ipo, 100.96 meters (from 110.93 m on Friday); Ambuklao, 749.97 meters (from 748.60 meters); Binga, 573.85 meters (from 573.35 meters); San Roque, 235.28 meters (from 234.42 meters); Pantabangan, 192.12 meters (from 191.62 meters); Magat, 185.39

meters (from 185.46 meters) and Caliraya, 286.31 meters (from 286.24 meters).

As many have been affected by Hanna, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) on Saturday distributed some 3,500 food packs to residents isolated by bad weather conditions in Iloilo after its personnel arrived at the Gigantes Island port on Saturday morning.

In a statement, the DSWD said that Philippine Coast Guard ship *BRP Cape Engaño* delivered the relief goods from Iloilo City.

Previously, local maritime authorities have halted all sea travel to the island affected by days of continuous heavy rains and inclement weather in the province of Iloilo in Western Visayas.

With Leila Rodriguez



A glass half full Our water supply woes may be over soon as our dams refill anew.



Angat Dam returning to minimum operational level

By **RAMON EFREN LAZARO**

MALOLOS – Monsoon rains are replenishing Angat Dam, with the water in its reservoir rising and approaching its minimum operating level of 180 meters.

Based on monitoring by the provincial

disaster risk reduction and management office (PDRRMO) of Bulacan, the dam's water elevation as of yesterday morning was at 174.24 meters. This is 1.68 meters higher than the elevation recorded last Saturday.

The increasing water elevation is just 5.67

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meters below its minimum operating level of 180 meters.

The National Water Resources Board earlier slashed down the dam's water allocation for domestic use for Metro Manila residents to only 36 cubic meters per second. The normal allocation is at 48 cms.

This reduction led the two water concessionaires for Metro Manila to implement the rotational water service interruptions and for authorities to totally cut the water supply for irrigation purposes in Bulacan and Pampanga provinces.

Aside from the Angat dam, the PDRRMO monitored the Ipo Dam's water elevation at 100.91 meters, a slight reduction from the previous day's level of 100.97 meters.

The water level at Bustos Dam is already at 17.53 meters, which is slightly above its spilling level of 17.50 meters.



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ANTAS NG ANGAT DAM PINATAAS NI HANNA

BULACAN – MAY magandang naidulot ang mga pag-ulan nitong mga nakaraang linggo sa Luzon dahil sa bagyong Hanna.

Ito ay nang tumaas ang lebel ng tubig sa An-

gat Dam kahapon dahil sa mga pag-ulan kamakailan.

Ayon sa Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), hanggang ka-

hapon ng alas-6:00 ng umaga, ang water level sa Angat Dam ay nasa 174.13 meters, o 1.82 meters na mas mataas kumpara sa 172.31-meter water level na napaulat noong Sabado ng

umaga.

Bukod dito, bahagyang tumaas din ang lebel ng tubig sa iba pang mga dam sa bansa, kabilang na ang La Mesa Dam, Ambuklao Dam, Binga Dam, San Roque

Dam, Pantabangan Dam, at Caliraya Dam.

Samantala, nagkaroon naman ng bahagyang pagbaba ng lebel ng tubig sa Ipo Dam at Magat Dam, ayon sa state weather bureau. **PMRT**



Tubig sa dam pa-'normal' na

MALAPIT na sa normal high water level ang tubig sa La Mesa dam, ayon sa Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

Kahapon ng umaga, ang tubig dito ay 76.56 metro tumaas ng 0.22 metro mula sa 76.34 metro na naitala noong Sabado ng umaga.

Ang normal high water level ng La Mesa dam ay 80.15 metro.

Tumaas din ang tubig sa Angat dam. Kahapon ng umaga ito ay 174.13 metro o tumaas ng 1.82 metro mula sa 172.31 metro kamakalawa.

Ang normal high water level ng Angat ay 210 metro. Ang normal operating level nito ay 180 metro.

Ang dalawang dam ang pangunahing pinagkukuhanan ng supply ng tubig sa Metro Manila at mga karatig-probinsya. — *Leibilly Begas*



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

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THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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EDITORIAL

CARTOON

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Water concessionaires to appeal SC's ₱2-B penalty

By **MADELAINE B. MIRAFLOR**

Water concessionaires Maynilad Water Services, Inc. (Maynilad) and Manila Water Company, Inc. (MWC) are both exploring legal options to appeal the decision of the Supreme Court (SC) requiring them to pay the Philippine government nearly ₱2 billion for "violating" the Philippine Clean Water Act.

On Tuesday, the high court ordered the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) to pay ₱1.84 billion for violating Section 8 of the Philippine Clean

Water Act enacted in 2004 under Republic Act No. 9275.

Under the law, MWSS and its concessionaires are required to connect the existing sewage line found in all subdivisions, condominiums, commercial centers, hotels, sports and recreational facilities, hospitals, market places, public buildings, industrial complex and other similar establishments including households to available sewerage system within the first five years of the law's implementation. Maynilad and Manila Water are the concessionaires of MWSS.

When sought for comment, Manila Water and Maynilad said they haven't received the SC decision, but both companies are now planning to make an appeal.

"On the new penalty to be imposed by the Supreme Court, Manila Water has not received an official copy of the Supreme Court decision to-date. We are prepared to exercise all our legal options, including filing for a Motion for Reconsideration, within the prescribed time mandated by the law on receipt of the said order," Manila Water said.

Maynilad, too, said it has not yet re-

ceived a copy of the SC decision.

"But assuming the news is correct then we intend to file a motion for reconsideration within the allowed 15 days from receipt of the ruling," the company said.

In the unanimous full court decision written by Associate Justice Ramon Paul L. Hernando, the SC ordered the two water firms and the MWSS to pay a fine of ₱322,102 for every day of non-compliance with the law.

"Maynilad shall be jointly and severally liable with the MWSS for a total amount of ₱921.46 million covering the period May 7,

2009 to date of promulgation (Aug. 6, 2019)," the SC decision reads. In the same manner, Manila Water shall also be jointly and severally liable with MWSS for the same amount and period.

Maynilad, Manila Water, and MWSS are required to pay the fine within 15 days from receipt of the decision.

MWSS Administrator Reynaldo Velasco also said the agency has yet to receive the SC decision.

When asked if the agency is also planning to make an appeal, Velasco has not yet issued a response.



Make corporate officers liable

There's an increasing number of companies guilty of wrongdoing that are getting slapped with up to a billion pesos in penalties by our government.

Manila Water and Maynilad, our country's biggest water distributors, are the latest of these penalized companies. Last week, the Supreme Court announced it is imposing P2 billion in penalties against these two entities because of their gross environmental law violations. Even the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), the government agency regulating these two water utilities, is held solidarily liable to pay the penalty.

Prior to this, Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. was fined P1 billion by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Philex Mining Corp. was penalized P1 billion by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the now defunct ride-hailing company, Uber, was ordered by the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board to pay almost half a billion pesos in fines and financial aid to its drivers.

In addition to the P2 billion fines, Manila Water, Maynilad and the MWSS are being made to pay P322,102 in daily penalty until they fully comply with the Clean Water Act (Republic Act No. 9275). The law requires them to connect the sewage lines found in all subdivisions, condominiums, commercial centers, hotels, sports and recreational facilities, hospitals, market places, public buildings, industrial complexes and other similar establishments, including households, to the available sewerage system.

The two water companies were obligated to provide sewage lines in Metro Manila and



FLEA MARKET OF IDEAS

JOEL RUIZ BUTUYAN

other cities in their concession areas within a five-year period, which expired in 2009. The P2-billion penalty was for their failure to put up the sewerage system from 2009 up to the present.

The MWSS admits that only an appalling 15 percent of Metro Manila water consumers are connected to sewer networks. What's even more distressing is that, despite the 2009 deadline set by law, the MWSS defies Congress by proclaiming that it will take its own sweet time by committing to full sewer and sanitation coverage only in 2037.

In its website, Manila Water admits that 85 percent of the households in its concession areas "are not yet covered by a sewer system and instead utilize their own septic tanks. Wastewater that accumulates inside septic tanks... eventually leak out pollution into the groundwater or into municipal drainage systems, eventually finding its way into our rivers and water bodies." It's the same fate for wastewater coming from the households

serviced by Maynilad, no doubt.

It's clear that the heavy pollution of our city rivers and Manila Bay is virtually due to the refusal of the two companies to complete the sewerage system. No amount of money and effort spent by the government and civic organizations will ever clean up our city rivers and the bay because of the daily seepage and flow of wastewater.

Manila Water and Maynilad enjoy two enviable advantages. The government has each given them a franchise that amounts to a business monopoly with millions of captive consumers. They are also guaranteed a 12-percent rate of return on their investments, as public utilities. In exchange for these huge privileges, they have been required to put up a sewerage system out of which they will earn additional income in sewage fees anyway.

The P2-billion fine imposed by the government will work to penalize the stockholders of the two companies, many of whom are innocent investors of the publicly-listed companies. Even making the MWSS solidarily liable merely penalizes innocent taxpayers.

If the government wants to exact real accountability and force the quick completion of the sewerage projects, it should criminally prosecute the responsible corporate officers, because the law allows the imposition of P3 million in fines per day and imprisonment of 10 years against them.

If that doesn't work, unleash the ultimate weapon of the current government: Allow the President to go berserk on them.

Comments to fleamarketofideas@gmail.com



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Manila Water cites need for new source

MANILA Water Co. Inc. will give equal importance to the development of water supply sources alongside its core responsibility as a distributor.

This comes as the water subsidiary of Ayala Corp. changes leadership effective September 1 with the return of Rene Almendras as chief executive officer and chief sustainability officer vice Ferdinand Dela Cruz who resigned for personal reasons.

Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala, Ayala Corp. chairman and chief executive officer, said apart from the distribution responsibilities of Manila Water, the development of water supply sources which is the role of the government should be equally treated with high importance.

"We have a little supply capacity from the last 30, 40, 50 years. Angat dam was built a long, long time ago and the reason that we've not faced the problem is because we took the efficiency when we took over, when Manila Water was privatized... Supply has not been a lot of a problem because there's a lot of efficiency built into the system but unfortunately, that efficiency is now maximum and the city continues to grow so new supply then is the only way to go," Zobel said.

He said there are now "productive conversations with the government" on how to resolve the water supply issue.

Manila Water was slapped with fines due to service interruptions that started in March and most recently, because of its alleged failure to provide proper wastewater facilities in its franchise area.



ZOBEL

Meanwhile, Almendras will continue to serve as president and chief executive officer of another Ayala owned company, AC Infrastructure Holdings Corp.

In 2009, Almendras was president and chief operating officer of Manila Water but his term was cut short when the Aquino administration appointed him as secretary of the Department of Energy and later on as Cabinet Secretary and finally as secretary of foreign affairs.

Speaking at last week's Integrated Corporate

Governance, Risk Management and Sustainability Summit, Zobel said the group has designed a "long-term sustainability blueprint that lays out actionable and measurable targets that address critical environmental, social, and governance gaps."

"We identified marginalization, large untapped potential of our human capital, and irresponsible growth leading to long-term environmental damage as the three critical challenges our group can focus on," he said.

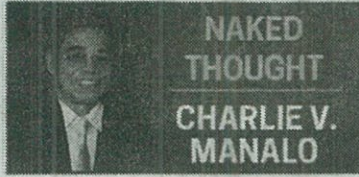
Dubbed as the "Ayala Sustainability Blueprint," it was specifically designed to support the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 to enable the Ayala Group "to be more deliberate in monitoring and evaluating sustainability targets and help allocate resources to initiatives more appropriately."

"Under the blueprint, we will focus on contributing to the achievement of three pillars where we believe our businesses can generate the most significant and lasting impact. These are: access and inclusivity, productivity and competitiveness, and responsible growth and innovation. Let me discuss this in greater detail by citing examples of our initiatives across the Ayala group in support of these three pillars," Zobel said.

"We believe that by integrating Corporate Governance, Risk Management and Sustainability, we will fortify the group's capacity to function as a more efficient and relevant partner in nation building. To us, sustainability is key to bridging persistent societal gaps that have disenfranchised generations of Filipinos," he added.



Boon or curse



AFTER having tendered an unopposed offer to build the New Manila International Airport, San Miguel Corp. has been given the green light to proceed with the construction of the four-terminal airport in Bulacan over a 3,300 hectare property, standing on water and which has yet to be reclaimed.

The project is expected to decongest the already overcrowded Ninoy Aquino

“An expert says the new airport will be a disaster for Bulacan, Metro Manila and adjacent provinces.”

International Airport as it targets to service 100-million passengers a year.

However, former press attaché to the Philippine Embassy in Washington, Ado Paglinawan, insists that the mega project touted to deliver us from the miseries of the overcrowded NAIA

terminals will only spell disaster not only for Bulacan but for the whole of Metro Manila and adjacent provinces.

In his paper, Paglinawan said the Environmental Compliance Certificate issued by the Regional Director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for the project is anomalous because the adverse environmental impact of the Bulacan Airport project extends to the National Capital Region and Region IV-A because of the interconnecting over and underground river basin systems and network of river deltas behind the coastlines of the entire Manila Bay.

Paglinawan says further that if and
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Boon...

From A4

when it should have been issued at all, the responsibility should have not been below the Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources himself.

As it currently stands, Paglinawan says that even without the Bulacan Airport, there is already a warning of a clear and present danger to human lives and safety for all those in the areas affected by the interconnections.

And he hits the nail right on the head. The amount of rainfall that fell on Metro Manila last week, which inundated streets resulting in horrific traffic conditions and sent schools to close for several days, is enough proof of this.

And we are not even talking about “Ondoy” and habagat that in recent years cost thousands of lives, billions in private properties and immobilized Metro Manila for days, and Typhoon “Yoling” which flooded many parts of Central Luzon for six months.

It is interesting to note that presently, there are already areas in Bulacan where the municipalities have already raised street and drainage canals by one meter, causing the inundation to seep into and dwell on the ground floors of residential communities for months.

As such, Paglinawan says any reclamation or land development

project, regardless of the semantics, especially in the magnitude of 3,000 hectares, can perpetuate this despicable condition for many generations.

Serious flood control mitigation and disaster resiliency strategies and infrastructure, not just for immediate areas but all those fronting the entire Manila Bay, must precede any development project, especially one of this magnitude.

Golden Boy

How time flies. It seems not too long ago I used to hang out with this guy, along with his brothers Joy and Roy (It was actually Roy whom I got first acquainted with), first in their apartment in EDSA, and then in another compound in Kamuning. Playing basketball, music and downing a few bottles thereafter (With Joy and Roy only as he was not of the drinking age then).

Oh what a time it was, but it was really fun. And that was long ago. Their apartment on EDSA had to give way for the MRT Quezon Avenue Station. I don't know who now dwells in their former abode in Kamuning.

But the other night, we had some sort of reunion. He, his gorgeous wife Vangie, Joy, Roy and their lovely sons and daughters, all grown up. The event—his 50th birthday, marks his entry to a golden era.

Happy Birthday Neil Brillantes. Hope to sit down with you again soon.



P-1

Sawdust: An answer to world's plastic woes?

A TECHNOLOGY start-up near Ontario's leafy border with Michigan says it has the answer to the world's plastic pollution problem: sawdust.

Origin Materials is getting ready to pay sawmills in the area \$20 a ton for the scraps left over in the process of turning logs into lumber, which it will use to make recyclable plastic bottles that remove carbon dioxide from the sky because they're made from sustainably sourced wood waste.

Nestlé SA, Danone SA and PepsiCo Inc. plan to sell water in Origin's recyclable plant-based bottles in early 2022.

It's one of the many unconventional ways conceived by scientists to reduce the world's reliance on plastics made from petroleum, which emit as much climate-damaging pollutants as 189 coal plants each year from production to incineration.

Other so-called bio-based plastics are being developed from sugar, corn, algae, seaweed, sewage and even dead beetles.

"Consumers are caring about plastic in a way that they haven't in a long time, maybe ever," said John Bissell, 34, who founded Origin Materials in 2008 and has spent 10 years working as an engineer developing alternative plastics that don't contribute to climate change.

"Everyday things like bottles and clothing can now become carbon negative, but remain otherwise functionally identical."

That may be true in theory, but phasing out petroleum-based plastics will be an uphill battle.

Use of the material has become so ingrained for societies around

the world that about half of all new oil demand through 2040 will come from petrochemicals, an industry that relies on plastics for most of its business, according to BloombergNEF.

The \$500-billion global plastics market is responsible for 5 percent of greenhouse-gas emissions, Friends of the Earth data show. Some projections see that ratio tripling in the next 30 years.

Plant-based plastics, especially varieties made from sugar cane, are starting to seep into the mainstream as companies try to respond to consumers who are increasingly angry about the ecologically devastating impact of plastics.

London-based Bulldog sells its male skin-care products in plastic tubes made from sugar cane. Last year, Danish toymaker Lego A/S started including botanical pieces, like leaves, bushes and trees, made entirely of plant-based plastics in its box sets.

It'll take getting big food and beverage companies on board to really alter the equation. Nestlé alone produces 1.7 million tons of plastic packaging a year, according to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, enough to make over 51 billion bottles.

Beverage makers like Coca-Cola Co. and Pepsi use a lot more than that. Coca-Cola rolled out its so-called plantbottle in 2009, but it's still 70 percent petroleum based.

"There is no doubt that aware-

ness around plastic waste has become more prominent in the last two years," said Simon Lowden, president of PepsiCo's global snacks group, which announced in 2016 it would seek to reduce absolute greenhouse-gas emissions by 20 percent by 2030.

As part of a strategy to find more sustainable packaging, Pepsi last year joined Nestlé and Danone's NaturALL Bottle Alliance to find ways to reduce the carbon footprint of beverage bottles. All three plan to buy 100 percent plant-derived bottles from Origin Materials when its Ontario plant gets up and running at the end of 2020 with a starting capacity of 300 million bottles a year.

Origin Materials developed a way to extract cellulose from wood waste to make para-xylene, a hydrocarbon usually derived from oil used to manufacture PET, one of the most common plastics today.

Since trees and plants naturally capture CO2 through photosynthesis, using sustainably sourced sawdust and wood chips more than offsets any pollutants released in the manufacturing process, according to Bissell.

However ingenious the techniques to make plant-based bottles may get, though, they're still plastic.

Not all varieties are recyclable or biodegradable. And ultimately unless they are recycled—and worldwide only one out of every



P-2

Sawdust: An answer for world's plastic woes?

five bottles is—plastic bottles inevitably end up in landfills where they may spew pollutants into the air, or worse, find their way into the oceans where most could take hundreds of years to degrade, killing birds, fish and whales in the process.

When incinerating, bio-based plastics may be little better than oil-based ones because the carbon stored in them is released.

Since David Attenborough's Blue Planet 2 documentary in 2017 showed albatrosses feeding their chicks plastic by accident, plastic's environmental impact has "gone from a niche topic of conversation and engagement to something that features in all our conversations," said Mark

Lancelott, a sustainability expert at PA Consulting Group Ltd.

The London-based consultancy has seen a "significant increase" in requests from food and beverage companies on how to manage plastic waste.

After the European Union and New York announced bans this year on certain single-use plastics, many companies are getting nervous about how far those regulations could go, added Katherine Lampen, a London-based partner in Deloitte's sustainability advisory team, which advises big consumer packaged good companies.

"They are concerned that the future viability of their business could be reduced due to a heavy reliance on the material," she said.

Skeptics of the bioplastic push say they're not resolving the underlying problem. It would be better to focus on improving rates of reuse of plastic or glass packaging, with waste collected by the producer, according to Juliet Phillips, an ocean campaigner at the Environmental Investigation Agency, a nongovernment organization.

If production of plant-based plastics were to be scaled up, "land-use demands could bring about competition with agriculture, accelerating deforestation concerns and biodiversity loss," she said.

For Bissell at Origin Materials, the plastic industry has become too important for global commerce to work on only one front to improve sustainability, especially considering soaring demand in emerging markets where reuse programs tend to be underdeveloped.

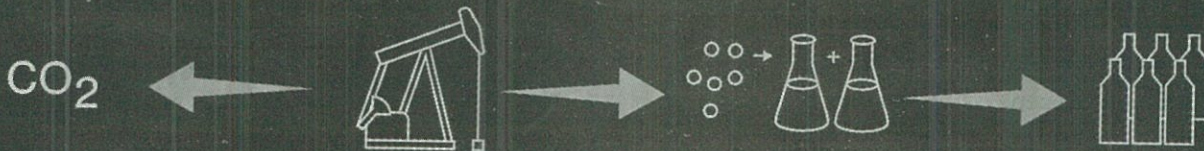
"The end of life of plastics is really important. I'm not too sure that I'd argue that it's more important than climate change. That feels like maybe not the right trade off to make," he said. *Bloomberg News*

Solving the Emissions Problem

Using plants instead of oil to make plastic can absorb CO2 from the atmosphere

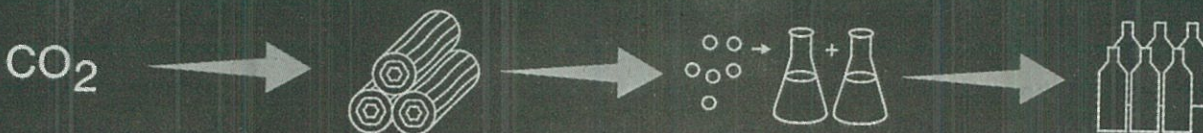
Petrochemical-Based Plastics

Drilling for the crude oil used to make plastic resin releases greenhouse gases



Plant-Based Plastics

Origin Materials makes the same plastic resin from wood waste, restoring the atmosphere because trees naturally absorb carbon dioxide



Note: Failure to recycle or reuse plastic packaging could eventually add to emissions

Sources: Origin Materials, Bloomberg

Bloomberg



0.1 the arguments against incineration ...

The arguments against incineration haven't changed

CEBU Gov. Gwen Garcia, in her desire to address Cebu's, especially Metro Cebu's, garbage crisis, is proposing the construction of a waste-to-energy plant. Chinese company New Sky Environment is offering to put up an incinerator that will not only make Cebu's garbage literally go up in smoke but generate electricity as well!

Burning the garbage definitely looks like the convenient way out for Metro Cebu. Existing landfills either cannot accommodate all the garbage or are being shut down due to violations. In the longer term, as Metro Cebu gets more and more congested, finding available land or space for future landfills sounds like a mission impossible.

Burning garbage, we know, has its problems too. The main one is called dioxin. Dioxin is one of the most toxic chemicals known. It is an inevitable byproduct of burning garbage. Filters and scrubbers are used to capture dioxins so that they won't escape into the air. Unfortunately, even the highest standards of emission controls are no guarantee that dioxins won't make it to the surrounding environment. In Denmark where garbage has been incinerated for decades, an incineration plant was recently found to have been exceeding dioxin emission limits for years. Even after corrective measures were implemented the levels were still too high.

Because of the extreme toxicity of dioxins, they must be sealed before being disposed in landfills. Chinese researchers Zhenwu Tang, Qifei Huang and Yufei Yang in a scientific article entitled "PCDD/Fs (dioxins and furans) in fly ash from waste incineration in China: A



RESURGENCE

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need for effective risk management" (May 2013) pointed out that dioxin-containing fly ash from incineration constitutes a great environmental risk, whether disposed of in hazardous waste landfills or in ordinary municipal solid waste landfills. Dioxins are likely to eventually leach into the surrounding environment and contaminate soil, ground water and nearby water bodies.

To summarize: dioxins, formed during the burning of garbage and industrial processes, find their way into the environment through smoke stack emissions where air pollution control devices fail to capture them, and in solid form when they leach into the surroundings from the landfills where dioxin-containing fly ash has been disposed.

Last year, the European Food Safety Authority set a new Tolerable Weekly Intake for dioxins and dioxin-like chemicals seven times lower than the existing one. Now the TWI is two picograms per kilogram of body weight. A picogram is one trillionth of a gram.

Dioxins pose a real risk to the health and are linked to reproductive and development problems, among others. "The developing fetus is most sensitive to dioxin exposure," warns the World Health Organization. Dioxins are absorbed by fat tissue and accumulate in the food chain. They find their way to our bodies through fish, shellfish, meat, eggs and milk that are among the food that have been found to contain higher levels

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of dioxin in contaminated environments (fields and water bodies). Are we capable of controlling, monitoring and managing emissions and fly ash? Do we have the expertise and tools to conduct regular tests of soil and water to ensure the safety of incinerator host communities, the general public, and consumers?

From a political perspective, going down the waste-to-energy - incinerator - path is a sad surrender. 18 years with the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act and waste minimization and segregation are like towns in Siberia. We continue to generate so much unnecessary garbage - in Cebu, plastic bags are still being used in most stores. Paper bags that replace plastic bags are often unnecessary and good for one use only. Fast-food restaurants auto-

matically add plastic utensils for take-out and delivery orders when the customer may not even need them. Every place has its own peculiar segregation system the inevitable result being both faulty segregation and failure of the garbage-generating public to learn to do it right.

The choice is not limited to land-filling and incineration. There are "hundreds of communities worldwide which are getting 80 percent diversion from landfills without using incineration," according to anti-incineration activist Paul Connett. The "figure of 80 percent is highly significant because an incinerator only gets 75 percent diversion from landfill (while) 25 percent is left as ash -- which has to go to a landfill." These communities have

shown "that they have been able to get 80 percent reduction, without the capital costs and pollution of building an incinerator, and without having to build an ash landfill (...). Incineration is neither a solution at the local or global level -- Northern Europe has finally realized this and is not encouraging incineration anymore."

The biggest lure of incineration is that we wouldn't have to change the way we act and think. Taking responsibility for our trash is complicated and inconvenient. However, taking responsibility for our trash is also taking responsibility for our finite resources. There is more to gain from waste minimization, reuse and recycling than from incineration, for our health, the environment and the economy.



Baguio sets cleanup drive

By Aldwin Quitasol

BAGUIO CITY – The City Government of Baguio designated the fourth Saturday of every month as cleanup day wherein local officials and residents will be mobilized to instill the importance of maintaining cleanliness inside and outside their homes.

This developed following a recently-conducted cleanup drive led by the private sector that proved to be successful. The monthly citywide cleanup campaign involving the barangays will be done every fourth Saturday of the month.

The city government cleanup campaign is needed to have an impact on the overall cleanliness around the city and help prevent

unnecessary increases in illnesses that could compromise people's productivity thus the monthly citywide cleanup campaign should be a regular activity in the barangays.

It added that cleanliness inside and outside the residences of people should be the responsibility of everyone. By actively participating in the conduct of cleanup activities in their barangays, It will show their concern in the overall efforts of the local government and ensure the sustainable preservation and protection of the city's environment.

In 1995, Baguio City was adjudged a Hall of Fame awardee in the nationwide

Search for the Cleanest and Greenest Highly Urbanized City after having won the said contest for three consecutive years through the consolidated efforts of the local government under the leadership of former Mayor Mauricio Domogan, concerned government agencies, the private sector, and the people in the barangays.

Aside from the monthly conduct of a city-wide cleanup campaign, the city government institutionalized the Search for Cleanest and Dirtiest Barangays wherein the judging is done year-round to ensure the sustainable implementation of clean and green programs beneficial in helping preserve and protect the city's environment from deterioration.



**TWO technologies developed by
DLSU, Crabfier and BioMon Dr.
Adelaida T. Calpe IARRD-PCAARRD**



Crabfier app to help identify mangrove crab

CRABIFIER, a mobile app that identifies mangrove crab species at the juvenile stage, was recently launched. This mobile application was developed by the Technologies for Biodiversity Use and Conservation (TechBiodive) Unit of the De La Salle University (DLSU).

It is an output of the mangrove crab project, "Integrating Genomics with Image Analysis and Geographic Information System Technology for Improved Rearing of Mudcrabs," funded by the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST-PCAARRD).

Crabfier is an open-access mobile application for sorting the fast-growing market-preferred "king crab" and two other species of mangrove crabs at the juvenile stages.

It aims to help farmers maximize production in farms, reduce postharvest losses of juveniles and potentially increase income by classifying the price of the mangrove juvenile crabs caught from the wild. This would help the mangrove crab industry, especially that 80 percent to 90 percent still depend on wild-caught juveniles from mangroves.

The mobile app was developed by integrating data from DNA markers, data with image analysis and mobile computing through partnership with the Practical Genomics Lab.

Headed by Dr. Ma. Carmen Ablan-Lagman and Dr. Chona Camille Vince Cruz-Abeledo of DLSU, the team that developed the app includes Southeast

Asian Fisheries Development Center experts Dr. Ma. Rowena Eguia, Ann Francesca Laguna and Courtney Anne Ngo. The launch, which was held at the Multipurpose Hall, Bro. Andrew Gonzales, FCS, Hall, DLSU in July also launched another app, Biodiversity and Threats Monitoring App, BioMon.

BioMon is an open-source mobile app for monitoring biodiversity and recording encounter data of terrestrial biodiversity. The data may be immediately downloaded to computers, bypassing the tedious process of encoding data, preventing data pile-up and encouraging immediate use of the data, especially for policy. The information may be stored, shared, and analyzed to draw maps for biodiversity distribution, evaluate threats, and establish relevant spatial and temporal patterns.

BioMon will allow local communities to actively monitor their own key biodiversity areas, as well as obtain and use crowdsourced data. The technology was developed through a partnership between the Terrestrial Ecology and Climate Resilience Lab, or TECResilience, headed by Dr. Neil Aldrin Mallari of DLSU and the Center for Conservation Innovation Ph Inc.

Representing DOST-PCAARRD during the launch were Inland Aquatic Resources Research Division's Officer in Charge Engr. Eduardo V. Manalili and Dr. Adelaida T. Calpe, senior science research specialist and Industry Strategic S&T program manager for mangrove crab.

Shirley T. Gahon/S&T Media Services



Govt agencies visit Taganito Mining

GOVERNMENT agencies accountable for monitoring responsible mining in the Philippines visit Taganito Mining Corp. (TMC) for a pilot project of the national government referred to as "Minerals Accounting".

The objective of the said project is to do an accounting of the country's minerals resources in order for the government to draft a roadmap that will effectively define the economic characteristics of the mining industry and other related industries.

TMC, a subsidiary of Nickel Asia Corp. (NAC), with mining operations in Claver, Surigao del Norte, is the first company the group is



engaging for relevant data for this important economic project.

The delegation, headed by the Philippine Statistics Agency (PSA), attended a detailed tour of the

TMC mine site as well as the plant site of THPAL, a minerals processing plant in Taganito.

The delegation also had representatives from the National

Economic Development Authority (NEDA), the Department of Natural Resources (DENR), and the Environment Management Bureau (EMB).



DoF: Mining tax reform still on the table

By Charmaine A. Tadalán *Reporter*

INCREASING the state's share in mining revenues is one of the tax reforms targeted by the government for enactment in the next two years, even as President Rodrigo R. Duterte did not mention it in his July 22 State of the Nation Address (SoNA), but it will take a back seat to the other measures, a senior official of the Department of Finance (DoF) said last weekend.

President Rodrigo R. Duterte, in his fourth SoNA last July 22, asked Congress to approve the remaining tax reform packages, starting with the proposal to reduce the corporate income tax rate to 20% by 2029 from 30% currently and rationalize fiscal incentives by making them more time-bound and performance-based. He also cited proposals to increase excise tax rates for alcohol products and e-cigarettes, centralize real property valuation and assessment, and simplify the tax structure for financial investment instruments.

Finance Assistant Secretary Antonio Joselito G. Lambino II said in a mobile phone message on Sunday that the measure that will reform the fiscal regime of the mining industry is "still part of the comprehensive tax reform program and we will pursue it after the others are enacted."

At the same time, "[w]e are prioritizing presidential directives from the SoNA," Mr. Lambino said.

Mining tax reform, S1/2

The proposed tax reform for mineral products nearly made it out of the 17th Congress that ended in June, as the Senate adopted House Bill No. 8400 with minor amendments. The said bill reduced the royalty on large-scale mining within mineral reserves to three percent of gross output from five percent currently and introduced a 1-5% margin-based royalty on those outside mineral reserves.

Senate President Vicente C. Sotto III and Majority Leader Juan Miguel F. Zubiri have each filed bills increasing the government's revenue share from mineral products; while three bills have already been filed in the House of Representatives.

If enacted, this will be levied on top of other taxes, such as the corporate income tax, excise tax which Republic Act No. 10963 doubled to four percent, royalty to indigenous people and local business tax, among others.

The government has so far enacted RA 10963, which slashed personal income tax and increased or added levies on several goods and services; RA 11213, which offers estate tax amnesty and amnesty for delinquent accounts that remained unpaid even after being given final assessment; and RA 11346, which will gradually increase excise tax on tobacco products to P60 per pack by 2023 from the current P35.

Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III had earlier said that tax measures should be approved by Congress within 15-18 months, which Senator Pia S. Cayetano, ways and means committee chairperson, had said is a "reasonable time to study and vote on the four priority measures."

Her counterpart, Albay 2nd District Rep. Jose Ma. Clemente S. Salceda, for his part, plans to apply Rule 48, which will allow the House ways and means committee to immediately submit for plenary action a measure that secured third-reading approval in the preceding Congress.

Moody's Investors Service, in the annual credit analysis on the

Philippines that it e-mailed to journalists on Friday last week, gave a "moderate(+)" score on "the government's demonstrated ability to pursue its economic and fiscal reform agenda in the face of increasing political noise" and the country's "longer track record of sustaining improvements in its fiscal profile than its peers."

At the same time, while "[t]he strong pro-administration majority in both houses of the legislature enhances the prospects for further reform... the government has a comparatively short window of about two years to pursue its legislative agenda," Moody's said.

"We expect campaigning to detract attention away from reform in the year prior to the next general election scheduled for 2022."

The mining industry has struggled under a trying policy environment since Executive Order No. 79 in 2012 imposed a moratorium on permits for new projects until enactment of a new law that would give the government a bigger share in industry revenues.

But Fraser Institute's *Survey of Mining Companies 2018* released at the end of February showed that while the Philippines has stayed at the bottom fifth of mining territories in terms of investment attractiveness, it has been improving in rank in terms of mineral potential.

Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) data as of May 30 showed metallic mineral production in the Philippines growing in value by 11.57% to P27.466 billion in the first quarter from P24.618 billion a year ago.

Mining contributed about 0.66% to gross domestic product in this year's first three months, roughly steady since at least 2016.

Taxes, fees and royalties from the industry have been on a steady decline from P35.494 billion in 2016 to P25.691 billion in 2017 and to P11.733 billion last year. Levies totaled some P268.8 million in the first quarter, MGB data showed.



Black sand mining in Cagayan exposed

APARRI, Cagayan: The Cagayan Province provincial board approved a resolution appealing to President Rodrigo Duterte to suspend dredging at the mouth of the Cagayan River.

Mila Lauigan, Cagayan Provincial Board member, said an engineer from the Department of Public Works and Highways Central Office informed them that the activities were actually black sand mining and not river dredging, as earlier reported.

The company, which was reportedly dredging the river, is allegedly earning about \$50 million a month on the illegal black sand mining.

"This has to be investigated that is why we are appealing to the President to immediately suspend the dredging operation and inquire whether the company has complied with all the requirements before it proceeded with its operation," Lauigan said.

The Aparri dredging project is under a memorandum of agreement between the provincial government of Cagayan and Pacific Offshore Exploration Inc.

"In the dredging operation in Aparri, the contractor only extracted black sand and leaves waste (non-mineral sand) material back into the river," Lauigan continued.

Earlier, Cagayan Gov. Manuel Mamba denied any illegal black sand mining in the Cagayan River, particularly at the mouth of the Cagayan River.

Mamba said the river was being dredged for the reopening the Port of Aparri, which would improve economic and trade relations between Cagayan province and China, and other neighboring Asian countries.

"Once we have rehabilitated and reopened the Port of Aparri, our relationship and connections with China and then countries in this northern part of the country will improve," Mamba said.

In 2018, Mamba, as chairman of the Regional Development Council-Infrastructure Development Committee, approved a resolution on the reopening of the Port of Aparri.

"Aparri Port is recognized as a catalyst in unlocking the region's potential as a major transshipment facility, thereby realizing the region's development potential as an agro-industrial and tourism hub," the resolution read.

Mamba said the port would take in agricultural products and other goods to complement other Northern Luzon ports in Claveria town in Cagayan and Currimao town in Ilocos Norte.

LEANDER C. DOMINGO



Aboitiz Group trains La Trinidad LGU and MSMEs on business continuity

RECOGNIZING Benguet's vulnerability to disasters, the local government of the provincial capital La Trinidad partnered with the Aboitiz Group to promote self-reliance among cooperatives operating in the municipality.

The Aboitiz Group, through its units Aboitiz Foundation, WeatherPhilippines Foundation, Aboitiz Equity Ventures - Risk and Security, and Hedcor Benguet, as well as the Mines and Geosciences Bureau conducted a series of disaster resilience-related training workshops for five cooperatives in La Trinidad, Benguet: Thanksgiving Multipurpose Cooperative, Barangay Alapang Multipurpose Cooperative, Lamut Multipurpose Cooperative, and Shilan.



This training coincided with the International Day of Cooperatives 2019 (Coops Day) on July 6. Coops Day celebrates increased

awareness of cooperatives, underscoring the contributions of the cooperative movement in resolving major problems identified by the

United Nations. It also strengthens partnerships between the international cooperative movement and the other groups.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

LIFE EXHIBIT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
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San Miguel Brewery sustains national re-greening program

By **ARIEL FERNANDEZ**

Beer market leader San Miguel Brewery, Inc. (SMB) stayed true to its commitment as stewards of the environment with its annual Trees Brew Life tree-planting activity.

Already on its 10th year, the program will conduct nine separate tree-planting activities in different locations across the company's areas of operations. The re-greening efforts will kick off in Mandaue and Bacolod to be followed by activities in Valenzuela, Laguna, Davao, and Angeles.

Under San Miguel Brewery's flagship Buhayin ang Kalikasan, the nationwide environmental program has succeeded in planting about 1 million seedlings since its inception. This year, around 70,000 seedlings of hardwood, mangrove and fruit-bearing

species will be planted in identified areas nationwide by officers and employees of the company.

"It is not only about planting trees, but it is also about brewing the foundation of life for generations to come," says SMB President Roberto N. Huang. "This year, we will focus on re-greening parks and communal areas, and adopt forest parks so that we will have more green spaces where our families can commune with nature. Our watersheds and forests are a valuable source of water, food, shelter, and a host of other benefits that offer immeasurable impact on our lives and that of future generations," Huang added.

The project aims to protect, preserve, and rehabilitate forest covers in both urban and rural settings and aid in regenerating mangrove areas in coastal communities.

Another purpose of the initiative is to ensure the availability of water supply in the communities where the company operates.

"SMB looks to further boost its environmental efforts to keep in line with San Miguel Corporation's (SMC) pledge in adapting water sustainability measures in all of its businesses.

Conducting this re-greening program coincides with our mother company's direction to propagate water sustainability. There's no question that water is essential in our business, and trees are the means by which we can secure ample supply of it for years to come," Huang says.

Aside from environmental concerns, SMB is also actively involved in programs that promote education, health, and basic services and livelihood.



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The mayor's curriculum

It is fun and exciting watching the newly elected mayors perform their jobs from day to day, as reported in the mass and social media. But there has to be a system to mayor-watching. In May 2022, citizens are expected to review the performance of this current crop of mayors who would be seeking re-election. There will be much ignorance and confusion as to the substance and perception of these mayors' accomplishments. How should citizens evaluate their mayors?

For over a decade, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) has implemented the Local Government Performance Management System (LGPMS). The LGPMS is a system for self-assessment of the performance of local governments (provinces, cities and municipalities) in the management, development and delivery of essential public services.

How does it work? The LGPMS measures two clusters—the state of local government performance (how well the local government unit [LGU] generates and manages inputs and outputs) and the state of local development (how well the LGU produces outcomes or impacts for the target constituency).

There are five areas under "governance" performance: administrative governance, social governance, economic governance, environmental governance and valuing fundamentals of good governance.

The "development" performance areas are social development (state of health and nutrition, of education, of housing and basic utilities, and of peace and order conditions), economic development (state of income and of employment) and environmental development (state of agricultural ecosystem, of forest ecosystem, of coastal marine ecosystem, of freshwater ecosystem and of urban ecosystem).



ON THE MOVE

SEGUNDO ECLAR ROMERO

Detailed templates are provided by the DILG to the LGUs for use in generating the required data. Assessment in service areas adds up to assessments in performance areas. A grade of 5.0 is the highest score and 1.0 is the lowest. The data are uploaded to a web-based information system which is primarily used for identifying areas for improvement as well as giving the seal of good housekeeping and other performance awards to LGUs.

What are the results? There are results for all LGUs in all the dimensions, but just to illustrate, the self-assessment of the cities in Metro Manila for the year 2011 shows that as far as "valuing fundamentals of governance" the Manila LGU graded itself 5.0 in transparency, 4.6 in financial accountability and 4.3 in participation. The Pasig City LGU, on the other hand, graded itself 5.0 in transparency, 4.8 in financial accountability and 4.3 in participation. The Caloocan, Mandaluyong, San Juan and Valenzuela LGUs, meantime, reported attaining 5.0 in all three dimensions.

LGPMS is a remarkably sophisticated system of performance management. The main problem is that it has practically been

withheld by the DILG and the local governments from their constituents. The LGPMS is supposed to have transitioned from mere performance measurement to performance management. Yet these self-assessment scores are not validated by the people in whose name and for whose appreciation they were generated. There have been four local elections since these reports have been generated for all provinces, cities and municipalities, but they have not at all been systematically introduced as critical inputs into the electoral process.

These self-assessments should be made available to the public now so that by the next elections, voters will not judge candidates on the basis of their personal characteristics, but on their performance on the job.

As to mayors who find themselves in the position of local chief executives, perhaps many of them do not realize this LGPMS constitutes the "mayor's curriculum"—the subjects that they should have systematically schooled themselves in before they became mayors.

It is not too late. All the swashbuckling, media-grabbing action on the streets many mayors engage in that tickle the public must eventually find discipline and meaning within the framework of the local governance performance management system.

The LGPMS is a critical social innovation that is waiting to be fully embraced—together—by both local chief executives and their constituents. Voter-education oriented citizen groups must now begin extracting and analyzing the LGPMS data from the DILG in time for the May 2022 elections.

Please send comments to doyromero@gmail.com

Law enforcers must not be above the law

GRAFT, no matter how petty, is still graft that should not be sanctioned. Law enforcers making money from illegal activities like video *karera* must be penalized, not condoned.

It is quite disturbing to hear President Duterte say that it was all right for policemen to accept gifts, even in amounts that are not allowed by law, as long as they were given out of "generosity" or "gratitude."

Equally troubling was his statement that there was nothing wrong with policemen getting involved in video *karera* (horse racing video machine games) although he cautioned them to temper their greed.

In the same breath, the President called on the police to protect their integrity and maintain a good public image so they could become effective law enforcers.

He also said he did not mind if police officials were to go into private business to improve their lives, as long as they are not into illegal activities. Video *karera* is a form of illegal gambling that law enforcers must get rid of, and not get involved in.

While Section 14 of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act (Republic Act 3019) provides for exemptions, it qualifies that what the law does not cover are "unsolicited gifts or presents of small or insignificant value offered or



TEA TIME

TITA C. VALDERAMA

given as a mere ordinary token of gratitude or friendship according to local customs or usage."

It is clear that "generous" gifts do not fall under the exemption.

When the President spoke last Friday during the celebration of the Philippine National Police's 118th service anniversary at Camp Crame, he was probably trying to court the support of the law enforcers. However, his contradictory statements are sending mixed messages that are confusing.

He seems to have forgotten that he signed in January 2018 Joint Resolution No. 1 that nearly doubled the base pay of the police and the military.

The joint resolution approved by the Senate and the House of Representatives covered all military personnel under the Department of National Defense (DND), and all uniformed personnel under the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), and the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (Namria).

It is comforting to hear the PNP leadership say that the

police organization is not keen to allow law enforcers to engage in video *karera* operations or accept gifts from the public, even if President Duterte appears to have given them the go-ahead.

The police force will instead continue to enforce the law, which prohibits illegal gambling activities such as video *karera*, or horse racing video machine games, PNP spokesman Bernard Banac said on Saturday.

Any form of illegal gambling, Banac said, was unacceptable, citing a conflict of interest situation if policemen who are supposed to enforce the law against illegal gambling would themselves be involved in its operations.

Under existing laws and civil service rules, it is prohibited to receive, directly or indirectly, any gift, present or any other form of benefit in the course of official duties.

RA 3019 said the prohibited acts should not be interpreted against the practice of any profession, business, or occupation by any public officer or private person for as long as these are legitimately practiced.

Although RA 3019 was enacted in 1960 yet, its provisions remain relevant and enforceable.

President Duterte also needs to be reminded of Presidential Decree 46 issued by the late President Marcos two months after he declared martial law in

September 1972. It provided for a penalty of one to five years' imprisonment, plus perpetual disqualification from public office, for "any public official or employee, whether of the national or local governments, to receive, directly or indirectly, and for private persons to give, or offer to give, any gift, present or other valuable thing to any occasion, including Christmas, when such gift, present or other valuable thing is given by reason of his official position, regardless of whether or not the same is for past favor or favors or the giver hopes or expects to receive a favor or better treatment in the future from the public official or employee concerned in the discharge of his official functions."

Included in the prohibition is the throwing of parties or entertainment in honor of officials or employees or their immediate relatives.

The law remains in effect. In fact, it is one of several anti-graft legislation posted on the website of the Department of Justice (DOJ).

For law enforcers to be effective and respected, they must be more diligent about abiding by the law than the citizenry that they are sworn to protect. Law enforcers engaged or involved in illegal activities must suffer higher penalties than ordinary offenders.

Law enforcers must be firm, fair and consistent in implementing the law.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

THE EXPORTER OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER



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EDITORIAL



CARTOON

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For Guimaras, sea tragedy worse than 2006 oil spill

By TARA YAP

More than a decade after experiencing the country's worst oil spill disaster, there is again suffering in the island province of Guimaras after the August 3 sea tragedy that killed 31 people.

"This is worse than the August 2006 oil spill. The oil spill was an environmental disaster that did not take away a human life. This is a human tragedy," said Guimaras Gov. Samuel Gumarin, referring to the capsizing of three pumpboats in waters between Iloilo City and Guimaras.

Gumarin told Manila Bulletin the people of Guimaras never thought that the province's two major disasters can both happen in August.

Sunday marked the 13th year after the oil tanker M/T Solar 1 sank off Nueva Valencia town in southern Guimaras. The spillage of 2 million liters of bunker fuel is still considered the biggest oil spill disaster in the country.

But aside from the loss of lives, the August 3 disaster "is now hurting our economy and our everyday lives," Gumarin said.

The Philippine Coast Guard has indefinitely suspended the 15-minute boat trips between the island province and Iloilo City. Only ferries and roll-on, roll-off (RoRo) ships are allowed to sail and carry passengers and goods. The fare, however, is more expensive and trips are limited.

Guimaras is highly dependent on Iloilo City for its food supply, employment and health care.

"We are slowly being isolated. We source out 80 percent of ours needs from Iloilo and our people work in Iloilo," Gumarin said.

Guimaras is also anticipating a backlash on its tourism industry, which is one of the economic drivers of the island province with only five towns. It has pristine beaches that have been pushed as alternative to the popular Boracay Island as a beach destination, especially among travelers coming to Iloilo.

There are also inland resorts while its long winding roads have attracted bikers during the weekend.

"We need help to get back to normal," Gumarin said.

He urged national government agencies to talk with local officials and stakeholders to find long-term solutions.



'Most expensive resort' gets DOT nod

BY MA. STELLA F. ARNALDO

✉ @akosistellaBM

Special to the BUSINESSMIRROR

BANWA Private Island, dubbed the "most expensive resort in the world," finally secured the much-coveted accreditation from the Department of Tourism (DOT).

DOT Assistant Secretary for Tourism Regulation, Coordination and Resource Generation Ma. Rica C. Bueno told the BUSINESSMIRROR, "DOT Region 4B [Mimaropa] issued a regular accreditation to Banwa." An inspection team from the DOT, Department of the Interior and Local Government, and Department of Environment and

DOT...

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Natural Resources (DENR) visited the island resort last July 8 and 9, to check on its facilities, documentation, and permits, for accreditation purposes.

Bueno added the resort is also being assessed for star rating. "The third-party auditor for the star rating has already finished its assessment of the resort, but the report is still being reviewed by our team from the standards monitoring and enforcement [section]." DOT's star-rating system is an objective system that reflects the star-rating standards of the international hospitality industry, rating accommodations from one to five stars.

Other sources confirmed the resort has been accredited by DOT "as of July 30," but it has yet to accomplish DENR requirements regarding its sewerage treatment plant. The resort opened in March with splashy publicity placements in many international travel publications, only to stop booking guests after being scolded by the DOT to secure its accreditation first. **(See, "No DOT accreditation for costliest resort," in the BUSINESSMIRROR, May 21, 2019.)**

As this developed, the management of Banwa expressed confidence it would be able to break the mold of many high-end luxury resorts in Palawan, which have found themselves dropping rates and opening up more rooms to the public to attain profit targets. Some of these luxury five-star resorts even sell getaways on coupon deal

online retailers.

In an email, Banwa general manager Rochelle Kilgariff averred, "We are not a traditional 'resort' which is geared solely towards selling rooms, and which is required to deliver profits to its investors. As a truly 'private' island, we are focused on attracting guests who will understand and share our vision and values."

She added, "We aim to engage our guests with our environmental initiatives, such that they feel motivated to get involved and assist our efforts with philanthropic donations to allow us to continue and further expand the work we do both in and around the island itself, but also in the wider community. As such, our price point has been set to realistically cover our annual operational costs, based upon our anticipated number of guest charters—a figure we believe to be both achievable, and realistic."

Guests at Banwa are expected to pay \$100,000 a night for a minimum of two nights, with a promise of posh villas, a myriad of activities including spa treatments, fine-dining cuisine, and other luxury amenities. The nightly rate is good for 48 persons, although it doesn't cover transportation to the island.

A separate source noted that the resort is designed to attract guests based on a loyalty program designed by Banwa owner, Richard Graham Beattie, founder and executive chairman of TCC, said to be the world's leader in retail loyalty building programs. **(See, "Super yacht builder behind world's 'most expensive resort,'" in the BUSINESSMIRROR, July 9, 2019.)**

"They have a different business model," explained the source. "It's like a corporate rewards system, where the rewards are given to their employees," which presumably includes a stay at Banwa. "Their [Banwa's] clients are corporations who are members of the [loyalty] rewards system," the source added.

Beattie's web site says his global clients for his retail loyalty building programs under TCC include Tesco, Carrefour, Argos, Sainsbury's, Wellcome, 7-Eleven, Spar, Auchan, McDonalds, Burger King, Shell, Agip, StatOil, Jaguar Land Rover, Peugeot, Homebase, Habitat, and Selfridges.

Kilgariff confirmed that it took about 10 years for the property to be developed, "and that in itself signals that the motivation for this project was never driven by a requirement for a quick return on investment. ERDC [EcoResorts Development Corp.], the developer and owner of the resort, was not willing to compromise quality for expediency. Everything had to be built according to an extremely high level of fit and finish."

Meanwhile, she asserted the resort isn't just in the business of tourism, but has lent a hand to local residents as well. "Our work also extends to the local communities, where we provide books and supplies for local schools in our local barangays, along with much-needed health education and medical support, coupled with invaluable provision of water purification systems and more in close cooperation and collaboration with similar community-focused charitable organizations."



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SEA SURFACE TEMPERATURES BELOW NORMAL

EL NIÑO NOW OVER, SAYS US CLIMATE PREDICTION CENTER

By Ronnel W. Domingo
@RonWDomingoINQ

The mild occurrence of El Niño, which Philippine economic managers cited as one of major challenges that would impact on growth, is now over as sea surface temperatures (SSTs) in equatorial regions of eastern Pacific Ocean dived below normal.

In its "final El Niño advisory," the United States' Climate Prediction Center (CPC) and the International Research Institute for Climate and Society declared a "neutral status," which meant the absence of the phenomenon that brought abnormally dry conditions to the Philippines as well as La Niña which brought abnormally wet conditions.

"In July, (neutral) conditions were reflected by the combination of below-average (SSTs) in the eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean and above-average SSTs in the central Pacific," CPC said.

The agency added that "anomalously cool waters prevailed in the eastern Pacific and anomalously warm waters continued in the Central Pacific."

The neutral status is considered most likely—with a 50-percent to 55-percent chance—to

continue through the Northern Hemisphere winter 2019-2020.

Last week when the government announced second-quarter results for the Philippines' economic performance, Economic Planning Secretary Ernesto M. Pernia said El Niño was seen to be responsible for the contraction in the output of the water-sensitive crops such as palay and corn.

Philippine gross domestic product grew by 5.5 percent in the second quarter. During the period, output palay shrank by 5.5 percent and that of corn by 8.4 percent.

"This is why we must equip the agriculture sector with an effective climate change and disaster risk reduction program that will reduce production losses owing to weather disturbances," Pernia said.

"In addition to insurance programs, we must introduce technological solutions in order to build resiliency," he added.

Still on El Niño, Pernia said that while the latest occurrence of El Niño was mild, the impact on water supply—particularly in Metro Manila—was severe.

"(T)his adversely affected consumer confidence, resulting in a slowdown in household consumption," he said. INQ



Legarda urges communities to embrace climate adaptation

IN line with the southwest monsoon affecting the entire Philippines, Deputy Speaker and Antique Congresswoman Loren Legarda yesterday urged local communities to implement measures to combat climate change and its effects.

Legarda, an environmental champion, said local communities should learn to adapt to climate change as its effects are getting worse and damaging.

"Climate change is real and we are experiencing its effects everyday. The change in weather patterns, the worsening calamities, and the dis-

turbances seen in ecosystems—these are only some of its effects," said Legarda.

"If we do not stop it or learn to adapt to it, we will be effectively destroying the world we live in. In a few years or so, we will be producing less output from our farms, drinking toxic water, and seeing worsening pollutions of rivers and oceans, if we do not adapt," she added.

Legarda cited 10 local climate adaptation solutions, which include: reducing waste to zero, recycling and reusing, and refusing single-use plastics; harvesting rainwater for household and

community use; and installing rain gardens, food gardens, and edible landscapes for food sufficiency.

"Our local communities can make roadside ditches that will mitigate floods; promote climate field schools and resilient livelihoods for farming and rural communities, which will also promote women leadership roles; and harness solar and other renewable energy that will electrify homes, schools, barangay halls, and public places," Legarda added.

"Knowing local risks for hazards and creating early warning systems will help

ensure early action at the household and community level," continued Legarda, who authored several landmark environmental laws such as the Clean Air Act, the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, the Climate Change Act, and the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act.

Other local climate change adaptation solutions she shared include planting bamboo to protect slopes, prevent landslides, and provide livelihood; planting mangroves and sea grasses to protect coastal ecosystems and communities; and preparing for emergency response and swift recovery from the impacts of extreme weather events, which may include contingency planning and drills.



IPCC: Humans lead in Earth's deforestation

THE Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has revealed that human activities are the leading factors in massive deforestation as majority of the more than 7 billion people wipe out animals and plants at a staggering rate, thus speeding up the climate breakdown.

In its Special Report on Climate Change and Land, the body said majority of human activities destroy the environment and don't help at all in improving soil health and resiliency, as well as being able to drawdown carbon.

"The way we treat land can either help or harm the climate. Right now humans are driving deforestation," the report said.

Other findings contained in the report are: to achieve climate goals and reduce emissions as much as 45 percent by 2030, the world needs to improve our land management and agricultural practices; there are many opportunities to improve land and forest manage-

ment that will help us adapt to and limit the effects of climate change; the people should work to eliminate food waste, eating a balanced diet thereby reducing emissions from our food system; halting deforestation and restoring damaged ecosystems will be crucial for improving climate resiliency of our ecosystems, and changing from an emissions source to a sink.

"If we don't rapidly change course, we won't be able to deliver the Paris Agreement or the Sustainable Development Goals," the IPCC pointed out.

The body said without near-term action, the ability of land to help mitigate climate change would be lost as it suffers under a changing climate and from growing demands (e.g., growing population, food security and bioenergy).

"There is no single 'silver bullet' solution to the climate crisis. Changing our relationship with the land is a vital part of limiting climate change," it said.



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EPCD binuo upang mabatid ang entry of hazardous wastes

UPANG mapagtuunan ang labag na pagpasok ng nakapipinsala at iba pang uri ng basura mula sa ibang bansa, itinatag ng Bureau of Customs ang Environmental Protection and Compliance Division (EPCD).

Ayon kay Customs Commissioner Rey Leonardo B. Guerrero naglabas ito ng Customs Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 38-2019, kaakibat ang EPCD, isang permanente at espesyal na yunit na nag-aatas na masubaybayan at makontrol ang pagpasok ng nakapipinsalang bagay at iba pang basura sa bansa.

Ang EPCD, na nasa ilalim ng Enforcement and Security Service at ng Enforcement Group (EG), kung saan ito ang susubaybay sa proseso ng shipment ng nakapipinsalang bagay, produktong basura, basurang nyuklar, recyclable products or substances sa ilalim ng regulatory control ng Department of Environmental and Natural Resources (DENR).

Ang naturang division ang magrerekomenda na maglabas ng alert order at pre-lodgment control orders laban sa shipment na kahina-hinalang naglalaman ng kalakal na lalabag sa Customs Modernization

and Tariff Act (CMTA) and environmental laws, kung saan ito rin ang inatasan mag-imbetiga sa mga kaso at gagawa ng rekomendasyon upang kasuhan sa paglabag sa CMTA in relation to environmental and other applicable laws rules and regulations.

Ang BOC na isa sa mga regulatory agencies, ay may mandato na asistihan ang DENR sa pagsubaybay at mapigilan ang pagpasok ng hazardous and nuclear waste sa bansa sa bisa ng Republic Act 6969 or the Toxic Substance and Hazardous and Nuclear Waste Control Act of 1999.

(Pasky Natividad)



U.N. supports sustainable land use

By Elmer N. Manuel

The United Nations (UN) warned recently that more than 500 million people today live in areas affected by erosion linked to climate change and urged all countries to commit to sustainable land use to help limit greenhouse gas emissions before it is too late.

Speaking at the launch of a Special Report on Climate Change and Land by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in Geneva, experts highlighted how the rise in global temperatures, linked to increasing pressures on fertile soil, risked jeopardizing food security for the planet.

Humans affect more than 70 percent of ice-free land and a quarter is already degraded, noted Valérie Masson-Delmotte, co-chair of one of three Working Groups that contributed to the bumper 1,200-page report.

"Today, 500 million people live in areas that experience desertification," she told journalists. "People living in already degraded or desertified areas are increasingly negatively affected by climate change."

This soil degradation has a direct impact on the amount of carbon the earth is able to contain, Dr. Masson-Delmotte explained.

Amid recent reports that more an 820 million people are undernourished around the world, Co-chair of another Working Group, Jim Skea, highlighted the fact that up to 30 percent of food is lost or wasted.

In the future, countries should consider all options to tackle loss and waste, thereby reducing the pressure on land and the resulting greenhouse gas emissions, including by growing plant-based, or so-called "bio" fuels, he said.

"Limiting global warming to 1.5 or even two degrees (Celsius) will involve removing carbon

dioxide from the atmosphere and land has a critical role to play in carbon dioxide removal," Skea insisted. "Agricultural practices can help build up carbon in soils, but it could also mean using more bio-energy with or without carbon capture and storage and expanding forests."

This soil degradation has a direct impact on the amount of carbon the earth is able to contain.

Produced by 107 scientists from more than 50 countries across all regions of the world – with more than half of the contributing authors from developing nations – the IPCC report provides a peer-based review of the latest research on land use today.

According to the IPCC report, agriculture, forestry and other land use contribute to around a quarter of greenhouse gas emissions, a fact that policy-makers should consider when considering how they should invest to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.

"Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from all sectors is essential if we want to keep the load two degrees Celsius," said Debra Roberts, co-chair of Working Group II, before cautioning that there were "limits to the scale of energy crops and afforestation that could be used to achieve this goal."

Before the report launch, the text had to be assessed and approved by 195 Member States, a process that took longer than expected on Wednesday. In addition to the Special Report on Climate Change and Land, the IPCC plans to release its latest findings on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate next month, ahead of the UN Climate Action Summit on 23 September in New York.





Appointment of retired generals backed

By Hananeel Bordey

A member of the House of Representatives sees nothing wrong with appointing retired generals as members of the Cabinet especially graduates of the Philippine Military Academy.

Cebu Rep. Eduardo Gullas has expressed support for President Duterte's penchant to name retired uniformed personnel to high government posts as they are already considered civilians.

"Frankly, we find it absurd for critics to even suggest that the President has been 'militarizing government' or 'undermining civilian supremacy over the military' with his selection of a number of retired generals to head certain executive departments," Gullas said.

If we look at America, West Point alumni now serve in various capacities both in government and in the private sector.

"To begin with, these retired generals are already civilians — just like everybody else — having been discharged from active military service," Gullas pointed out.

The lawmaker, who was a former member of the Commission on Appointments, has compared this to the American set-up where alumni of US Military Academy, also serve in their government.

"If we look at America, West Point alumni now serve in various capacities both in government and in the private sector there, mostly as administrators," Gullas said, referring to the US Military Academy.

"West Point graduates have been performing high purely civilian functions as chief executive officers of some of the largest corporations in America and as presidents of American universities," Gullas added.

Recently, Mr. Duterte has appointed retired Major General Emmanuel Salamat, former chief

of the Armed Forces' Northern Luzon Command, to be part of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System governing board.

"Clearly, the President believes that there are instances wherein he needs the help of an executive with a deep military background to get the job done," Gullas said.

"What the President is doing — harnessing the services of highly qualified and disciplined men with extensive military training — is nothing new," Gullas added.

The House member emphasized it is not only Duterte who has appointed ex-military men in the high government positions saying other post-EDSA People Power Revolution presidents have also designated some.

Mr. Duterte previously blasted Senator Richard Gordon for airing his concern on the high number of retired military officials who were appointed to office.

But the Senator believed that someone made his comment exaggerated which triggered the President to run tirades against him.

Senate President Vicente Sotto III has opposed Gordon's view and affirmed Mr. Duterte's stand on putting former military officers in key posts saying these men are already considered civilians.

Critics of the administration have been questioning the President's preference for former members of the military.

So far, he has appointed key officials with military background namely Interior Secretary Eduardo Año, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Carlito Galvez Jr., Information and Communications Technology Secretary Gringo Honasan, National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr., Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council of the Philippines Chair Eduardo del Rosario, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, Social Welfare Secretary Rolando Bautista and MMDA Chair Danilo Lim.



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GUSTO man natin o hindi, napag-iwanan na talaga ang mga magsasakang Filipino sa teknolohiya at iba pang modernong pagsasaka.

Yun bang === pagsasaka na pangunahing bigas at mais ang pangunahing produkto

Bukod sa pagiging atrasado sa paraan ng pagsasaka, problema rin ang pagbibitiw sa pagsasaka ng maraming kabataan.

Mabilis na dumarami ang mga kabataang mas gustong mabuhay sa bisa ng mga trabahong kaugnay ng kompyuter, ng iba pang mga kurso gaya ng engineering, pagtuturo, medisina at maging sa edukasyon.

Kaya naiwan na ang mga matatanda at sila na lang ang inaasahan na mag-asikaso sa bukid na pinagmumulan ng pagkain hanggang sa pumanaw ang mga ito at maaaring wala nang magproduksyon pa para sa pagkain natin.

Nakalilimutan ng mga kabataan na ang pagsasaka, kasama ang iba pang anyo ng agrikultura, ang pundasyon ng buhay.

Sa simpleng salita, mga Bro, computer expert ka man o inhinyero, titser, doktor at iba pa, kung wala kang makain at mainom mula sa pagsasaka at agrikultura, patay kang batang propesyonal ka.

TEKNOLOHIYA AT MEKANISASYON

Mapalad ang mga bansang ginagamit ang teknolohiya para mapaulad ang pinagkukunan nila ng pagkain at hindi magdepende sa importasyon nito para mabuhay.

Sa teknolohiya, ginagamit ang mga kompyuter para magdisensyo at gumawa ng mga mura at makabagong kagamitan at paraan para sa pagsasaka.

Halimbawa, sa mga mauunlad na bansa, naririyang ang paggawa ng mga makina para sa pagpupunla, pagtatanim, pagpapatubig at pag-aani na hindi kailangan ang maraming tao.

Naririyang din ang matipid na paggamit ng tubig sa halip na ubusin ang lamang-tubig ng mga dam at ilog para mapaganda ang mga tanim, maging mabunga ang mga ito at mapalaki ang ani.



P40 BILYONG PUHUNAN PARA SA MAGSASAKA

Naririyang din ang pag-aaral kung paano magkaroon ng mga butil na doble o triple ang ani, matibay sa mga sakit at pagkasira mula sa init o lamig ng panahon.

Tayo, may mga reaper na o pang-ani at ilang kagamitang moderno ngunit lahat ay imported o gawa ng mga dayuhang nasa bansa na kung masya ay perwisyo rin sa huli.

PUHUNAN ANG KAILANGAN

Para makaabot o makapantay tayo sa iba sa teknolohiya at mekanisasyon, kailangan ang puhunan.

At magandang pakinggan na magbubuhos ang Land Bank of the Philippines ng P30 bilyon para sa mga magsasaka.

Bukod ito sa inaasahang P10 bilyong buwis sa importasyon ng bigas na laan para sa mga magsasaka.

Kumikilos na ang Land Bank mula nang utusan ito ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na bumalik sa orihinal nitong layunin, ang paunlarin ang ating mga magsasaka sa pagbibigay ng kanilang puhunan o kapital.

Nag-iba kasi ang ihip ng hangin ang mga namumuno ng Land Bank at sa mga komersyo at industriya o pabrika nagtuon ng pansin.

Simple lang ang rason nila: hindi umano maaasahan ang mga magsasaka na magbalik ng inuutang nilang puhunan kumpara sa mga komersyante at kapitalista.

Kung meron mang mga magsasaka na binibigyan ng pansin ng nasabing bangko, walang iba kundi ang mga corporate farm o malalaking sangkot sa mga pangkomersyong produkto na agrikultural gaya ng mga hindi palay at mais.

Sa ngayon, nasa P9 bilyon lang umano ang inilalaan ng bangko para sa mga magsasaka ngunit nasa isang milyong lang ang bilang.

Sa susunod na tatlong taon, uubusin na umano nila ang P30 bilyon para naman makoberan nila ang nasa 3 milyong mag-

sasaka.

Sana nga matuloy ito at hindi na naman bumalik sa pagseserbisyo lamang sa mga malalaki at mayayaman makaraan ang tatlong taon o makaraang aalis sa Palasyo si Pang. Duterte.

HAMUNIN ANG SARILI

Mula sa inaasahang ayuda ng pamahalaan, sana mahamon ng mga magsasaka ang kanilang mga sarili na humarap sa pagbabago sa pagsasaka.

Sa nauulinigan natin, sa ilalim ng bagong pamunuan ng Department of Agriculture, susubuking mapaayon sa pag-unlad ng teknolohiya at mekanisasyon ang pagpapalay at pagmamais sa Pilipinas.

Gayundin na susubuking tulungan ng DA ang mga magsasaka na haluan ng mga high yielding crop o pangkomersyo ang kanilang pagsasaka.

Halimbawa, sa isang panahon o tag-ulan, palay ang itatanim pero iba naman ang itatanim sa tag-init.

Pwede ring hatiin ang lupa para sa palay at mais at para sa ibang mga produkto.

Ngunit sa palay at mais, gagamit ng mga binhi at paraang makabago upang magdoble o magtriple ang ani ng mga ito sa paggamit halimbawa ng mga hybrid na punla sa halip na mga ordinaryong binhi.

Tatal, halos parehong lang naman ang capital o salapi na ibinubuhos sa isang ektarya para sa hybrid at ordinaryong binhi.

O mga mahal nating magsasaka, magandang makipag-ugnayan tayo sa pamahalaan at sabihin kung ano ang gusto nating mangyari hindi lang para sa ating mga sarili at pamilya kundi para na rin sa ating bayan.

Anomang reaksyon o reklamo, maaaring iparating sa 09228403-333 o i-email sa bantiporda@yahoo.com.