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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



Gina Lopez, environment champion; 65

By the Inquirer Staff
@Team_Inquirer

Malacañang on Monday hailed Regina “Gina” Paz Lopez as a “warrior and advocate” for the environment, shortly after news broke that the former environment secretary had died.

Presidential spokesperson Salvador Panelo and other members of President Duterte’s Cabinet expressed their condolences to the family of Lopez, who died of brain cancer on Monday. She was 65.

“The Palace deeply grieves the demise of one of President Duterte’s most passionate Cabinet members whose environmental advocacy and legacy remains unparalleled to this day,” Panelo said in a statement.

“As we pay tribute and give honor to this warrior and advocate, we fervently pray for the Almighty to grant her eternal repose,” Panelo said.

Good friend

In a text message to reporters, Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea admitted that he had clashed with Lopez, but said he considered her a good friend.

“We had some slight differences on certain policies during our stint as members of the Cabinet, but remained as friends. We extend our condolences to the entire family and shall offer prayers for the eternal repose of her soul. Rest in peace, Gina,” Medialdea said.

Presidential Communications Secretary Martin Andanar hailed Lopez as “truly a good maverick and patriot.”

“The world will not be the same without Gina Lopez,” Andanar said.

Panelo recalled Lopez’s clashes with the mining sector, which inevitably led to the rejection of her nomination by the

Commission on Appointments.

“[She] took the bull by the horns when she fiercely fought powerful interests in the mining sector, as well as industries having negative effect on our ecology. She would be greatly missed,” he said.

Responsible mining

Both the mining industry and its opponents issued statements expressing grief over Lopez’s death.

“Her strong advocacy for the protection of the environment and mining communities was in step with our organization’s commitment to responsible resource development,” said Rocky Dimaculangan, spokesperson for the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines.

“Our members will best remember her for keeping us active, alert and focused on ensuring that our operations will benefit present and future generations of Filipinos on a sustainable basis,” he said.

“I hope you have finally found peace. We had our differences, but at the end of the day, we both wanted the same thing: a better planet for our children. You kept the mining industry on its toes, urging us to do better, and for that, I am truly grateful,” said the chamber’s executive director, Ronnie Recidoro.

The mining industry opponent Alyansa Tigil Mina held Lopez as a “bastion of environmental activism, and a source of hope and inspiration for many communities and organizations that had the opportunity to work and be served by her.”

“Many of the young people in the antimining campaign were touched by Ma’am Gina, and we are sure that they wanted to tell her many things—that they started to find their place in serving the country through the eyes and experiences of a



Gina Lopez, according to Sen. Sonny Angara, was the “confirmed environment secretary of the people, minister for sustainable development and ambassador for children’s rights.”

Gina Lopez,” the group said.

Lawmakers also paid tribute to Lopez, whose term abruptly ended when the Commission on Appointments rejected her nomination in May 2017 after she ordered an audit of the mining industry, canceled mining contracts, and suspended 26 projects that did not meet environmental standards.

Children’s rights champion

Opposition Sen. Francis Pangilinan praised Lopez not only for her work as an environmentalist in her private capacity and as a member of the Cabinet, but also for defending children’s rights as head of the Bantay Bata Foundation.

“At the Senate, we stood by her appointment ... because we believe that such an important position should be held by someone who understands how critical it is to prioritize the environment. Someone who is unafraid to butt heads with heavyweights who are harming our natural resources,” Pangilinan said.

“She was all that. In or out of [the] government, her life was about tireless creativity for all our collective future, through our children and our environment,” he added, describing Lopez as “a woman of courage” and “firebrand.”

Sen. Grace Poe thanked Lopez for “touching our lives in your impassioned ways.”

“[She] came in our midst and taught us love for mankind and the environment, our common home,” Poe said.

‘Secretary of the people’

Sen. Sonny Angara said that despite the appointments commission’s rejection of Lopez’s nomination, her “selfless works” showed that she was “the confirmed environment secretary of the people, the minister for sustainable development and the ambassador for children’s rights.”

Sen. Bong Go, who worked with Lopez when he was a special assistant to President Duterte, said his former Cabinet colleague was a “fearless advocate and a

tireless philanthropist.”

“As a former colleague in the government, I know how passionate, dedicated and humble she was as a public servant and as an Earth warrior,” Go said. “Her exceptional dedication in protecting our environment has no equal today.”

In a handwritten dispatch from her detention cell in Camp Crame, Sen. Leila de Lima said Lopez’s dedication to her advocacies had inspired Filipinos to make a stand for the environment and children’s rights.

“This world will never forget the woman who, from a life of privilege, found her calling among those who have the least—in the slums, among the abused and with the indigenous communities devastated by the destruction of their ancestral domains,” De Lima said.

Unquestionable commitment

“The legacy she left will be a beacon in these dark times, guiding us through seemingly insurmountable odds, as we continue the struggle for truth,

justice and peace,” she said.

Sen. Manny Pacquiao, who vigorously defended Lopez’s nomination as chair of the appointments commission’s committee on environment and natural resources, honored his “dear friend” for teaching Filipinos “to love our country by protecting our environment and caring for our people.”

“Her passion was undeniable. Her commitment was unquestionable. She lived her life to the fullest. Her legacy will inspire us to fulfill our mission with courage and conviction. Good-bye, my friend,” Pacquiao said.

Senate Majority Leader Juan Miguel Zubiri, said to be one of the 16 members of the appointments commission who voted against Lopez’s nomination, expressed admiration for the departed environmental advocate.

“She brought her environmental activism into every Filipino home in her travels around our beautiful archipelago,” Zubiri said.

“When disaster struck, she extended her able hands to help others. Even as a very young heiress of a media empire, she thought of their responsibility to the Filipino masses,” he said.

“We lost a strong defender of nature [with the death of] Gina. But we will continue her legacy and continue the struggle for the preservation of the environment,” Bayan Muna Rep. Carlos Zarate said.

“We grieve for Gina Lopez. But we, too, are grateful for the gift of life, spent for a worthy cause ... a life of sincere commitment to what truly matters,” said Catholic priest Edwin Gariguez, executive secretary of the National Secretariat for Social Action, Justice and Peace of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines. —REPORTS FROM JULIE M. AURELIO, KARL R. OCAMPO, MARLON RAMOS, DJ YAP AND TINA G. SANTOS INQ



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RIP, GINA LOPEZ

FORMER environment secretary Gina Lopez understood the environmental issues besetting our country.

Her passion for her work as then interim secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources was inspiring and energizing. The strong-willed woman that she was, she stuck to her policy decisions and held her ground, which unfortunately created anger and hatred toward her among some concerned mining companies and, worse, stirred unhappy admiration and envy in some politicians.

We lost one of the country's "best and the brightest" leaders. May your soul rest in peace, Secretary Gina.

REGINALD B. TAMAYO,
Marikina City



Gina Lopez: Warrior for Mother Earth, champion of the environment

By ARGYLL B. GEDUCOS, VANNE P. TERRAZOLA,
and ELLALYN DE VERA RUIZ

Malacañang, senators, and environment stakeholders paid tribute to former Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Regina Paz "Gina" Lopez, who passed away Monday morning.

In a statement, presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo expressed "with a heavy heart" the Palace's sincerest condolences to Lopez's family, relatives, friends and loved ones.

"The Palace deeply grieves the demise of one of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's most passionate Cabinet members whose environmental advocacy and legacy remains unparalleled to this day," he said early Monday.

"Secretary Lopez... took the bull by the horns when she fiercely fought powerful interests in the mining sector, as well as in industries having negative effect on our ecology. She would be greatly missed," he added.



GINA LOPEZ

Gina Lopez: Warrior...



"As we pay tribute and give honor to this warrior and advocate, we fervently pray for the Almighty to grant her eternal repose. May the perpetual light shine upon her," he continued.

According to ABS-CBN, Lopez passed away early Monday after battling brain cancer. She was 65.

Lopez was the 1997 International Public Relations Awardee for Excellence for the Environment and the 2009 Outstanding Manilan Awardee for the Environment.

She was appointed as Duterte's Environment Secretary in 2016 but her stint did not last a year after the Commission on Appointments (CA) rejected her confirmation. With the CA rejection, Malacañang expressed regret and "deep concern" but it nevertheless said it will accept and respect the body's decision.

As secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Lopez became known for shutting down mining operations found to have violated environmental laws. She also cancelled contracts for undeveloped mines and banned future open-pit mining

projects.

Warrior for Mother Earth

Senate President Pro Tempore Ralph Recto, in statement, described Lopez as a "great secretary of defense of our natural resources" despite her short stint as DENR secretary.

He also praised her advocacy for the environment, as well as for children.

"She was a lifelong warrior for Mother Earth," Recto said.

"Before climate change became a buzzword, she was already warning us about this threat to mankind," he added.

Recto said the "best way" to honor Lopez is to emulate and heed her lessons.

Majority Leader Juan Miguel Zubiri said he admires Lopez very much, describing her as "a good friend of every Filipino, rich and poor, and a real warrior for the conservation, protection of the environment."

"I admire the grace, patience and sublime courage with which she faced the pains of her sickness. We will all miss her," he said.

"Secretary Gina Lopez came in our

midst and taught us love for mankind and the environment, our common home. Thank you for touching our lives in your impassioned way," Sen. Grace Poe said.

'Confirmed environment secretary of the people'

Senator Juan Edgardo "Sonny" Angara said Lopez's death brought to mind her selfless work as a philanthropist and activist - that of a "confirmed environment secretary of the people."

"By her selfless works, Gina's work was the confirmed environment secretary of the people, the minister for sustainable development, and the ambassador for children's rights," Angara said in a statement.

"She spent a lifetime pouring her considerable talents in bringing to the mainstream the powerless and the voiceless who exist forgotten in the margins of society," the senator added.

During her stint, Lopez cancelled the contracts of 75 mining companies. At least 12 of the oppositions filed before the CA against her were related to her order closing and suspending mining operations.

Angara said Lopez "fought for children who were incapable of seeking justice and care for themselves and eloquently spoke for the people in the



communities whose voices have been crushed by exploitation.”

“She even took it upon herself to represent a constituency that cannot vote – trees, fish, rivers and wildlife – because she correctly believed that our continued existence and that of our children is dependent on theirs,” he said.

“Gina did not preach what she did not practice. She was not a PowerPoint crusader but a living example of how to live a life that will not bankrupt earth’s resources to support us,” added the senator.

Angara said Lopez, likewise, proved to be a “one-person green warrior” who took the fight in “boardrooms, chat rooms, government offices and her favorite office – out in the open under a forest canopy or underwater, where she was in her element with people she loved in a country she never gave up hope on.”

“In the last years of her life, she produced a travelogue, of the sublime kind, because it did not only transport us to the beautiful places in our country, but gave us a lesson on the importance of protecting these,”

“She left us a bucket list to comply with and follow,” Angara enthused.

Defender of the environment

For Surigao del Norte 2nd District Rep. Robert Ace Barbers, Lopez was a “rare breed of a public servant,” one that the nation would sorely miss.

“The country lost a true defender of the environment,” he said.

“Her love for our country and passion to protect Mother Earth and her ways in doing it as well as being vocal about it is a manifestation of her character as a maverick in her advocacies. A rare breed of a public servant and a Filipina,” Barbers noted.

Quezon City 2nd District Rep. Precious Hipolito-Castelo echoed her colleagues’ glowing description of the former environment secretary in her own statement.

“We lost a tenacious fighter in protecting our environment – an advocacy she relentlessly pursued to keep Mother Earth better for the next generation,” said the lady solon.

“She taught us to dream the impossible. She let us believe we can fly. We will miss her,” Castelo added.

Champion of the environment

DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu, who succeeded Lopez as chief of the agency, described Lopez as “a pure champion of the environment, bold and fearless in her advocacies, regardless of the consequences.”

Cimatu said Lopez had been compassionate for the underprivileged, and promoted ecotourism as a way out of poverty.

“She was an inspiration to many, a personification of our hopes for a sustainably greener environment with bountiful natural resources for all,” Cimatu said. “The DENR family will remember her fondness, respect, and love. We will honor her by building on her legacy.”

“Her noble efforts to save the environment transcend to protect and improve the lives of the people, the youth, and the disadvantaged and have contributed immensely to nation-building,” the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) said in a statement.

For his part, Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) Executive Director Ronald Recidoro said he was grateful for Lopez, who urged the mining industry to do better.

“Goodbye, Ma’am Gina. I hope you have finally found peace. We had our differences, but at the end of the day, we both wanted the same thing: A better planet for our children. You kept the mining industry on its toes, urging us to do better, and for that, I am truly grateful,” Recidoro said.

Members of the Alyansa Tigil Mina (ATM) were also deeply saddened with the demise of Lopez.

“She was a bastion of environmental activism, and a source of hope and inspiration for many communities and organizations that had the opportunity to work and be served by her. She will be sorely missed,” ATM said. (With reports from Hannah L. Torregoza, Ellson B. Quismorio, and Madelaine B. Mirafior)



Earth warrior Gina Lopez, 65

By LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON

Philanthropist and former Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) secretary Gina Lopez died early yesterday due to multiple organ failure after battling brain cancer. She was 65.

Lopez served as a long-time chairperson of the ABS-CBN Foundation Inc. (AFI). Her decades of work gave birth to Bantay Bata 163, Bantay Kalikasan, and several campaigns and projects, including Kapit Bisig para sa Ilog Pasig, No to Mining in Palawan, and the reforestation of La Mesa Watershed.

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He added, "She fought for children who were incapable of seeking justice and care for themselves, and eloquently spoke for the people in the communities whose voices have been crushed by exploitation."

Sen. Bong Go cited her for her work as secretary of DENR.

"I had the honor of working with her when she was the environment secretary of the Duterte Administration. As a former colleague in the government, I know how passionate, dedicated and humble she was as a public servant and as an Earth warrior," Go said in a statement.

Sen. Grace Poe said Lopez "taught us love for mankind and the environment, our common home."

"Thank you for touching our lives in your impassioned way. May our prayers bring you peace and your family, comfort," Poe added.

Senate President Pro Tempore Ralph Recto described Lopez as the "great secretary of defense of our natural resources."

"She walked her talk, be it in defense of helpless children or displaced communities, or in nursing back to life polluted waters or ravaged forests," Recto said.

Sen. Francis Pangilinan thanked Lopez for her service to the nation, "We worked together on various advocacies of the ABS-CBN Foundation spanning three decades. We partnered with her in the early '90s to raise funds for the resettlement of victims of the Mt. Pinatubo eruption. We partnered with her again a decade later to help build the La Mesa Dam Eco Park Project, and yet again a few years ago to help raise incomes for farming communities in Palawan and other parts of the country."

Sen. Nancy Binay offered

Earth From Page 1

Lopez was also a columnist of *The STAR's* Lifestyle section.

In a statement, ABS-CBN said it lost a fervent advocate of children's rights and protection, a passionate proponent of sustainable livelihood among the underprivileged, and an unswerving champion for environment preservation.

"Gina was the pillar of strength that pushed AFI to achieve what seemed to be impossible. Her caring heart and selfless kind of love inspired people within and beyond the organization to help and serve others," it added.

ABS-CBN chairman Mark Lopez said his cousin lived her life with overflowing love and passion to serve.

"At an age when people are just figuring out what they want to do in life, she already knew her purpose. She left a comfortable life to devote her time and energy to help uplift other people's lives," he said.

"When she returned to join ABS-CBN, she instilled in her people the same drive to help. For her, nothing cannot be done, no effort is too small, anybody can—and should—do their part in making the world a better place," Lopez added.

Palace: Lopez legacy unparalleled

Malacañang cited Lopez as an environmental warrior and advocate whose legacy was unparalleled.

"The Palace deeply grieves the demise of one of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's most passionate Cabinet members whose environmental advocacy and legacy remains unparalleled to this day," presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo said in a statement yesterday.

"Lopez took the bull by the horns when she fiercely fought powerful interests in the mining sector, as well as in industries having negative effect on our ecology. She would be greatly missed," Panelo said.

Senators mourned the passing of the former environment secretary, and cited her lifelong

work to protect the environment and children.

Sen. Sonny Angara said with her selfless works, Lopez "was the confirmed environment secretary of the people, the minister for sustainable development, and the ambassador for children's rights."



prayers for Lopez's family and friends. "A staunch defender of the environment, she was steadfast in her beliefs and inspired us all through her passion for the environment," Binay said.

House Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda, former news anchor of ABS-CBN, also extended her condolences and said, "She was passionate, courageous and she knew what her purpose was. She lived a life dedicated to saving and preserving the environment for the younger generations. She treaded the paths most will unlikely take," the Antique congresswoman said.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu noted that he remembers his predecessor in DENR as a strict environmentalist, and that some of her department orders are still in effect.

In a statement, Cimatu said, "Gina was a pure champion of the environment, bold and fearless in her advocacies, regardless of the consequences. She was uncompromising in protecting watersheds and imposing high standards of responsibility on the mining industry. At the same time, Gina was compassionate for the underprivileged, and for them promoted ecotourism as a way out of poverty."

Lopez's most notable achievements include the successful reforestation of the La Mesa Watershed and the rehabilitation of 17 esteros of the Pasig River.

She also pioneered Educational Television in the Philippines which put in place video libraries in 10,000 public schools, and served as vice-chairperson of ABS-CBN Bayan Foundation, which provides microfinance assistance to micro-entrepreneurs.

She became the first Filipino to be awarded the prestigious Seacology Prize in October 2017 at Berkeley in California for her "exceptional achievement in preserving island environments and culture."

Lopez was the daughter of ABS-CBN chairman emeritus Eugenio Lopez Jr. and Conchita La'o. She is survived by her two sons, Roberto and

Benjamin.

Champion of communities

For 10 months as DENR secretary, Lopez ordered the conduct of a mine audit, cancelled mining contracts, suspended the operations of 26 mining projects and issued new policies to ensure that the industry is up to international standards on transparency and disclosures.

However, the congressional Commission on Appointments rejected her appointment, which President Duterte described as a loss.

Even the mining sector, who received the greatest attention during her stint at the DENR, bid goodbye and hoped that Lopez has finally found peace.

"We had our differences, but at the end of the day, we both wanted the same thing: a better planet for our children. You kept the mining industry on its toes, urging us to do better, and for that, I am truly grateful," Chamber of Mines of the Philippines executive director Ronald Recidoro said.

Non-government organization Alyansa Tigil Mina, emphasized that Lopez was a bastion of environmental activism, and a source of hope and inspiration for many communities and organizations.

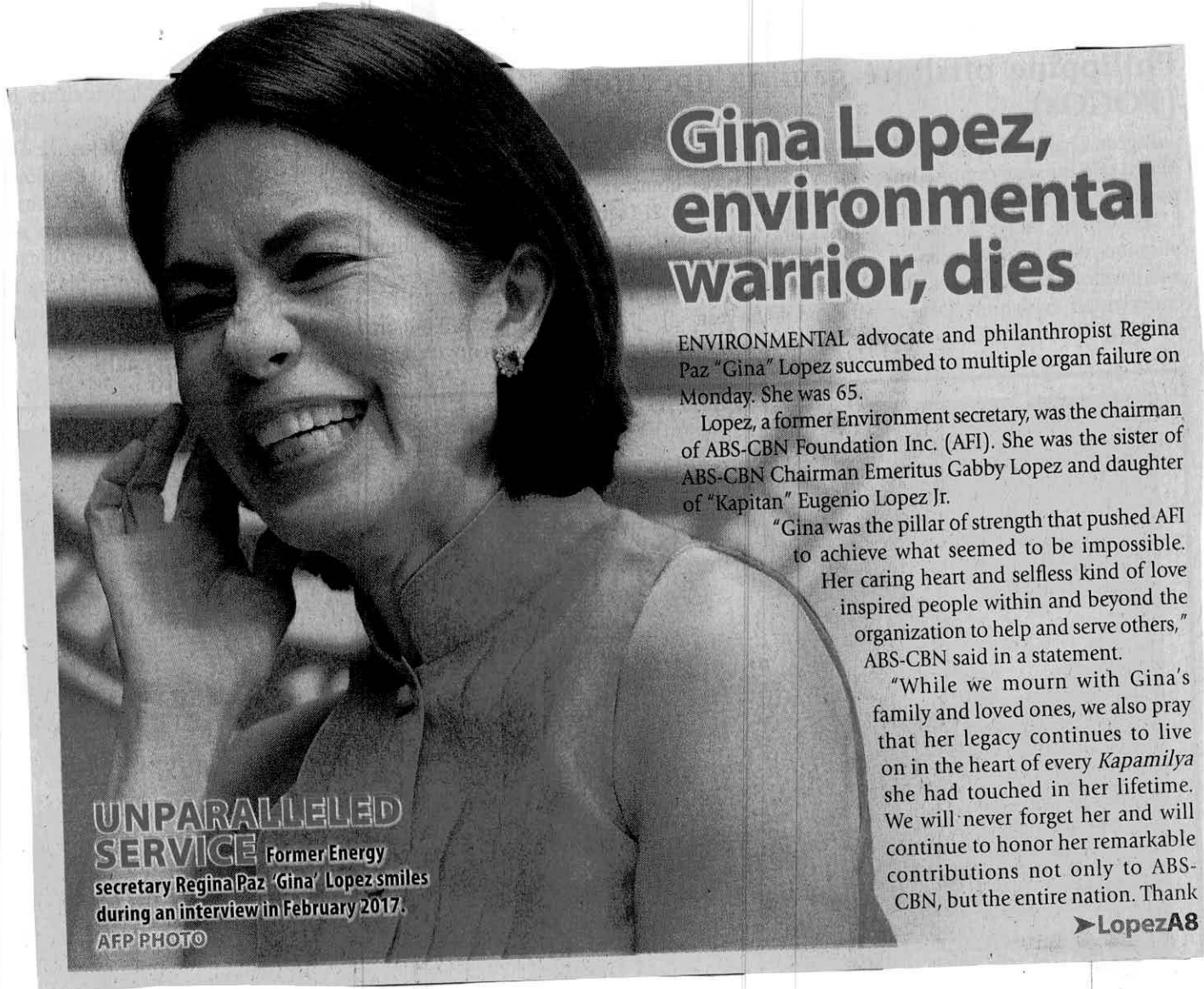
Meanwhile, the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission, which Lopez served as chairperson from 2009 to 2016, said, "She was a great leader, an inspiring mentor, a loving friend, and a colleague full of character. She will always be the champion of the Filipino communities and will forever be remembered as the unwavering advocate and muse of the Pasig River."

Environmental groups also expressed sadness over Lopez's passing.

Aileen Lucero, national coordinator, EcoWaste Coalition, said, "When the Commission on Appointments rejected Gina's nomination as DENR secretary, we said it was a dark day in our nation's struggles against destructive mining operations and for sustainable resource use. Today is a very sad day as we mourn the passing of Gina, an outspoken

eco-warrior who took on powerful mining companies and bravely fought for our threatened ecosystems and communities and for our common future." - With Edith Regalado, Alexis Romero, Paolo Romero, Helen Flores, Jose Rodel Clapano, Rhodina Villanueva, Emmanuel Tupas, De-Ion Porcalla

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Gina Lopez, environmental warrior, dies

ENVIRONMENTAL advocate and philanthropist Regina Paz "Gina" Lopez succumbed to multiple organ failure on Monday. She was 65.

Lopez, a former Environment secretary, was the chairman of ABS-CBN Foundation Inc. (AFI). She was the sister of ABS-CBN Chairman Emeritus Gabby Lopez and daughter of "Kapitan" Eugenio Lopez Jr.

"Gina was the pillar of strength that pushed AFI to achieve what seemed to be impossible. Her caring heart and selfless kind of love inspired people within and beyond the organization to help and serve others," ABS-CBN said in a statement.

"While we mourn with Gina's family and loved ones, we also pray that her legacy continues to live on in the heart of every *Kapamilya* she had touched in her lifetime. We will never forget her and will continue to honor her remarkable contributions not only to ABS-CBN, but the entire nation. Thank

► LopezA8

**UNPARALLELED
SERVICE** Former Energy
secretary Regina Paz 'Gina' Lopez smiles
during an interview in February 2017.
AFP PHOTO



■ LOPEZ FROM A1

Gina Lopez

you Gina, for showing us how it is to live in the service of the Filipino," it added.

Malacañang said Lopez's advocacy "remains unparalleled to this day."

"It is with a heavy heart that we express our sincerest condolences to her family, relatives, friends and loved ones," Palace spokesman Salvador Panelo said.

Sen. Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go said it was an honor working with Lopez in the Duterte Cabinet.

"She was a fearless advocate and a tireless philanthropist, dedicating most of her life for the betterment of her fellow Filipinos. Her exceptional dedication in protecting our environment has no equal today," the senator said.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said Lopez was a "pure champion of the environment."

"[She was] bold and fearless in her advocacies, regardless of the

consequences. She was uncompromising in protecting watersheds and imposing high standards of responsibility on the mining industry. At the same time, Gina was compassionate for the underprivileged, and for them promoted ecotourism as a way out of poverty," Cimatu added.

ABS-CBN Chairman Mark Lopez said the country lost a staunch environmentalist and children's rights advocate.

"She left a comfortable life to devote her time and energy to help uplift other people's lives," he said in a statement.

He lauded his cousin for her efforts to rescue victims of child abuse, save a watershed, stop the destruction of the environment, clean a river and help communities stand on their own by turning them into eco-tourism sites.

Lopez was known for her work in rehabilitating the Pasig River and La Mesa Watershed and

shutting down mining operations found to have violated environmental laws.

She founded Bantay Bata 163, a helpline for victims of child abuse. She also established Investments in Loving Organizations for Village Economies Foundation, which aims to lift communities out of poverty through the creation of environmentally conscious businesses at the grassroots level.

Tributes

Tributes cascaded for Lopez, who was appointed secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in 2016. Her stint was brief because she did not get the approval of the Commission on Appointments.

Besides shutting down mining operations found to have violated environmental laws, she also canceled contracts for undeveloped mines and banned open-pit mining projects.

Farmer's groups Anakpawis party-list and Unyon ng Mang-

gagawa sa Agrikultura commended Lopez's fight for the environment.

"Her holistic approach not only [in] advocating a genuine pro-environment policy, but also a deep concern on communities made her close to the people. Thus, various sectors were vocal in supporting her to be the DENR secretary. But, unfortunately, the clamor fell on deaf ears," Ariel Casilao, Anakpawis party-list vice president, said in a statement.

The fishing community also remembered Lopez for her campaign to dismantle vast tracts of fish pens in Laguna de Bay to let the lake recuperate from pollution and congestion.

"She was the most competent environment chief in Philippine history, standing firm against powerful giant mines without hesitation. She also committed [in] seeking consultations with the grassroots to hear their views on government projects that affect civil and socioeconomic rights," fisherfolk group Pamalakaya Chairman Fernando Hicap said.

National Anti-Poverty Com-

mission Secretary Liza Maza said Lopez was a model for women.

"She was feisty, passionate and unafraid to pursue her advocacies for the environment, children's welfare and indigenous people's rights, among others," she said.

"She was articulate and fearless in presenting at Cabinet meetings DENR programs that would protect the environment, safeguard indigenous communities and create livelihood programs for the poor," the former Social Welfare secretary said.

Greenpeace also mourned the Lopez's death.

"Gina was a prime mover in many of our coalitions through the years, most recently with the Green Thumb Coalition of the last decade, which sought to ensure government accountability on environmental issues that plague our people and affect all other aspects of Filipino life," Southeast Asia executive director Yeb Saño said. "The Department of Environment and Natural Resources championed people over profit, putting the welfare of the Filipino people over the

exploitation and destruction of natural resources by corporate interests. She was also an inspiration to many for her courage and kindness."

The People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) remembered Lopez for being an animal lover, Earth warrior and activist.

"One of her greatest dreams was to see Mali free from loneliness and suffering at the Manila Zoo, and she played a crucial part in PETA's campaign to accomplish that. We hope people will emulate her example by following their hearts to do what's right, fighting for the environment and animals by standing up for them, and speaking up for Mali, who deserves to live in freedom and happiness at a sanctuary," the group said. Mali is the 45-year-old elephant held at the Manila Zoo.

A memorial service will be held for Lopez at the La Mesa Eco Park on Thursday and Friday. Viewing will be from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

FRANCIS EARL CUETO, DIVINA NOVA JOY DELA CRUZ AND ARIC JOHN SY CUA



Palace mourns Gina's death

By Pilar Matoto

Malacañang expressed its condolences to the family of Regina Paz Lopez who passed away on Monday.

Lopez, Gina to family and friends and known for being the long-serving chairperson of the ABS-CBN Foundation Inc. (AFI), was also the former Department of Environmental and Natural Resources (DENR) secretary under President Rodrigo Duterte.

As DENR secretary, she was steadfast in her service to the environment and to the Filipino people.

Lopez systematized the termination of 28 mines that violated environmental laws. She also fought against 75 contracts

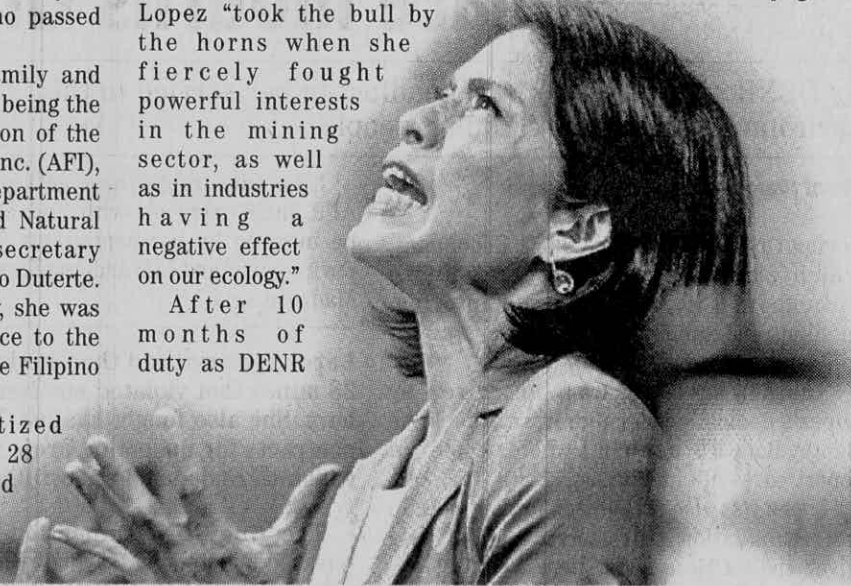
for upcoming projects, all of which were deemed unlawful.

Presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo stated that Lopez "took the bull by the horns when she fiercely fought powerful interests in the mining sector, as well as in industries having a negative effect on our ecology."

After 10 months of duty as DENR

secretary, Lopez went on to form other organizations such as the I.L.O.V.E. or Investments in

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GINA Lopez, 65

Palace mourns Gina's death

As DENR secretary, she was steadfast in her service to the environment and to the Filipino people

From page A1

Loving Organizations for Village Economies, which aims to "create models of love throughout the country" by mentoring, funding, and uplifting organizations sworn to loving service of the Filipino.

Another such organization driven by Lopez's dedication to children's rights is the Bantay Bata 163, a helpline where people can report cases of child abuse.

Lopez was also recognized for her work in the rehabilitation and restoration of the Pasig River and La Mesa Watershed.

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief of staff General Benjamin Madrigal Jr. also extended his condolences to Lopez's family.

"Ms. Gina might have left us, but the AFP shall carry on with and continue to be inspired by her aspirations for a clean environment and safe and protected children" Madrigal said.

Lopez systematized the termination of 28 mines that violated environmental laws. She also fought against 75 contracts for upcoming projects, all of which were deemed unlawful.

The ABS-CBN Foundation Inc. also released a statement, saying, "Gina was the pillar of strength that pushed AFI to achieve what seemed to be impossible. Her caring heart and selfless kind of love inspired people within and beyond the organization to help

and serve others."

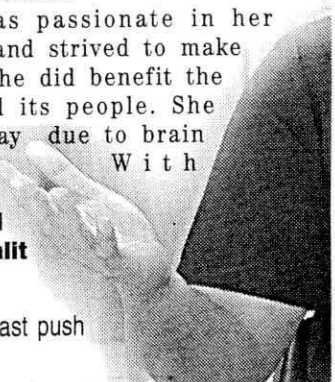
"While we mourn with Gina's family and loved ones, we also pray that her legacy continues to live on in the heart of every Kapamilya she had touched in her lifetime."

"We will never forget her and will continue to honor her remarkable contributions not only to ABS-CBN, but the entire nation," the statement concluded.

Lopez was passionate in her advocacies and strived to make everything she did benefit the country and its people. She died on Monday due to brain cancer.

With
**FTW, Miguel
Togonon and
Kristina Maralit**

CARDEMA in last push for recognition.





Ex-DENR chief, environmental advocate Gina Lopez dies at 65

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

[@jonmayuga](#)

ENVIRONMENTALIST Regina Paz L. Lopez, scion of the Lopez family which had interests in media, property development and power generation, died at 4:15 a.m. Monday, August 19, 2019, due to multiple organ failure. She was 65.

Lopez has earned the admiration of millions of netizens and followers on social media for her staunch environmental advocacies. Her passing was considered a great loss by her family and friends in environmental advocacy.

Mark Lopez, chairman of the ABS-CBN Foundation, in an official statement sent via e-mail, said the Lopez family lost not just a family member “but a person we deeply admire and respect.”

He added, “My cousin Gina Lopez, chairman of ABS-CBN Foundation, lived her life with overflowing love and passion to serve.”

He said the former secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) “left a comfortable life to devote her time and energy to help uplift other people’s lives.”

“When she returned to join ABS-CBN, she instilled in her people the same drive to help. For her, nothing cannot be done, no effort is too small, anybody can—and should—do their part in making the world a better place,” he said.

Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, in a statement, expressed his sympathy to the family of Lopez, whom he called, “a pure champion of the environment; bold and fearless in her advocacies, regardless of the consequences.”

Cimatu added, “She was uncompromising in protecting watersheds and imposing high standards of responsibility on the mining industry. At the same time, Gina was compassionate for the underprivileged, and for them promoted ecotourism as a way out of poverty.”

According to Cimatu, his predecessor served as an inspiration to many, describing her as “a personification of our hopes for a sustainably greener environment with bountiful natural resources for all.”

“The DENR family will remember her with fondness, respect and

love. We will honor her by building her legacy,” Cimatu said.

Socio-civic activities, recognition

LOPEZ was known for leading ABS-CBN Foundation Inc., the socio-civic arm of ABS-CBN.

Under her leadership, Bantay Bata 163—the first rescue hotline for children in Asia—was launched. In 1997, Bantay Bata was the United Nations Grand Awardee for Excellence, besting 187 countries all over the world.

Lopez also founded Bantay Kalikasan, a program that advocates for the protection of the environment. Bantay Kalikasan was behind the successful reforestation of the La Mesa Watershed and the rehabilitation of 17 esteros of the Pasig River.

In 2010, recognizing her efforts, President Benigno S. Aquino III appointed her to be the chairman of the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission.

Lopez is also known for pioneering Educational Television or ETV in the Philippines. She put up video libraries in 10,000 public schools across the country. ETV aired for 15 years, mounting 16 educational television, which included shows on science (*Sineskwela*), math (*Math Tinik*), values (*Hiraya Manawari*), History (*Bayani*) and English (*Epul Apple*). For *Sineskwela*, Lopez was honored with the Unesco Kalinga Award, the first Southeast Asian to earn such a distinction.

As vice chairman of the ABS-CBN Bayan Foundation, Lopez was credited with providing microfinance assistance to microentrepreneurs.

In June 2016, Gina was appointed by President Duterte as secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in an ad interim basis. On May 3, 2017, the Commission on Appointments formally rejected her appointment as environment secretary.

Lopez hosted an environmental show on ABS-CBN, entitled *G Diaries*, which premiered on June 4, 2017. The show focuses on environmental conservation, area development and innovations.

She became the first Filipino to be awarded the prestigious Seacology Prize on October 5, 2017, at Berkeley, California, for her “exceptional achievement in preserving island environments and culture.”

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Former DENR secretary Lopez succumbs to Big C

BY VINCE NONATO

FORMER Environment secretary and ABS-CBN Foundation chair Regina Paz Lopez passed away yesterday due to multiple organ failure after battling brain cancer. She was 65.

Lopez's bout with cancer was previously not disclosed to the public, but she mentioned having "health challenges" in a July 3 video in which Gary Valenciano sang to her.

In her last personal post on Facebook on Aug. 1, Lopez said she was "lying down," being infused with vitamin C and using a Lenyo electromagnetic field therapy mat to cope with her "health crisis."

A public viewing for Lopez is set at the La Mesa Eco Park on August 22-23.

Lopez was a staunch environmentalist, anti-mining campaigner, and an advocate of child welfare.



LOPEZ

She served as ad interim environment secretary from June 30, 2016 to May 3, 2017.

The Commission on Appointments voted 15-9 to reject her

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FORMER

appointment on the basis of multiple oppositions by mining corporations.

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Lopez's family requested that instead of flowers and mass cards, donations be made to the ABS-CBN Foundation's account, Banco de Oro Scout Albano branch (ALKFI General Fund, SA 003930003567).

"It is with a heavy heart that we express our sincerest condolences to her family, relatives, friends and loved ones. The Palace deeply grieves the demise of one of President Duterte's most passionate Cabinet members whose environmental advocacy and legacy remains unparalleled to this day," Chief Presidential Legal Counsel and concurrent presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo said.

"She would be greatly missed. As we pay tribute and give honor to this warrior and advocate, we fervently pray for the Almighty to grant her eternal repose. May the perpetual light shine upon her," he added.

The DENR, in its Facebook page, said the members of the agency are saddened to learn of the passing of "environmental activist and former secretary Gina Lopez" and offered its "deepest and sincerest condolences to her family and friends."

"May she rest in peace," it added.

"Gina was a pure champion of the environment, bold and fearless in her advocacies, regardless of the consequences. She was uncompromising in protecting watersheds and imposing high standards of responsibility on the mining industry. At the same time, Gina was compassionate for the underprivileged, and for them promoted ecotourism as a way out of poverty," current DENR chief Roy Cimatu said in a statement.

In a statement, ABS-CBN said: "With Gina's passing, we lost a fervent advocate of children's rights and protection, a passionate proponent of sustainable livelihood among the underprivileged, and an unswerving champion for environment preservation."

The media conglomerate recalled her advocacies that gave birth to Bantay Bata, Bantay Kalikasan and other programs under the foundation, as well as campaigns to clean up the Pasig River, protest mining in Palawan island, and reforest the La Mesa Watershed.

The foundation, in a separate statement, said Lopez "exemplified a life of service to humanity with a deep desire to improve people's lives, rallied for social justice, and sought to bring hope and change to poor communities."

A more recent advocacy of hers was Investments in Loving Organizations for Village Economies (ILOVE) Foundation, which she

founded and chaired to partner up with distant communities. ILOVE remembered her belief in "building the country from the bottom up and spark(ing) inclusive economic growth."

ABS-CBN chairman Mark Lopez, in a statement, recalled his cousin as someone who "knew her purpose... (and) left a comfortable life to devote her time and energy to help uplift other people's lives."

"Like only she could, she would unite private organizations, local government units, the police and military, to join her projects and campaigns... All of these she did out of love, and with love, as she believed love to be the strongest force for change," said the ABS-CBN chairman.

'GREAT SECRETARY'

Senate President Pro Tempore Ralph Recto and Sen. Francis Pangilinan, who sat in the CA and voted in favor of Lopez's confirmation, mourned her demise.

Recto described Lopez as a great "secretary of defense of our natural resources." He praised her passion and pursuit of "lofty goals" and said: "The best way to honor her is to heed what she tried to teach us."

"Our future can only be made secure if we continue her kind of stewardship, one that is not focused in parceling national patrimony into blocks for exploitation, but in delineating 'wild spots' where profit has no dominion," Recto said.

Pangilinan recalled that the minority stood by Lopez because "we believe that such an important position should be held by someone who understands how critical it is to prioritize the environment."

"Someone who is unafraid to butt heads with heavyweights who are harming our natural resources. Someone who will not hesitate to implement bold, necessary reforms to save our country and our planet," Pangilinan said. "She was all that. In or out of government, her life was about tireless creativity for all our collective future, through our children and our environment."

Sen. Juan Edgardo Angara celebrated Lopez for "bringing to the mainstream the powerless and the voiceless who exist forgotten in the margins of society," and even taking up the cause of "a constituency that cannot vote—trees, fish, rivers and wildlife."

"By her selfless works, Gina's work was the confirmed environment secretary of the people, the minister for sustainable development, and the ambassador for children's rights," Angara said.

Sen. Christopher Go said that as a former colleague in the executive branch, he "knows how passionate,

dedicated and humble she was as a public servant and as an Earth warrior."

Sen. Grace Poe thanked Lopez for "touching our lives in your impassioned way," while Sen. Richard Gordon said he was "so sad" because she was a "staunch advocate of significant and meaningful causes for the country."

Former colleagues in the Duterte Cabinet joined the Lopez family and friends in mourning her demise.

Panelo, in a separate television interview, recalled that he just met Lopez two months ago when she came to his office and invited him to join her in visiting certain places.

"You know what I like in her, she is always thinking of how to uplift the status of life of the poor folks. She went to these places and then she even funded them. In fact, she came to my office, because she wanted the government to help her advocacy," he said.

Executive Secretary Salvador Mediladea shared with media that he had some "slight differences on certain policies" with Lopez during her stint as a member of the Duterte Cabinet but they had remained friends despite this.

Medialdea, in extending his condolences to the family of Lopez, also offered his prayers for the eternal repose of her soul. "Rest in peace, Gina," he said in a message.

Communications Secretary Martin Andanar believes the world would not be the same without Lopez.

"Gina was one of the original members of the Duterte Cabinet that I had the privilege working closely with, especially during the height of her anti-illegal mining campaign. Gina's passion to save the world was contagious. She is truly a good maverick and patriot," he said.

Oceana Philippines vice president Gloria Ramos, said Lopez was a big loss especially for her climate change related efforts in the country.

"We will continue to be inspired by her strong voice to stop mounting threats to the world's center of the center of marine biodiversity and to mainstream sustainability choices and livelihoods. In her rather short stint in government service, she proved that with political will and deep love for our planet and people, our long languishing environmental laws and policies can be implemented," Ramos said.

Chamber of Mines of the Philippines executive director Ronald Recidoro also expressed his condolences and said: "We had our differences but at the end of the day, we both wanted the same thing: a better planet for our children. You kept the mining industry on its toes, urging us to do better, and for that, I am truly grateful."

— With Jocelyn Montemayor and Jed Macapagal



Celebrities pay tribute to Gina Lopez

TRIBUTES poured on social media for former Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Gina Lopez, who passed away yesterday from multiple organ failure. She was 65 years old.

Charo Concio, actress, producer and former ABS-CBN CEO, shared an emotional post on her Instagram account. She wrote: "This is how I will remember my dear friend, Gina... always so passionate. When she is on to something, she will definitely do it with all her heart, mind and soul, whatever it takes. When she would tell me her vision... the next thing I know, she's already in the field doing something about it. No wasted time... no wasted opportunities... for the love of the people, the country and the environment. Gina, may your selfless heart inspire many more!!! Thank you for the unconditional love. Rest now, my friend!"

Actress Kris Aquino talked about Lopez' influence on her and also remembered the late secretary's magnanimity.

"For the woman who ... strengthened my belief in the TRUTH of the last part of this verse, Luke 12:48 NIV 'But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been

entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

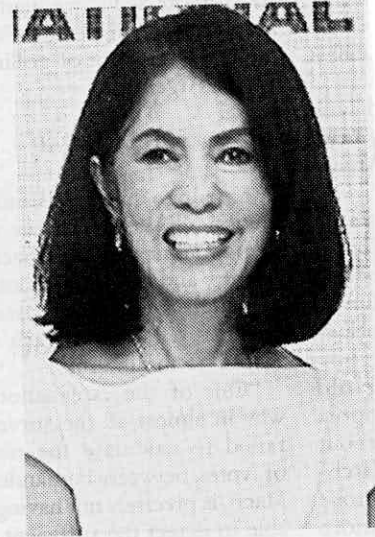
"My life was touched by your openness, warmth, honesty, and passion."

Matteo Guidicelli described Lopez as having "the purest and most generous heart."

"You always wanted what was best for the Filipino people. Thank you for allowing me to guest on your show 'G Dairies.' To witness your passion for change and progress for our country was extremely motivating and inspiring. Thank you ma'am," he wrote.

Erwan Heusaff, vlogger, paid a touching tribute to Lopez on Instagram: "I have never met someone that was so driven by her passions. Someone who understood that even in front of adversity, we are the change that we want to see in the world. A staunch champion for thousands of voiceless communities and an infallible protector of the environment. Mother Nature personified, Gina leaves behind a legacy that we should all be inspired by, urging us to become better and help out, in whatever little ways we can, to improve the lives of everyone in our country.

"I spent just 4 days with her in Tawi Tawi and in that small amount of time, we had already spoken about grand plans, to a point where I was left confused by where to start. She woke up earlier



GINA LOPEZ

than everyone else and met with community leaders, later than the rest of us. She taught us that it's all about moving forward, knowing that the race will never truly end, content with the impact we leave along the way.

"Like rays of sunshine, your energy will continue to stir our souls, even on the cloudiest days."

Lopez was a philanthropist and staunch environmentalist. She was the one who established Bantay Bata 163 and spearheaded the rehabilitation of the Pasig River and La Mesa Watershed. She also hosted the award-winning travel show, "G Diaries," on ANC and the METRO Channel.



Ex-DENR chief passes away, 65

By Rio N. Araja

PHILANTHROPIST and environmentalist Gina Lopez succumbed to multiple organ failure at 4:15 a.m. on Monday. She was 65.

"The whole ABS-CBN family profoundly mourns the passing of Regina Paz 'Gina' Lopez, chairman of ABS-CBN Foundation," the network's official statement said.

"With Gina's passing, we lost a fervent advocate of children's rights and protection, a passionate proponent of sustainable livelihood among the underprivileged, and an unswerving champion for environment preservation."

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GINA LOPEZ

Ex-DENR chief...

From A1

"While we mourn with Gina's family and loved ones, we also pray that her legacy continues to live on in the heart of every Kapamilya she had touched in her lifetime," ABS-CBN said in a statement.

Lopez took on the post of Environment Secretary in 2016 but her term was cut short after the Commission on Appointments rejected her appointment in 2017.

At least 12 of the oppositions filed with the CA against her were about the closure and suspension of mining operations.

She was succeeded by former Armed Forces chief Roy Cimatu.

Lawmakers on Monday mourned her passing. Party-List Representative Carlos Zarate, Ferdinand Gaité and Eufemia Cullamat of Bayan Muna expressed condolences and sympathies to the family and friends of the late environmental activist.

Senate President Pro Tempore Ralph Recto described Lopez as a "great secretary of defense of our natural resources."

"Gina was not a debutante infatuated with green causes to which she had a passing fancy. She was a lifelong warrior for Mother Earth," Recto said.

Senator Grace Poe said Lopez "came in

our midst and taught us love for mankind and the environment, our common home."

Senator Richard Gordon described Lopez as a staunch advocate of significant and meaningful causes for the country. He said Lopez stood her ground firmly on the issues she felt needed to be addressed.

Senator Francis Pangilinan said Lopez was a woman of courage.

Senator Bong Go said he had the honor of working with Lopez when she was the environment secretary of the Duterte Administration.

ABS-CBN, the family-owned company, said Lopez's tireless commitment to her advocacies gave birth to Bantay Bata 163, Bantay Kalikasan and other programs under the ABS-CBN Foundation.

Lopez pushed for many campaigns and projects, including Kapit Bisig Para sa Ilog, No-to-Mining in Palawan, the La Mesa watershed reforestation, and the "G Diaries" weekly television program before serving as Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission chairman and Department of Environment and Natural Resources chief in 2016.

"Gina was the pillar of strength that pushed AFI to achieve what seemed to be impossible. Her caring heart and selfless kind of love inspired people within and beyond the organization to help and serve others," the ABS-CBN family said. With MJ Blancaflor, Maricel V. Cruz and Macon Ramos-Araneta



Anti-mining advocate Gina Lopez dies after battle with cancer

By Vincent Mariel P. Galang
and Arjay L. Balinbin *Reporters*

REGINA Paz "Gina" L. Lopez, the former Environment secretary who rattled the mining industry after she shut down erring large-scale operations, has died. She was 65.

Ms. Lopez passed away on Aug. 19 due to multiple organ failure, according to ABS-CBN News. In January 2018, Ms. Lopez posted on Facebook that she was battling cancer.

"Gina Lopez was a champion for the environment, child protection and the disadvantaged," ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc., where Ms. Lopez was chairperson, said in a statement yesterday. "She exemplified a life of service to humanity with a deep desire to improve people's lives."

Ms. Lopez served as Environment chief for less than a year through May 2017, before Congress rejected her appointment by President Rodrigo R. Duterte because of her anti-mining stance.

The environmental advocate and philanthropist shuttered more than a dozen mining operations and suspended more after months of audit. She also banned open pit mining and wanted to cancel mining contracts near watersheds.

The presidential palace said Ms. Lopez was one of the president's most passionate alter-egos.

"It is with a heavy heart that we express our sincerest condolences to her family, relatives, friends and loved ones," presidential spokesman Salvador S. Panelo said in a statement. He said her environmental advocacy and legacy "remains unparalleled to this day."

"Gina was a pure champion of the environment, bold and fearless in her advocacies, regardless of the consequences" her successor Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu said in a statement. "She was uncompromising in protecting watersheds and imposing high standards of responsibility on the mining industry," said Mr. Cimatu, a former military general.

"In her rather short stint in government service, she proved that with political will and deep love for our planet and people, our long languishing environmental laws and policies can be implemented," said Gloria Estenzo Ramos, vice president of environmental group Oceana Philippines.

Ms. Lopez was the daughter of ABS-CBN Chairman Emeritus Eugenio Lopez, Jr. and Conchita La'O. She had six siblings including ABS-CBN Chairman Eugenio Lopez III.

Ms. Lopez went to Assumption College and Newton College of the Sacred Heart in Boston. She held a master's degree in Development Management from the Asian Institute of Management.

After studying in the US, Ms. Lopez left Manila and became a yoga missionary for 20 years, and lived in Portugal, India and Africa, according to ABS-CBN News. She is survived by her two sons.

"We hope people will emulate her example by following their hearts to do what's right, fighting for the environment and animals by standing up for them," People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals Manager Ashley Fruno said in a statement.

There will be a memorial service for the public at the La Mesa Eco Park on Aug. 22 to 23 from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., according to the ABS-CBN Foundation.



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
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Malaya Business Insight

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Rest well, Gina Lopez

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You
should care
about the
environment
because
of how it
will affect
people, not
just you and
me, but the
generations
that will
follow.**

Today I woke up to the sad news that former Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Gina Lopez died from multiple organ failure, a consequence of her terrible battle with brain cancer. She and I did not serve in President Rodrigo Duterte’s Cabinet at the same time, but I knew her to be a public servant in the truest sense of the word.

That is the extraordinary thing about Gina Lopez: many people may not have had the privilege of meeting her in person, but they will certainly be able to say that they know her because of her work. It is not just that her work was remarkable. It certainly was – but more on that later. It’s also that she put so much of herself in what she did that to know her as a person, you needed to know her work.

There was so much passion in everything



BRIEFING ROOM
Harry Roque

that Gina Lopez did. Her critics – and there were a fair few when she decided to take on the mining industry early in her tenure as DENR Secretary – might say that she was too passionate, sometimes at the expense of good sense. As a passionate person myself (who is also mocked by friend and foe alike for being too much sometimes), I think it was a very minor fault, considering the things that she

was passionate about.

To say that Gina Lopez was a committed environmental warrior is a massive understatement. She championed the environment for decades, years before we started to feel the effects of climate change and certainly long before it became fashionable. As an advocate, I intimately understand the frustration that comes

with this territory: you can slave away for years, taking a few steps forward, only to be knocked back another few. She did amazing work for the Pasig River and the La Mesa Watershed, but as she herself would often point out, there is still so much more to be done – and part of that is maintaining our gains.

She also initiated the Bantay Bata 163 hotline. It was the first of its kind in the Philippines, and I am sure that hundreds, if not thousands will be able to tell us how much of an impact it made in terms of reporting child abuse. In fact, her work as an advocate of children’s rights underscores something about her character that I hope will be what people remember most about her.

Due to the events of recent years, it is

**“
There was
so much
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easy to think of her only in the context of her contentious, highly-publicized time as DENR Secretary. I recall an accusation being circulated by a few at the time: that she cared for the environment, but not people. I considered the criticism myopic then, and I consider it myopic and a gross mischaracterization now. You should care about the environment because of how it will affect people, not just you and me, but the generations that will follow who must bear the burden of our choices. I am sure that Gina Lopez – the Bantay Bata founder, the woman who spent decades as a yoga missionary, who spent years living in slums and running children’s homes and schools for the underprivileged – cared about the environment because she cared about people.

May God bless Gina Lopez. Her life was an example, and one that we who are left behind to continue must keep in mind.



POSTSCRIPT

FEDERICO D. PASCUAL Jr.

Wider consultation needed for Xi talks

• **Gina Lopez, Earth Warrior, 65**

FROM the notes of *Kristine Sabillo* of ABS-CBN News: Whether it was providing for the needy, protecting the environment, or promoting meaningful change, Gina Lopez said she always followed her heart. It was the principle she lived by until she passed away on Monday. She was 65.

The second of seven children of Eugenio "Geny" Lopez Jr. and Conchita La'O, Gina was born on Dec. 27, 1953. In an essay, she described her childhood as being warm, full of love and a lot of fun. Still, she longed for something else.

While studying in the United States, Lopez tried meditation. "I felt something I had not felt in church or in school. I had a feeling of Divine Love. That changed my life forever," she wrote in an essay describing her entering an ashram, a monastery or place for spiritual retreat.

At 18, Lopez left her life of privilege to become an Ananda Marga yoga missionary. After serving in Portugal and India, she spent 11 years in Africa.

"I was constantly looking for money to survive and take care of the children I was responsible for," she recounted working as a teacher in yoga-run, pre-primary schools. In India, Lopez "lived as the poor lived" and learned "how not to be wasteful." When she returned to Manila after 20 years of missionary work, Lopez devoted her time to social causes.

In 1994, back with her family and their flagship business, Lopez headed the ABS-CBN Foundation. Among her pioneering projects was *Bantay Bata* 163, which rescues children victims of domestic violence.

Lopez also produced educational TV shows, drummed up support for micro-entrepreneurs, and tapped on the Filipinos' *bayanihan* spirit to support medical missions, feeding programs, and other outreach projects.

Lopez, however, is best known as an environmental activist. Through *Bantay Kalikasan*, she pushed the rehabilitation of the 2,700-hectare La Mesa watershed and the development of the La Mesa Eco-Park. In 2010, Lopez headed the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission.

Turning 60 in 2014, she retired from ABS-CBN Foundation. Two years later she took on the challenge of heading the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in the Duterte administration.

The country saw an outspoken and principled public servant. Lopez ordered all mining firms inspected for compliance with safety laws, and closed down violators. She stirred opposition among those adversely affected, but found support among religious leaders, indigenous groups, and environment advocates.

In May 2017, the Commission on Appointments rejected Lopez's nomination as DENR secretary, despite her appeal that the environment should be prioritized over business interests, and despite Duterte's public remarks supporting her.

Until her death, Lopez was active in promoting sustainable development and lifestyles. In her *Philippine STAR* columns, she often talked about meditation, lifestyles through nutritious food and exercise, and natural remedies.

"One of the biggest mistakes of humanity is to think we are these physical bodies and life ends when this physical body deteriorates," she said. "The truth is that we are spirit. Living now gives us the opportunity to 'hone' our spirit so it is more aligned with higher forces of truth and light."

* * *

NOTA BENE: *Postscripts* are archived at manilamail.com. Author is on *Twitter* as @FDPascual. Email feedback to fdp333@yahoo.com





Nation mourns passing of ex-DENR chief

Malacañang led the nation in mourning the passing of former Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Regina Paz Lopez.

Presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo expressed "with a heavy heart" the Palace's sincerest condolences to Lopez's family, relatives, friends and loved ones.

"The Palace deeply grieves the demise of one of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's most passionate Cabinet members whose environmental advocacy and legacy remains unparalleled to this day," he said early yesterday.

"Secretary Lopez...took the bull by the horns when she fiercely fought powerful interests in the mining sector, as well as in industries having negative effect on our ecology. She would be greatly missed," he added.

"As we pay tribute and give honor to this warrior and advocate, we fervently pray for the Almighty to grant her eternal repose. May the perpetual light shine upon her," he continued.

According to ABS-CBN, Lopez passed away early Monday after battling brain cancer. She was 65.

Lopez was the 1997 International Public Relations Awardee for Excellence for the Environment and the 2009 Outstanding Manilan Awardee for the Environment.

She was appointed as Duterte's Environment Secretary in 2016 but her stint did not last a year after the Commission on Appointments (CA) rejected her confirmation.

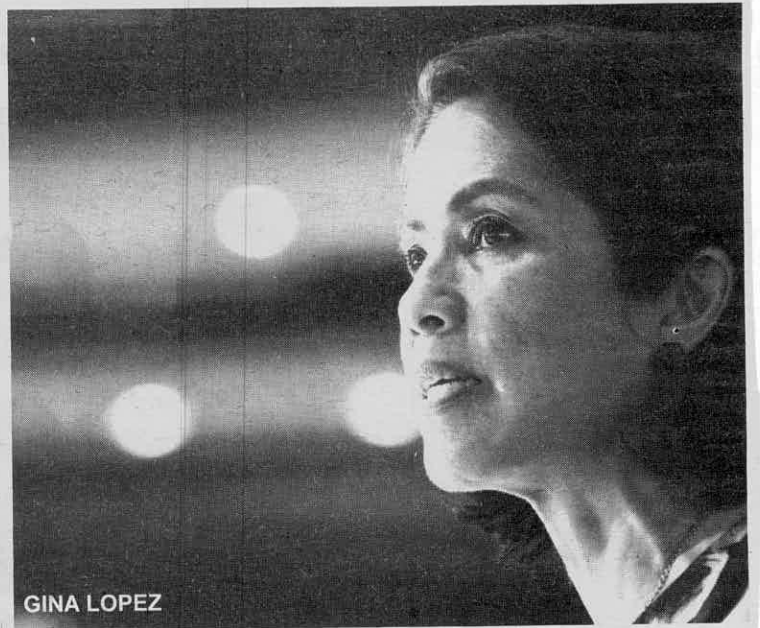
Meanwhile, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) paid tribute to Lopez's uncompromising stand to protect the environment.

"Gina was a pure champion of the environment, bold and fearless in her advocacies, regardless of the consequences," DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu, who succeeded Lopez as chief of the agency, said. "She was uncompromising in protecting watersheds and imposing high standards of responsibility on the mining industry."

During her stint as DENR Secretary from June 2016 to May 2017, Lopez ordered the closure or suspension of mining firms due to serious environmental violations.

She also had plans to scrap mineral production sharing agreements with mining companies operating within or near watershed areas.

Likewise, Lopez came out with an administrative order requiring suspended mining companies to set aside P2 million per hectare of "disturbed land" for farmers before they are allowed to transport their stockpiles. **(Argyll Geducos and Ellalyn de Vera-Ruiz)**



GINA LOPEZ



Malacañang mourns death of former DENR chief Gina Lopez

By Efen Montano

MALACAÑANG yesterday mourned the death of former Environment Secretary Regina "Gina" Lopez who succumbed to brain cancer.

"News has reached the Office of the President that former Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources Regina Paz L. Lopez has passed, and it is with a heavy heart that we express our sincerest condolences to her family, relatives, friends and loved ones," said Presidential spokesperson Salvador Panelo in a statement.

"The Palace deeply grieves the demise of one of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's most passionate Cabinet members whose environmental advocacy and legacy remains unparalleled to this day."

Panelo said Lopez had "fiercely fought powerful interests" in the mining sector, as well as in industries with a negative effect on the ecology.

"She would be greatly missed.

"As we pay tribute and give honor to this warrior and advocate, we fervently pray for the Almighty to grant her eternal repose. May the perpetual light shine upon her," Panelo added.

Lopez was Duterte's first DENR chief, but her stint at the department was cut short after the powerful Commission on Appointments voted to reject her appointment.

At least 12 of the oppositions filed with the CA against her were about the order to close and suspend mining operations. Lopez also canceled the contracts of 75 mining companies.

Duterte earlier went as far as to indicate that lobby money played a role in the bicameral body's decision to thumb down Lopez's appointment.

Several members of the commission then came out to deny the allegation.

Meanwhile, Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu joined the nation in mourning the untimely death of his

predecessor Gina Lopez whom he described as a pure champion of the environment. She was 65.

According to Cimatu, the DENR family will always remember Lopez for her fondness, respect and love.

Aside from being bold and fearless in her advocacies regardless of the consequences, Cimatu said Lopez was also known for her being uncompromising in protecting watersheds and imposing high standards of responsibility on the mining industry. A compassionate for the underprivileged, Lopez was an inspiration to many who promoted ecotourism as a way out of poverty.

"She was an inspiration, a personification of our hopes for a sustainably greener environment with bountiful natural resources," the former ranking military official said.

Former Armed Forces chief Roy Cimatu succeeded Lopez in May 2017.

The Philippine National Police also expressed its sorrow over the death of Lopez.

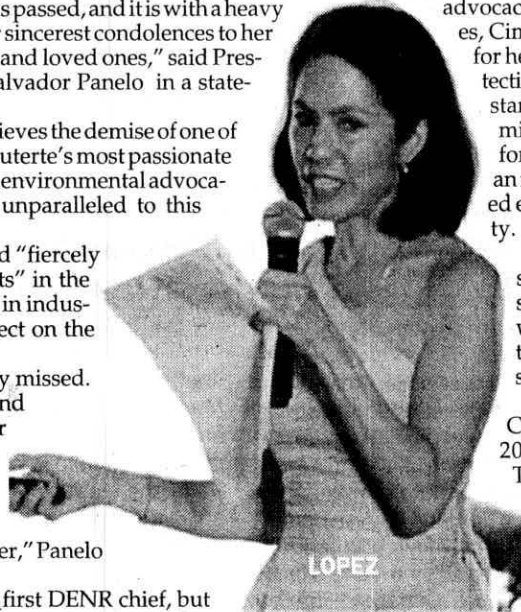
"We are deeply saddened by the death of former DENR Secretary Gina Lopez. The PNP expresses its deepest and most

sincere condolences to the family, friends and relatives.

"Her various advocacies and gentle soul will forever remain in our hearts. She will continue to be an inspiration as the PNP pursues its core values of 'makaDiyos, makaBayan, makaTao at Makakalikasan,'" said PNP spokesman Brigadier General Bernard M. Banac.

"If only for a short while during her incumbency as DENR Secretary, the PNP is proud to cherish the work we shared with Ma'am Gina in enforcing environmental laws, particularly against destructive mining activities," Banac added.

With Joel dela Torre/Alfred Dalizon





Palace: Lopez's legacy remains unparalleled

MALACAÑANG yesterday mourned the death of former Environment Secretary Regina "Gina" Lopez who succumbed to brain cancer.

"News has reached the Office of the President that former Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources Regina Paz L. Lopez has passed, and it is with a heavy heart that we express our sincerest condolences to her family, relatives, friends and loved ones," Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo said in a statement.

"The Palace deeply grieves the demise of one of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's most passionate Cabinet members whose

environmental advocacy and legacy remains unparalleled to this day."

Panelo said Lopez had "fiercely fought powerful interests" in the mining sector, as well as in industries having negative effect on the ecology.

"She would be greatly missed," he said.

"As we pay tribute and give honor to this warrior and advocate, we fervently pray for the Almighty to grant her eternal repose. May the perpetual light shine upon her," Panelo added.

Lopez was Duterte's first DENR chief, but her stint at the department was cut short after the powerful Commission on Appointments voted to re-

ject her appointment.

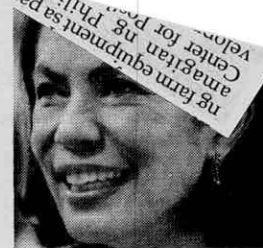
At least 12 of the oppositions filed with the CA against her were the order to close and suspend mining operations. Lopez also canceled the contracts of 75 mining companies.

Duterte earlier went as far as indicate that lobby money played a role in the bicameral body's decision to thumb down Lopez's appointment.

Several members of the commission then came out to deny the allegation.

Lopez was succeeded by former Armed Forces chief Roy Cimatu in May 2017.

DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu described Lopez as "a pure champion of the



Lopez

environment, bold and fearless in her advocacies, regardless of the consequences."

"Gina was compassionate for the underprivileged, and for them promoted ecotourism as a way out of poverty," Cimatu added, saying the "DENR family will remember her with fondness, respect, and love." **Efren Montano with Alfred Dalizon & Cory Martinez**



Gina Lopez, 65

STAUNCH environmentalist Regina Paz 'Gina' L. Lopez, chair of the ABS-CBN Foundation, has died.

This was announced by ABS-CBN in a statement Monday citing the 65-year-old sister of ABS-CBN chairman emeritus Gabby Lopez and daughter of "Kapitan" Eugenio Lopez, Jr's death as resulting from multiple organ failure.

It was Lopez who founded Bantay Kalikasan, a program that advocates for the protection of the environment. Among its more notable achievements include the successful reforestation of the La Mesa Watershed and the rehabilitation of 17 esteros of the Pasig River.

She also launched Bantay Bata 163 – the first rescue hotline for children in Asia, which received the United Nations Grand Awardee for Excellence in 1997.

She was also the Vice-Chairperson of ABS-CBN Bayan Foundation, which provides assistance to micro-entrepreneurs; and Chairman Emeritus of Southeast Asian Children's Television.

Lopez pioneered Educational Television (ETV) in the Philippines which put in place video libraries in 10,000 public schools.

In June 2016, Gina was appointed by President Rodrigo Duterte as Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in an ad interim basis. The Commission on Appointments rejected her appointment a year later.

Of late, Lopez was hosting "G Diaries," an environmental show that focuses on environmental conservation, area development, and innovations.

She had two sons, Roberto and Benjamin.

ABS-CBN's statement on her passing read in part: "With Gina's

passing, we lost a fervent advocate of children's rights and protection, a passionate proponent of sustainable livelihood among the underprivileged, and an unswerving champion for environment preservation.

"Gina was the pillar of strength that pushed AFI to achieve what seemed to be impossible.

Her caring heart and selfless kind of love inspired people within and beyond the organization to help and serve others.

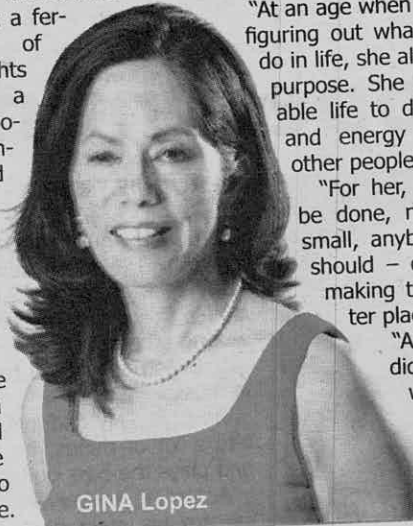
"While we mourn with Gina's family and loved ones, we also pray that her legacy continues to live on in the heart of every Kapamilya she had touched in her lifetime."

ABS-CBN chair Mark Lopez, added in a separate statement: "My cousin Gina Lopez, chairman of ABS-CBN Foundation, lived her life with overflowing love and passion to serve.

"At an age when people are just figuring out what they want to do in life, she already knew her purpose. She left a comfortable life to devote her time and energy to help uplift other people's lives.

"For her, nothing cannot be done, no effort is too small, anybody can – and should – do their part in making the world a better place.

"All of these she did out of love, and with love, as she believed love to be the strongest force for change."



GINA Lopez



PDU30, cabinet members nagluksa

MABIGAT sa puso na nagpaabot ng taos-pusong pakikiramay si Pangulong Rodrigo Roa Duterte at ang buong gabinete sa pamilya, kamag-anak, kaibigan at mga mahal sa buhay sa pagpanaw ni dating Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources Regina Paz L. Lopez

Labis na ikinalungkot ng Malakanyang ang pagpanaw ng itinuturing na "most passionate Cabinet member" ni Pangulong Duterte kung saan ang environ-

mental advocacy at legacy ay mananatiling walang kapantay hanggang sa ngayon.

Si Lopez, 65 ay pumanaw matapos ang pakikipaglaban sa sakit na brain cancer.

Noong Sabado ay napaulat nang pumanaw si Sec. Lopez, ang itinuturing na ina ng ABS-CBN Foundation.

Si Sec. Lopez ay 1997 International Public Relations Awardee for Excellence for the Environment at 2009 Outstanding Manilan Awardee for the Environment.

Nagpaabot din ng pakikiramay sina Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea, Presidential Communications Operations Office Secretary Martin Andanan, DFA Secretary Teddy Locsin at Justice Secretary Meynardo Guevarra.

Labis din ang kalungkutan ni Senador Bong Go sa pagpanaw ni dating DENR Sec. Gina Lopez.

Bilang dating kasamahan sa gobyerno, alam ni Go ang ipinamalas ni Lopez na dedikasyon sa kanyang trabaho. **KRIS J**



Gina Lopez pumanaw, Palasyo nagluksa

PUMANAW na si dating Environment Secretary at chairperson ng ABS-CBN Foundation na si Regina Paz "Gina" Lopez Lunes ng umaga.

Kilala rin sa pagiging environmental advocate, si Lopez ay sumakabilang buhay sa edad na 65 sanhi ng multiple organ failure.

Ikinalungkot naman ng Palasyo ang pagpanaw ng dating kalihim.

"The Palace deeply grieves the demise of one of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's most passionate Cabinet members whose environmental advocacy and legacy remains unparalleled to this day," sabi ni Presidential Spokesperson at Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo.

Matatandaang itinalaga ni Pangulong Duterte si Lopez bilang kalihim ng DENR pagkaupo bilang pangulo noong 2016 at nagsilbi bilang kalihim hanggang Mayo, 2017.

"...The 1997 International Public Relations Awardee for Excellence for the Environment and the 2009 Outstanding Manilan Awardee for the Environment, took the bull by the horns when she fiercely fought powerful interests in the mining sector, as well as in industries having negative effect on our ecology. She would be greatly missed," dagdag ni Panelo.

Nagparating din ng kanilang pakikiramay ang ilang senador.



MINING AT ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST

Gina Lopez, pumanaw



BINAWIAN ng buhay ang anti-mining, environment activist at dating Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary na si **Regina "Gina" Lopez** kahapon, sa edad na 65, kinumpirma ng ABS - CBN.

Ayon sa ilang media reports, ang ikinasawi ni Ms. Gina ay brain cancer.

Si Lopez ay naging kalihim ng DENR noong 2016.

Maikli ang kanyang panunungkulan sa DENR dahil ni-reject siya ng Commission on Appointments (CA) noong 2017.

Sa kanyang maikling panungkulan sa ahensiya, 12 sa oposisyon ang naghain apela

sa CA laban kay Lopez hinggil sa pagsara at suspensiyon ng mining operations.

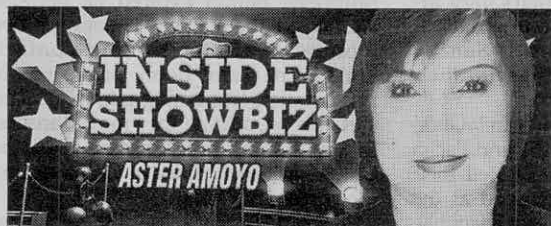
Kinansela rin ng dating kalihim ang mga kontrata ng 75 mining companies. Matapos ng kanyang panunungkulan, siya ay pinalitan ng kasalukuyang DENR Sec. na si dating Armed Forces of Philippines (AFP) Chief **Roy Cimatu**.

Bago naging kalihim ng DENR si Lopez, ilang civic works ang kanyang inilunsad, naging yoga missionary at managing director din siya ng ABS-CBN Foundation at hotline Bantay Bata 163, at ginawaran ng excellence award ng United Nations.

Jun Fabon



Gina Lopez. 'di malilimutan ang mga nagawa



ISANG malungkot na balita ang bumulaga sa buong Pilipinas sa hindi inaasahang maagang pagpanaw ng environmentalist, philanthropist at dating Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary na si Regina Paz 'Gina' La'O Lopez kahapon, August 19 sa edad na 65. She could have been 66 sa kanyang kaarawan on December 27.

Si Gina ay pangalawa sa pitong magkakapatid at mga anak ng ABS-CBN Emeritus na si Eugenio 'Geny' Lopez, Jr. ng Iloilo at Conchita La'O ng Manila. Siya'y nag-aral sa Assumption College at sa Newton College of Sacred Heart in Boston (now Boston College) and took her masters degree on Development Management sa Asian Institute of Management (AIM). Hiwalay sa asawa at may dalawang anak na parehong lalake.

Si Gina ang founder and long-time chairperson ng ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc. (AFI) at Bantay Bata 163 at naging chairperson sa paglilinis at rehabilitasyon ng Pasig River at La Mesa watershed at TV host ng "G Diaries". Hin-

di na rin halos mabilang ang napakaraming environmental at humanitarian projects ang nagawa ni Gina, ang kanyang pagtulong sa iba't ibang komunidad na maging self-reliant, turismo, ang pagtulong sa mga taong nasasalanta ng iba't ibang kalamidad, ang mga naabusong mga bata and other remarkable contributions sa bansa. She was the most dedicated, perfect and qualified DENR Secretary pero hindi inaprubahan ng Commission on Appointments ang kanyang appointment dahil sa personal business interests ng maraming mambabatas.

At a young age, iniwan ni Gina ang kanyang marangyang pamumuhay para maging isang yoga missionary ng Ananda Marga at naranasan din niya ang mamuhay ng isang maralita nang tumira siya sa India sa loob ng isang taon and 11 years sa Amerika.

Taong 1994 nang bumalik si Gina sa Pilipinas to be with her family. Sa halip na tumulong siya sa operasyon ng Lopez' owned group of companies, mas ginusto niyang itatag ang ABS-CBN Foundation at Bantay Bata Foun-

ation at iba pa niyang mga adbokasiya at serbisyo publiko kahit hindi niya pinasok ang larangan ng pulitika.

Pinangatawanan ni Gina ang popular slogan ng ABS-CBN, ang "In the service of the Filipino" up to the very end. Inalay niya ang kanyang buhay sa pagtulong sa kanyang kapwa lalung-laluna ang mga mahihirap, mga naabusong mga bata at ang ating kalikasan.

Ilan pa kaya ang katulad ni Gina na handang isakripisyo ang marangyang buhay para lamang makapagsilbi sa kanyang kapwa?

Lumisan man si Gina, maiiwan sa puso't isipan ng mga tao ang mahahalagang aral, tulong at mga adbokasiya na kanyang ipinaglaban at itinamin for the next generation to appreciate and continue.

Paalam sa nag-iisang Gina Lopez. Wala kang katulad and heaven will laud your good deeds.





20 AUG 2019

DATE

Gina Lopez pumanaw

Pumanaw na kahapon ng alas-4:15 ng madaling-araw si anti-mining, environment activist at dating Environment Secretary Regina "Gina" Lopez sa edad na 65 anyos.

Bumigay ang katawan ni Lopez sa multiple organ failure sa Makati Medical Center makaraang makipaglaban sa sakit na brain cancer.

Itinalagang kalihim ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary si Lopez noong 2016 pero hindi siya tumagal sa panunungkulan dito dahil sa pagtangi ng Commission on Appointment sa kanya noong 2017.

Bago siya napunta sa DENR, aktibo si Lopez sa iba't-ibang civic work, naging yoga missionary, managing director ng ABS-CBN Foundation at nagtatag ng hotline na Bantay Bata 163. (*Malou Escudero*)



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

Abante

UNA SA BALITA



20 AUG 2019

DATE

Bantay Bata, Kalikasan founder Gina Lopez pumanaw na

PUMANAW na sa edad na 65 ang Filipino philanthropist, environmentalist at dating kalihim ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources na si Regina Paz 'Gina' L. Lopez dahil sa komplikasyon at organ failure.

Matagal na nanilbihan si Gina bilang chairperson ng ABS-CBN Foundation Inc. (AFI), sa ilalim ng kanyang pamumuno, naitag ang Bantay Bata 163 na pinakaunang rescue hotline para sa mga kabataan sa buong Asya at tumanggap ng United Nations Grand Awardee for Ex-

cellence noong 1997.

Si Gina din ang nagtatag ng Bantay Kalikasan na layong proteksyonan ang kalikasan, kabilang ang muling pagtanim ng puno sa La Mesa Watershed at rehabilitasyon ng mga estero sa Pasig River. Bago naging kalihim ng DENR, nagsilbi rin siya bilang chairperson ng Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission noong 2010.

Pinangunahan din ni Gina ang Educational Television (ETV) sa bansa, na nagresulta sa pagkakaroon ng video libraries sa may 10,000 public school. Sa ilalim din

nito nalikha ang mga programa tulad ng Sineskwela, Math Tinik, Hirayamanawari, Bayani at Epol/Apple na tumatalakay sa iba't ibang asignatura para makatulong sa pag-aaral ng mga estudyante.

Dahil sa kanyang adbokasiya na pangangalaga sa kalikasan at kultura, tumanggap si Gina ng maraming parangal kabilang ang kauna-unahang Pilipino na tumanggap ng Seacology Prize noong 2017.

Naiwan ni Gina ang kanyang dalawang anak na sina Roberto at Benjamin.



Gina Lopez pinuri ng mga senador

Pinuri kahapon ng ilang senador si dating Environment Secretary Gina Lopez na pumanaw kahapon sa edad na 65.

Ayon kay Senator Sonny Angara, bagaman at hindi nakumpirma bilang kalihim ng DENR, si Lopez ang maituturing na natatanging kinatawan ng kalikasan para sa mamamayan.

Ayon pa kay Angara, iginugol ni Lopez ang kanyang buhay sa pagbibigay tinig at lakas sa mga mamamayan na hindi napagkakalooban ng pagkakataon at ng mga sektor na tila nakalimutan na ng lipunan.

Idinagdag pa ni Angara, walang hindi tinutupad si Lopez sa kanyang mga sinasabi at kung ano ang ipinapayo nito sa kapwa, siya rin niyang ginagawa.

Ayon naman kay Senator Grace Poe, tinuruan ni Lopez ang mga mamamayan na mahal in ang lahat lalo na ang kalikasan.

Nagpasalamat din si Poe na ibinahagi ni Lopez ang kanyang buhay sa mga mamamayan.

Si Lopez din aniya ang maituturing na pinakasikat na naging kalihim ng DENR na isa ring "child protection advocate" sa pamamagitan ng kanyang Bantay Bata Program. *-Malou Escudero-*



Gina Lopez pumanaw na **Palasyo nakiramay**

NAKIRAMAY ang Palasyo sa pamilya at mahal sa buhay ni dating Environment Secretary Gina Lopez.

Si Lopez ay binawian ng buhay kahapon, ng brain cancer.

Sa kalatas ay pinuri ni Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo ang hindi matatawaring adbokasiya ni Lopez sa pangangalaga sa kalikasan.

Ayon kay Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea, kahit nagkaroon sila ng hindi pagkakau-nawaan ni Lopez noong pareho pa silang miyembro ng gabinete ay nanatili silang magka-ibigan.

Para kay Communications Secretary Martin Andanar, nakahawa ang pagmamahal ni Lopez sa kalikasan.

Isang taos-pusong pasasalamat ang iniha-yag ni Sen. Christopher "Bong" Go sa hindi mapapantayang serbisyo sa sambayanang Filipino ni Lopez.

(ROSE NOVENARIO)

SENATORS NAKIDALAMHATI SA LOPEZES

AGAD nagpaabot ng pakikiramay ang mga senador sa pamilya Lopez matapos mabalitaan ang pagpanaw ni dating Environment

Secretary Gina Lopez dahil sa cancer.

Kabilang sa mga nagpaabot ng pakikiramay sina Senator Bong Go, Ramon Revilla, Ralph Recto, Sonny Angara, Richard Gordon, Kiko Pangilinan, Cynthia Villar, Grace Poe, at Leila de Lima.

Ayon sa mga senador, isang malaking kawalan para sa bansa ang tulad ni Lopez na kilalang tapagtanggol ng kalikasan.

Naniniwala ang mga senador na mahihirapan ang bansa na magkaroon ng tulad niya.

Si Lopez, kilalang tagapagtanggol ng kalikasan at isa sa naging dahilan kaya hindi nakalusot sa makapangyarihang Commission on Appointments (CA) ay nang ipatupad ang ban laban sa mining activity sa buong Bansa.

Hindi rin naitago ng mga senador ang paghanga kay Lopez dahil sa katapangan at katatagan nitong ipinakita para maipagtanggol at mabigyan ng proteksiyon ang ating ninang kalikasan.

Maituturin si Lopez na nagbukas sa kaisipan ng bawat mamamayan kung paano dapat pangalagaan at alagaan ang ating kalikasan.

(NINO ACLAN)



MALAKANYANG NAKIRAMAY SA PAGYAO NI LOPEZ

NAGPAABOT ng pakikiramay ang Malakanyang sa pamilya, kaibigan at mga mahal sa buhay ni dating Environment Secretary Gina Lopez na pumanaw sa edad na 65 sa brain cancer.

Sa pahayag ni Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo, labis silang nagdadalamhati sa pagpanaw ng isa sa mga maituturing na "most passionate" na naging cabinet member ni Pangulong Duterte.

Inalala ng Malakanyang ang pagiging matapang ni Lopez sa pagharap at pagtugon sa pansa-

riling interest ng mining sector.

"Secretary Lopez took the bull by the horns when she fiercely fought powerful interests in the mining sector, as well as in industries having negative effect on our ecology. She would be greatly missed," pahayag ni Panelo.

Mananatili ang naiwang legasiya ni Lopez na pagiging advocate nito sa pangangalaga sa kalikasan.

"The Palace deeply grieves the demise of one of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's most passionate Cabinet members whose environmental advocacy and legacy remains unparalleled to this day," ayon kay Panelo.



'Eco Warrior' Gina Lopez inspirasyon ng mga Pinoy

Nagluksa at nagbigay-pugay ang buong bansa sa pagpanaw ng environmentalist at philanthropist na si Gina Lopez.

Si Lopez, chairperson ng ABS-CBN Foundation Inc, ay pumanaw nitong Lunes sa edad na 65 dahil sa brain cancer.

Ayon kay Senate President Pro Tempore Ralph Recto, maituturing na 'secretary of defense of natural resources' si Lopez bagama't sandali lang ito nanungkulan bilang kalihim ng Department of Environmental and Natural Resources (DENR).

"Paalam, Gina. May our life be as colorful as the earth you always imagined it to be: blue skies, green mountains, crystal clear waters, and the riot of colors we see in the wildlife you spent a whole life pro-

tecting," ani Recto.

Pahayag naman ni Senador Risa Hontiveros, "She'll always be remembered that way: As a fighter whose legacy will be remembered by many."

Nagpaabot naman ng dasal sina Senador Ramon 'Bong' Revilla Jr. at Joel Villanueva sa pamilya Lopez.

"Tinitingalang earth warrior, philanthropist at cultural advocate, malaking kawalan siya sa ating bansa. Maraming salamat sa paglalaan ng iyong buhay upang pangalagaan ang kalikasan at kapakanan ng bawat Pilipino!" ani Revilla.

Nagpahayag din ng pagdadalamhati at pakikiramay ang DENR sa pangunguna ni Secretary Roy Cimatu sa pagpanaw ni Lopez.

Ayon kay Cimatu, si Gina ay

maituturing na isang "pure champion" ng kapaligiran na "bold and fearless" sa kanyang adbokasiya kahit ano pa ang kanyang kaharapin.

Maging ang Armed Forces of the Philippines at Philippine National Police ay nagbigay-pugay kay Lopez.

Nagbigay-pugay din ang Alyansa Tigil Mina sa legacy ni Lopez na kilala anila ang lubos na dedikasyon na tulongan ang karapatan ng mga komunidad na naapektuhan ng mga minahan sa bansa.

"It is rare to have an oligarch wage a battle against her own class... Her values were unwavering. Rest well mam Gina, spread your wings and fly happily," pahayag pa ng grupo. **(Dindo Matining/Riz Dominguez/Edwin Balasa/Dolly Cabreza)**



Gina Lopez 20 years naging misyonaryo!

Hindi ka mabibiglang makikita si dating Environment Secretary **Gina Lopez** na kausap ang mga vendor ng organic vegetables sa Legaspi Sunday Market. Talagang halos linggu-linggo ay naroroon siya, hindi lang para bumili kundi naririnig naming tinatanong niya ang kalagayan ng mga magsasaka, mga mangingisda at iyong mga naghahayupan.

Hindi mo sasabihing galing siya sa isang milyo-naryong angkan. Simple lang kung mag-ayos si Gina Lopez, kagaya rin ng kara-niwang mga tao sa Legaspi Sunday Market. Isang araw, narinig pa namin siyang nagtuturo doon sa mga nagtitinda kung papaano ang tamang gamit ng "kakuwate" o "madre cacao". Ginagamit din iyan bilang herbal medi-cine. At habang nagsasalita siya, unti-unting dumami ang mga tao sa paligid niya na nakikinig sa kanyang sinasabi.



GINA

After so many years, sanay si Gina Lopez sa ga-noong crowd. Dalawampung taon siyang naging misyonero ng grupong Ananda Marga sa Africa, Nepal, Portugal at kung saan-saan pa. At sa palagay namin iyong kanyang karanasan bilang isang misyonero ang dahilan kung bakit nag-ing matagumpay siya nang mamuno sa **ABS-CBN Foundation** at sa **Bantay Bata**.

Noong panahon niya, iyon ang panahong aktibo ang dalawang ahensiyang iyan. Ilang bata ba ang naisalba ng Bantay Bata 163 noon? Ilang kabuhayan ba ang natulungan niya sa ABS-CBN Foundation.

Pero ngayon, wala na si Miss Gina. Namatay siya kahapon ng madaling araw dahil sa multiple organ failure, na sinasabing nagsimula rin naman dahil sa mga gamot siguro na kailangan niyang inumin para sa brain cancer. Akala rin namin magtatagal pa ang kanyang buhay. Malakas at masigla siya. Iyong lakas niya, sinasabi niyang dahil sa herbal medicine. Pero



iyon nga rin, she has gone too soon.

Ang tanda namin, naiwan ang pamilya niya sa abroad dahil nagbalik nga siya sa Pilipinas to be of service to the Filipino people. Matagpuan nawa niya ang kapayapaang walang hanggan.



GINA LOPEZ HINDI PINAALAM SA PAMILYA ANG SAKIT NOON!

Rest In Peace Ms. **Gina Lopez**

Sumakabilang-buhay na nga ang philanthropist at environmentalist na si Ms. Gina Lopez kahapon dahil sa multiple organ failure matapos makipaglaban sa sakit na brain cancer ayon sa ABS-CBN. Pero last weekend ay nabalita na pumanaw siya pero itinanggi ng Kapamilya Network insider.

Pero kahapon ay nagkaroon ng official announcement na namaalam na nga si Ms. Gina na huling nakaharap namin sa media conference para sa partnership ng programa niyang **G Diaries with Net Geo** last February.

Siya ay 65 years old.

Si Ms. Gina ay former DENR Secretary at matagal na chairperson ng **ABS-CBN Foundation Inc. (AFI)**.

Narito ang official statement ng ABS-CBN sa pagpanaw ni Ms. Gina.

"Lubos na nagdadalamhati ang ABS-CBN sa pagpanaw ng chairman ng ABS-CBN Foundation na si Regina Paz "Gina" Lopez.

"Sa pagpanaw ni Gina, kasamang namaalam ang isang maalab na tagapangalaga ng karapatan at proteksyon ng mga bata, masugid na tagapagsulong ng kabuhayan ng mga kapus-palad, at isang matibay na pundasyon ng pangangalaga sa kalikasan.

Ang walang-pagod niyang pagsusulong sa mga adbokasiyang ito ang naging dahilan para mabuo ang Bantay Bata 163, Bantay Kalikasan, at iba pang programa sa ilalim ng ABS-CBN Foundation. Bago siya nagsilbi bilang chairperson ng Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission at kalihim ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources, isinulong din niya ang hindi mabilang na mga kampanya at proyekto, kabilang na ang Kapit Bisig Para sa Ilog Pasig, No To Mining in Palawan, La Mesa Watershed reforestation, at ang TV program na "G Diaries" - na lahat ay nag-iwan ng hindi malilimutang pagbabago sa mga komunidad.

"Si Gina ang sandigan ng lakas na nagtulak sa AFI na maisagawa ang mga bagay na tila ba imposible. Ang puso at pagmamahal niya ang nagbigay ng inspirasyon sa mga tao sa loob at labas ng organisasyon na tumulong at magsilbi sa kapwa.

"Kasabay ng aming pakikiramay sa pamilya at mahal sa buhay ni Gina, ipinagdarasal din namin na manatiling buhay ang kanyang alaala sa puso ng bawat Kapamilya.

"Hindi namin siya malilimutan at

patuloy naming tatanawin ang kanyang mga kontribusyon hindi lamang sa ABS-CBN, kundi sa buong bansa.

"Maraming salamat Gina, sa pagpapakita sa amin kung paano mabuhay nang naglilingkod sa Pilipino."

Breast cancer ang unang sakit ni Ms. Gina na na-detect noong 2017.

Kuwento niya sa isang article niya na lumabas sa *Philippine Star* that year :

"Sometime back, I noticed a lump in my breast. I was not worried at all because it was shrinking through the use of a laser I had gotten from a friend. However, I had a doctor friend who

insisted on a biopsy so I gave in. Going back, if I had the chance to make a choice again, I would not do the biopsy because people in the alternative field have told me that cutting up the lump actually spreads the cancer cells and this to me makes sense. Anyway, the result was that I had malignant invasive cancer — and this was validated by tests in Singapore. I was totally unperturbed because I felt fine. I refused any kind of chemical or invasive treatment because I had seen the effect these had on people I knew. I didn't tell anyone at all because I didn't want to be hassled into doing things. I told my family only when the tests conclusively indicated I was okay. It took eight months — and my sense is I was probably okay way before then — and I just didn't want to take the tests until I had at least a month's use of a machine called the *Beam Ray*," mahaba ang nasabing article at kinuwento niya doon na nalabanan niya ang nasabing sakit 'The Natural Way.'

Bago siya naging aktibo sa kanyang adbokasiya na pagmamahal sa kalikasan at kapaligiran, naging misyonaryo siya for 20 years.

"In the 20 years I was a missionary, I never experienced lack of money or food. It was not a luxurious life, but I always had enough for basic needs. The only time I can remember going hungry was during training, because it partly involved restricting food. I do not think this is advisable for spiritual growth because one can't concentrate if one is hungry. Instead of feeling the Divine, one is thinking of dinner," sabi niya sa isang article tungkol sa naging karanasan niya



GINA



sa Africa at iba't ibang mahihirap na bansa na kanyang tinulungan.

At any rate, sa *G Diaries* siya huling napanood.

Pero sa reply nito lately na napanood sa **ANC**, si Mr. **Ernie Lopez** na ang naghost. Tinutulungan ng programa ang mga katutubo na mag-develop ng mga puwede nilang pagkakitaan.

Last February ay wala kaming nakitang trace na may sakit pala si Ms. Gina.

Ang sigla-sigla niya pa noon na nag-iimbiba pang sumama ang press sa mga pinupuntahan nilang lugar para madiskubre ang ganda ng kalikasan ng bansa.

Kumanta pa siya noon ng very short lang. Favorite niya ang **I Believe I Can Fly**.

Dinagsa ng pakikiramay ang



pamilya ni Ms. Gina - mula sa mga pulitiko, artista at mga ordinary people.



BRAIN CANCER

Pinoy celebrities nagluksa sa pagpanaw ni Gina Lopez

TRENDING sa Twitter PH kahapon ang hashtags na #GinaLopez, #MsGina at #MissGina. Kaugnay ito ng pagyao ni Gina Lopez ng ABS-CBN Foundation at dating DENR Secretary dahil sa brain cancer.

Naglabas ng statement ang network sa pagpanaw ni Lopez. Bahagi ng pahayag ay, "Sa pagpanaw ni Gina, kasamang namaalam ang isang maalab na taga-pangalaga ng karapatan at proteksyon ng mga bata, masugid na tagapagsulong ng kabuhayan ng mga taong kapus-palad at pundasyon ng pangangalaga sa kalikasan."

JUN NARDO

Dahil kay Lopez, nabuo ang Bantay Bata 163, Bantay Kalikasan at iba pang programa sa ilalim ng ABS-CBN Foundation.

Nagsilbi rin siyang chairperson ng Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission, No To Mining in Palawan at La Mesa Dam Watershed Reforestation at TV program na **G Diaries**.

Bumuhos naman ang pakikidalamhati mula kina Matteo Guidicelli, Lea Salonga, Kim Atienza, Enchong Dee, Gladys Reyes, Karen Davila.

Bukod sa mga adbokasiya, ang kantang **I Believe I Can Fly** ang maaalala rin sa pagyao ni Gina. Kinanta niya ito nang ma-reject siya ng Commission on Appointments bilang DENR Secretary.



Gina Lopez



Lea Salonga



Matteo Guidicelli



Karen Davila



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

Abante

UNA SA BALITA

3
PAGE

UPPER
 LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

20 AUG 2019

DATE

Palasyo, senado, gabinete nagdalamhati sa pagpanaw ni Gina Lopez

IKINALUNGKOT ng Malacañang ang pagpanaw ni dating Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) secretary Gina Lopez dahil sa sakit na brain cancer.

Sa ipinalabas na pahayag ni Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo, naglululuxa ang Palasyo sa pagyao ni Lopez na aniya ay isa sa 'most passionate' cabinet member ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte lalo na sa kanyang adbokasiya na pangalagaan ang kalikasan.

"It is with a heavy heart that we express our sincerest condolences to her family, relatives, friends and loved ones. The Palace deeply grieves the demise of one of President Rodrigo Duterte's most passionate cabinet members whose environmental advocacy remains unparalleled to this day," ani Panelo.

Nagpahayag din ng kalungkutan sa pagyao ni Lopez sa edad na 65 ang ilang senador.

"She fought for children who were incapable of seeking justice and care for themselves and eloquently spoke for the people in the communities whose voices have been crushed by exploitation," sabi ni Senador Sonny Angara.

Inilarawan naman ni Senador Francis Pangilinan ang dating Environ-



mental Secretary bilang 'a woman of courage, firebrand'.

Para naman kay Senador Bong Go, hindi umano matatawaran ang pagiging 'passionate, dedicated, at humble' nito bilang public servant at bilang isang Earth warrior.

Ang mga naging dating kasamahan sa gabinete ay nalungkot din sa pagpanaw ni Lopez kabilang si Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea.

Sinabi naman ni Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO) secretary Martin Andanar na malaking karangalan ang makatrabaho ang isang Gina Lopez na mas nakilala noong kainitan ng isyu sa anti-illegal mining. (Aileen Taliping/Dindo Matining)



Sulat kay Editor

Si Gina Lopez at ang Google

Dear Abante:

Magandang araw sa mga mambabasa ng Abante!
Mabuhay po kayo!

Wala man akong alam sa politika ngunit akin namang napapanood dati sa telebisyon si ma'm Gina Lopez.

Marami ang may gusto o bilib kay ma'm Gina Lopez dahil sa matapang nitong adhikain na magsulong para sa ikagaganda at pagligtas ng kapaligiran ng Pilipinas para sa kinabukasan nating lahat.

Sayang at hindi siya na-appoint kasi tinabla siya ng Commission of Appointment kasi parang maraming masasagasaang mga negosyo ng mga bigating politiko sa kanyang ipapatupad na pagsasara ng large at small scale mining at ito ay narinig ko sa aming barber shop, alam ninyo naman sa Tondo ang mga barber shop dito nakakakuha ng magagandang pananaw o opinyon o haka-haka na minsan ay totoo at minsan ay hindi na parang si Mr. Goggle din na may mga fake news. Kayo na ang bahala kung maniniwala ba kayo o hindi sa maririnig.

Nakakalungkot at nakakabigla na namatay siya sa sakit na brain cancer, na tulad din ng aking nanay na namatay sa cancer, alam ko ang hirap kung paano magkaroon ng sakit na cancer, sobrang sakit na titiisin, hindi makatulog sa gabi at sa sobrang lakas ng gamot na iniinom ay parang nagkaka-dementia na.

Paalam po ma'm Gina Lopez, at maraming salamat at naging bahagi ka ng buhay namin na lumaban para sa kinabukasan ng nakakarami!

Bega Pors ng Tondo, Maynila



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

BULGAR

BOSES NG MASA, MATA NG BAYAN



20 AUG 2019

DATE

SA edad na 65, pumanaw na ang former secretary ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at chairperson ng ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc.

na si Ms. Gina Lopez.

Mas nakilala rin si Ms. Gina sa Kapamilya show niyang **G Diaries** at sa ginawang pangunguna sa rehabilitation ng Pasig River at La Mesa Watershed.

Ayon sa inilabas na pahayag ng ABS-CBN, multiple organ failure ang ikinamatay ng kilalang philanthropist at environmentalist dahil na rin sa brain cancer nito.

"Gina was the pillar of strength that pushed AFI to achieve what seemed to be impossible. Her caring heart and selfless kind of love inspired people within and beyond the organization to help and serve others."

"While we mourn with Gina's family and loved ones, we also pray that her legacy continues to live on in the heart of every Kapamilya she had touched in her lifetime. We will never forget her and will continue to honor her remarkable contributions not only to ABS-CBN, but the entire nation," ang naging pahayag ng ABS-CBN. ❖❖❖



20 AUG 2019

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PAGE 1/

DATE

The Board of Directors, management, and staff of
ABS-CBN Corporation
and the Board of Trustees, management, and staff of
ABS-CBN Lingkod Kapamilya Foundation, Inc.

extend their sympathies and condolences to the family of

REGINA PAZ "GINA" LOPEZ



Who joined our Creator on August 19, 2019.

She leaves behind her family Conchita and Ricardo,
Gabby and Karen, Marisa and Beat, Raffy and Gaucha,
Roberta and Ting, Ernie, Ramon and Rea,
Sona Roy and their sons Roberto Miguel
and Benjamin Emmanuel.

There will be a memorial service for the public at the
La Mesa Eco Park Amphitheater from August 22 to 23.
Viewing time is from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Gina was Chair of the ABS-CBN Foundation and also served
as Secretary of the Department of Environment
and Natural Resources.

We mourn the passing of a champion of children's rights,
the environment, and community livelihood.

We pray that her legacy will live
in the hearts of the millions she has touched.

*In lieu of flowers and Mass cards,
the family requests that donations be made to the
ABS-CBN LINGKOD KAPAMILYA FOUNDATION, INC.
at the ABS-CBN Foundation Building,
Mother Ignacia Avenue corner Eugenio Lopez Drive, Quezon City*



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KAWAYAN MABISANG ALTERNATIBO PAMALIT SA KAHoy

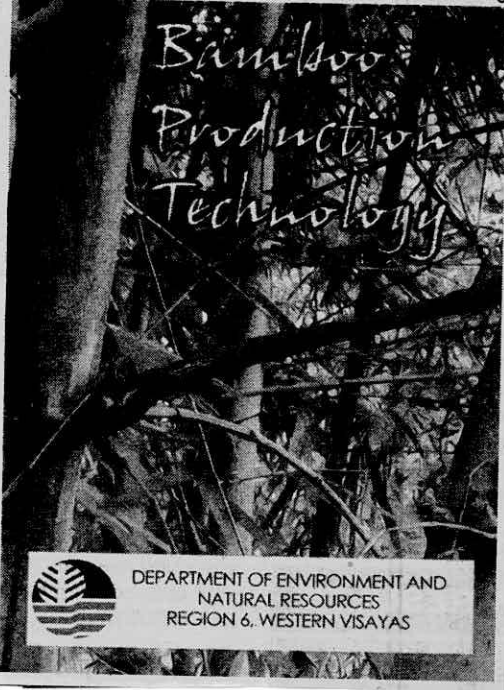
HINIKAYAT ni Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu ang mga Pilipino na gawing pa-malit sa wood lumber ang kawayan dahil sa pamamagitan nito ay tataas ang bilang ng puno sa ating kabundukan bukod pa sa mabibigyan nito ng solusyon ang problema sa climate change.

Ayon kay Cimatu, ang paggamit ng kawayan bilang alternatibo sa tradisyunal na kahoy ay magdudulot ng mabuting epekto dahil mapigilan nito ang pagputol ng mga puno sa kabundukan na ma-katutulong upang mabawasan ang

epekto ng climate change. Kapag maraming puno, nababawasan ang dami ng greenhouse gases sa ating atmospera.

Sinabi pa ng kalihim, na ang kawayan - na damo at hindi puno - ay hindi lamang magandang gawing alternatibo sa kahoy, ito rin ay may kakayahan na mag-offset ng carbon emissions.

Bukod sa nakapagbibigay ng pagkain at raw materials sa construction, malaki rin ang naitutulong ng kawayan upang mabigyan ng hanapbuhay ang mga Pilipino at bumuo ng



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND
NATURAL RESOURCES
REGION 6, WESTERN VISAYAS

ANG INYONG LINGKOD



DR. HILDA C. ONG

pagkakakitaan o income streams. Nababawasan din nito ang pagbaha, pagguho ng lupa, pagtaas ng lebel ng tubig sa dagat at mainam din itong pagmulan ng clean fuel.

Ayon kay Cimatu, kasalukuyan nang pinag-aaralan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na gawing sentro ng bamboo production sa bansa ang Panay Island sa Western Visayas.

Inatasan na ni Cimatu ang regional office ng DENR sa Western Visayas na magsagawa ng imbentaryo ng bilang ng mga kawayan sa isla partikular na sa bayan ng Maasin, sa probinsiya ng Iloilo, na may mataas na bilang ng halamang kawayan.

Batay pa sa kautusan ng kalihim, bibigyan ng prayoridad ang pagtanim ng kawayan sa mga napabayaang kagubatan kabilang na ang sakop ng Enhanced National Greening Program, na isang inisyatibo ng gobyerno para sa reforestation.

Ayon kay ERDB Director Sofio Quintana, binigyan ng pagkakataon ang mga kalahok sa naturang bamboo congress na magbahagi ng kaalaman tungkol sa kawayan at kung ano ang gamit nito sa kani-kanilang bansa.

oOo
CIMATU TUMANGGAP
NG LIBRONG

"BAMBOO, THE GRASS OF HOPE" MULA SA MGA MAY-AKDA

Ang 1st ASEAN Bamboo Congress ay inorganisa ng Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB) ng DENR na layuning mapagtibay ang samahan ng mga bansang kasapi ng ASEAN sa pagsasaayos ng kondisyon ng mga bamboo forest at mga industriyang kaugnay nito sa rehiyon.

Ang aklat ay naglalaman ng mga impormasyon ukol sa kawayan tulad ng teknolohiya para malubos ang paggamit nito. Minumungkahi ni Cimatu ang paggamit ng kawayan kapalit ng tradisyunal na kahoy upang mapigilan ang pagputol ng puno at madagdagan ang forest cover ng Pilipinas.

Ang bamboo congress ay inorganisa ng DENR sa pamamagitan ng Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB).

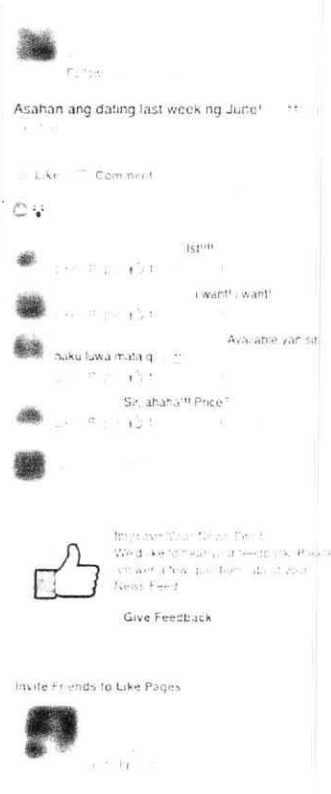
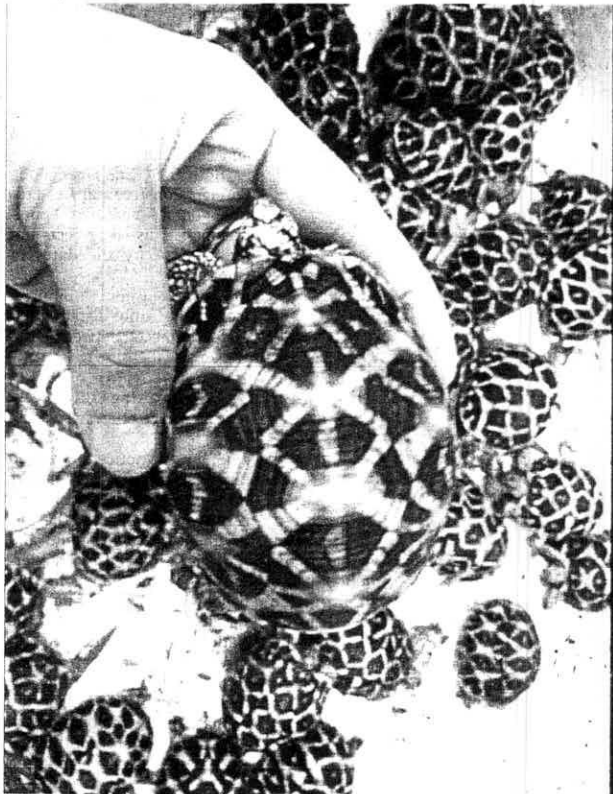


DENR-USEC BENNY ANTIPORDA, THUMBS UP SA GREENING PROGRAMS NI MAYOR ANDENG YNARES PARA SA ANTIPOLO CITY – Si Antipolo City Mayor Andeng Ynares, kasama si Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Benny Antiporda, sa ginanap na 4th Annual Environmental Summit kamakailan sa Taal Vista Hotel, Tagaytay City. Laking tuwa ni Mayor Ynares gayundin ng mga kawani ng City Environment and Waste Management Office (CEWMO) nang kilalanin at bigyan ng dalawang Plaque of Recognition ng DENR IV-A ang Antipolo City para sa Best Environmental Technology at Best Available Practices. Maliban dito, pinarangalan ng DILG ang Antipolo bilang Hall of Fame Awardee noong 2018 dahil sa magaling na pagpapatupad ng environmental practices.

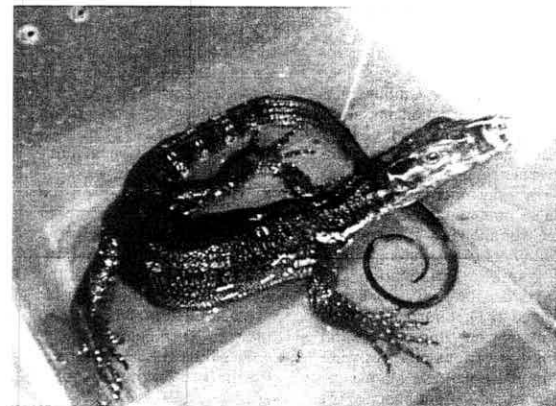
NEW WILDLIFE TRADERS RISE IN FACEBOOK HUBS

SPECIAL REPORT BY JHESSET O. ENANO

In closed and secret Facebook groups, endangered and endemic wildlife are exchanged in swift deals that take advantage of the perceived anonymity on the internet. On the online battleground, law enforcers struggle to keep up. **A6**



For sale rush monitor water lizard 1k ning po



ONLINE DEAL Facebook conversation threads reflect the haggling for endangered species in the illegal wildlife trade. Despite monitoring by environmental officials and private antitrafficking groups, threatened species like the Indian star tortoise (left), monitor lizard (top right) and hornbill (bottom right) are traded like stocks by fly-by-night businessmen. —FACEBOOK SCREENSHOTS COURTESY OF TRAFFIC AND DENR



SPECIAL REPORT

New Filipino wildlife traffickers, traders emerge in Facebook hubs

FROM A1

By **Jhesset O. Enano**
@JhessetEnanoINQ

(Second of three parts)

In a convenience store near an LRT 1 station in Tondo, Manila, a man carrying two boxes usually reserved for fighting cocks waited for someone in a white shirt to show up.

It was to be their first meeting. All their interactions had been done on Facebook and its app, Messenger, with the final details of their deal later firmed up through text messages.

It was to be a simple transaction: The “buyer,” who was interested in birds—in particular, a pair of brahminy kites locally known as “lawin” and a pair of endangered young hornbills or “tarictic”—would wait in the store. All four birds were to be sold for P16,000.

But the “buyer” was actually a wildlife law enforcer from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). He had gone undercover to bag the suspected trafficker, identified by authorities as Ronald de Vera, whose activities they had discovered and tracked online.

At first, De Vera wanted to just watch from a distance while a child handed over the birds and received the money. But the “buyer” persuaded him to appear.

De Vera did, and the exchange of money and birds, including the hornbill hatchlings in a small juice carton, took place. He was promptly arrested by DENR officers and agents of the National Bureau of Investigation.

Unable to show the necessary permits under the wildlife law, he was charged with illegal possession and sale of wildlife.

De Vera, who used a fake name in his social media account, is just one of thousands of wildlife traders operating online.

In the Philippines, transactions involving endangered and threatened species do not even have to lurk in the underbelly of the internet: On Facebook, where 65 million Filipinos are active users, the illegal trade in wildlife is rampant and fairly blatant—and, if lax regulations continue, poised to get worse.

New breed

Government enforcers and wildlife experts agree that the heyday of Cartimar Market in Pasay City and Arranque Market in Manila in the illegal trade of animals and plants is slowly waning, with online marketplaces taking over the business.

While wildlife trafficking already poses a serious threat to Philippine biodiversity, the internet compounds the problem. Facebook, undeniably the largest social networking site in the country, allows new players to easily enter the game.

“What happens online is that it breeds a new generation of traders,” said Emerson Sy of the Philippine Center for Terrestrial and Aquatic Research. “Because of social media, particularly Facebook, illegal traders in the Philippines have multiplied easily tenfold or more.”

Sy, a herpetologist who has closely studied the illegal activity online, said around 90 percent of these traders started out as casual hobbyists or collectors.

“Then they get sucked into the illegal trade, trading illegally caught wildlife because they found out that they can make money off it,” Sy said. “From commonly traded and captive-bred species, they transition to wild-caught and endangered ones.”

With the perceived

anonymity offered by online transactions, the trade has taken a new, increasingly menacing face. With no physical shop that restricts their reach, the black markets have expanded, both locally and globally.

“With the internet, all gates are open. Anyone can be your client,” Sy said. He said a number of intercepted packages containing wildlife were heading to countries like the United States, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Thailand, some through online transactions.



Against policies

This illegal exchange occurs despite Facebook's own commerce policies, which ban the buying or selling of animals. Under Facebook's rules, live animals, whether livestock or pets, are not allowed in any listings on its site and also on Instagram, which it owns.

Also not allowed are any products from or parts of dogs, cats, or endangered or threatened animals, as well as prohibited animal parts, including but not limited to horn, ivory, organs and bone, among others.

Despite this clear policy, the buying and selling of live animals, including endangered and endemic species, remain rampant across Facebook groups in the country, based on monitoring by government agencies such as the DENR and concerned groups such as Traffic, an international wildlife trade monitoring network.

According to a study published by Traffic in 2018, over 1,000 Filipino traders posted some 2,200 ads in at least 90 Facebook groups, in which over 5,000 different kinds of reptiles were traded within a three-month period in 2016.

The report said various species were sold, including

venomous snakes, tortoises and sailfin lizards, many of which were poached for sale in the pet trade—a major threat for Philippine reptiles. Philippine pond turtles and a lone Philippine crocodile were also offered online, even as both species are classified as critically endangered, only a step away from extinction in the wild.

Traffic placed the value of the reptiles at P26.4 million. Sy, who authored the report, said the amount was still a "conservative value," given the limited number of groups observed.

"For reptiles, the value of the trade is roughly P150 million-P200 million a year. Birds have bigger markets, maybe around P300 million a year," he said.

Done in secrecy

Facebook's own design makes it easy for users to create and take down groups anytime, exercise control over what goes on in their spaces, and operate with near-impunity. Some groups are public but others are made private, allowing more scrutiny of their members and ensuring that bogus traders and potential snoops are kept out.

The Inquirer looked into more than 200 Facebook groups identified by enforcers and advocates as having members engaging in the illegal wildlife trade. Of that number, nearly half were found to be "public" (open to all) or "closed" (cannot be accessed by nonmembers). The other half were either secret groups or have since changed their names.

Some were created as far back as 2012, and a handful as recent as this year. Most of the groups have thousands of members and grew by hundreds more in the past 30 days by the end of July, based on the Inquirer's latest monitoring.

The Facebook groups with the largest memberships were conspicuously named the "official black market" of two different cities in Mindanao, comprising some 110,000 and 45,000 members, respectively. In general, many of the groups' names state the obvious: either the names of the animals they were trading, such as Burmese pythons, mynahs and cockatiels, or the words "exotic," "exotic pets" or "exotic keepers" right after the province or city where members claim they are from.

The Inquirer learned that to be part of some closed groups, one is required to answer certain questions, such as animal interests and reason for joining. Those seeking membership are evaluated by the group's administrators—for example, if they have friends in the same trading circles. At times, a recommendation from a veteran online trader comes in handy.

In these groups, photos and video clips of endangered and threatened animals pop up alongside commonly traded and other species that may be legally bought and sold, as long as there are proper registration and permits acquired from the DENR. Often, the animals are seen inside cages, plastic containers or cardboard boxes.

Some photos even show sellers proudly holding up the wild animal, boasting that it had already been tamed or trained.

As in any other online marketplace, interested buyers are coaxed to communicate via Messenger, where prices are haggled privately and modes of delivery are agreed upon. Enforcers said even payments were not anymore exchanged in person; some use remittances and cash transfers, leaving less of a paper trail for authorities to track.

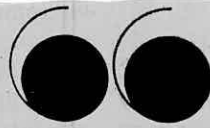
Changing strategy

According to Esteven Toledo, a wildlife law enforcer with the DENR's Philippine Operations Group on Ivory and Illegal Wildlife Trade, roughly 95 percent of the illegal trade is done online, leading to new challenges for authorities.

And since trading has become more exposed, more reports on suspected poaching and trafficking also come in, Toledo said. "Before, a concerned citizen would call us to report having personally seen something," he said. "Now, reporting is much easier: When you see it online, you can just take a screenshot then attach it to an email to us. That's it."

What follows is similar to any kind of detective work: surveillance, intelligence-gathering, case-building. But instead of applying for search warrants for raids, enforcers and agents now go undercover online, infiltrating closed and secret Facebook groups.

They filter through thousands of posts, in groups that multiply like viruses, in a painstaking process to weed out those with legal permits to own and trade animals by virtue of DENR-issued certificates and



What happens online is that it breeds a new generation of traders. Because of social media, particularly Facebook, illegal traders in the Philippines have multiplied easily tenfold or more

Emerson Sy

Philippine Center for Terrestrial and Aquatic Research,
Herpetologist

those making money by selling poached, illegally acquired and critically endangered animals.

With no particular unit dedicated to cybersurveillance, these efforts become laborious and take considerable time, allowing criminals faster get-aways.

To catch up, environmental law enforcers now undergo training in cybercrime monitoring while working with other enforcement agencies such as the NBI and the Philippine National Police, which have intelligence funds at their disposal.

Who's to blame?

For Sy, the bigger onus lies on Facebook to regulate its platform in accordance with its own policies.

"They have been turning a blind eye [to this problem] for the longest time ... giving the burden to users to report [posts] to them first before they act," he said.

From hate speech to other controversial content, Facebook has received similar criticism for its refusal to take more responsibility for contents posted and shared on its site, passing the buck to users to flag and report posts for action.

In March 2018, Facebook joined other global giants like Google, Microsoft and eBay in the Global Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online, setting a bold target of reducing the illicit trade by 80 percent by 2020. Among others, they agreed to craft clear, comprehensive and enforceable wildlife trade policies, and to enhance their staffs' ability to detect illegal products on their respective sites.

But despite Traffic's published report, Facebook Philippines is still not doing enough to help curb the illegal trade happening in real time in its own backyard, Sy said. The social media giant should cooperate with law enforcement to shut down these groups for good, he said.

Sought for comment, Facebook said that as of April, it had prohibited attempts to sell all animals, save for "brick-and-mortar entities, animal rehoming and adoption agencies, and animal shelters."

"We are committed to working with the relevant authorities to help tackle illegal online wildlife trade, both in the Philippines and around the world," a spokesperson said. The Inquirer communicated with Facebook through its media partner in the Philippines and was provided the responses from a spokesperson. No particular official was named.

In the same exchange, Facebook also said it was investing in technologies that could proactively detect and flag content. But for now, user reporting tools were its keys to know about potential violations done in its site.

Meanwhile, it's business as usual for criminals like De Vera. Since his arrest, he has simply changed his name on Facebook and is active again in trading endangered birds, turtles and mammals. INQ

(To be concluded)



Exotic

March 28 at 6:07pm

PTPAII

PAKI BASA PONG MABUTI.

FIX NA PO. wag ka na po humingi ng tawad wala ka nmn pong kasatanan! no papers po. auto block sa mga bashers kaya wag na magtangka na mag comment ng kung ano ano! #REPECT n lng sa post! salamat! pwede ako mag shipp via bus basta dpnde sa lugar.

FORSALE!

BRAMINY KITE chick 2.5k each fix na po.

BRAMINY KITE juvy 3.5k each fix na po.

pm lng po sa may gusto lrt abad santos po ang meet up unahan n lng po.



August 6 at 6:22pm

lutino lrn with recall 8,200

blue nape parrot 5,500

pine apple conure 8,000

sun conure 7,000

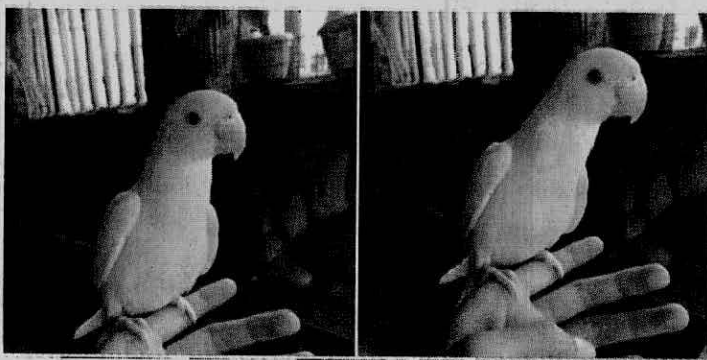
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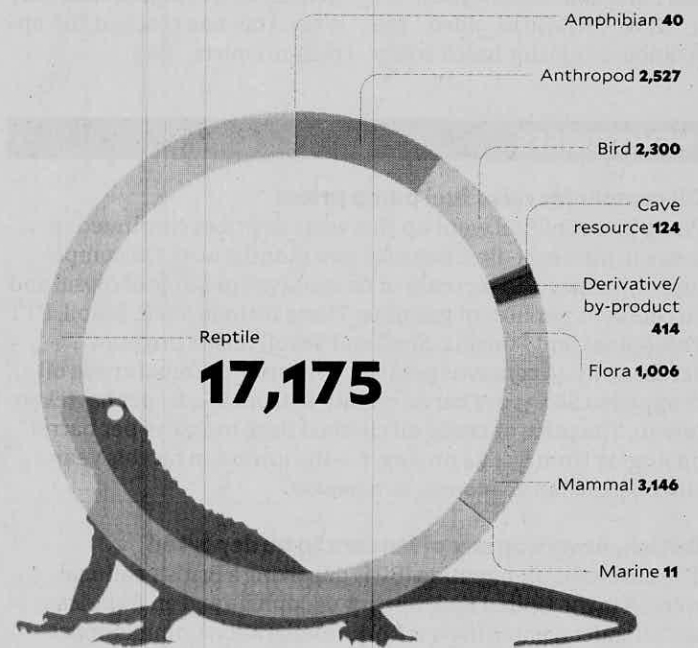
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lahat po yan tamed and quality pwede ako sa trade in ng mas mababang value tapos add or ako ang mag trade sa higher value tapos ako ang mag add

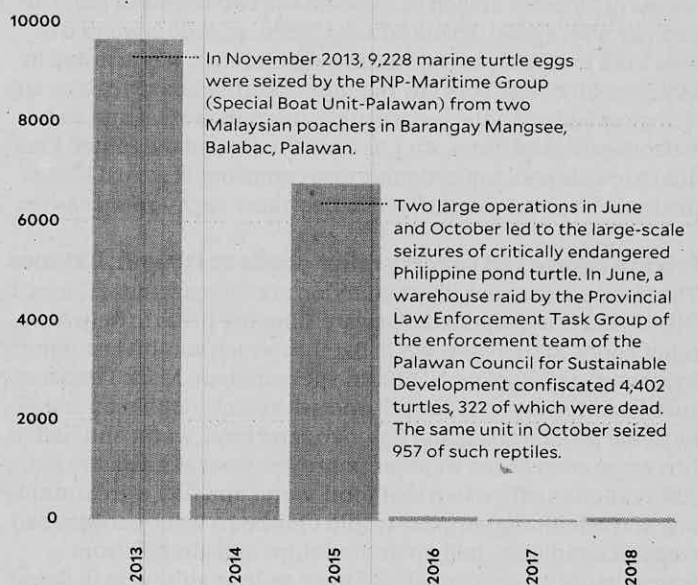


PRICE LIST, SALES PITCH Despite Facebook's own commerce policy against the buying and selling of live animals on their site, the trade is alive and flourishing in many public, closed and secret groups on the social networking site. —FACEBOOK SCREENSHOTS COURTESY OF DENR

CONFISCATED WILDLIFE IN DENR WILDLIFE LAW ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS (2013-2018)



REPTILE CONFISCATIONS



SOURCE: Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau

INQ GRAPHICS



Birdwatching park now an ecotourism zone in Bataan

THE Balanga Wetland and Nature Park (BWNP) in Bataan province, which is home to birds of different species, is now an ecotourism zone that offers livelihood opportunities to residents.

The park's new stature came following President Duterte's signing of Republic Act No. 11365 that declared that part of the coastal area at Barangay Tortugas in Balanga City as a "responsible, community-based ecotourism zone."

"The law will allow Balanga to further develop its wetland park through the support of the Department of Tourism (DOT). We have used this park to help educate our schoolchildren to better understand and care for the environment," said Bataan Rep. Jose Enrique Garcia III, principal sponsor of the bill in the House of Representatives. Sen. Cynthia

Villar sponsored the bill in the Senate.

The law gives BWNP "priority development by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, DOT, Department of Public Works and Highway, and the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority."

The park covers 153,578 square meters of mangrove forest and 187,500 sq. m of foreshore land. A least 80 species of mostly migratory birds have been recorded in the place, which faces the Manila Bay.

Since 2013, Balanga has been holding the annual "Ibong Dayo Festival." — *Inquirer*



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
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NEWS

COA questions Kaliwa Dam bidding

The Commission on Audit (COA) says the bidding for the P18.7-billion Kaliwa Dam project, won by a Chinese state-owned company, was in fact a negotiated contract from the start. To be funded by loans from Beijing, the project is expected to ease Metro Manila's water shortage. But critics say the project would displace the Dumagat indigenous group and that the terms of the Chinese loans are onerous. —STORY BY JHESSET O. ENANO

A2



P18.7-B Kaliwa Dam project a negotiated deal, says COA

By Jhesset O. Enano
@JhessetEnanoINQ

The bidding for the P18.7-billion Kaliwa Dam project in Quezon province, which was won by a Chinese state-owned company, was in fact a negotiated contract from the start, according to the Commission on Audit (COA).

“The procurement of the project is with the semblance of a competitive bidding when in reality, it is a negotiated contract from the inception of the bidding process,” the COA said.

Malacañang said it had yet to study the COA memorandum.

“We’ll let the President decide on that,” said presidential spokesperson Salvador Panelo when asked if the government was open to suspending the contract amid questions about the selection process.

One of the Duterte administration’s big-ticket projects to be funded by loans from Beijing, the Kaliwa Dam is expected to ease Metro Manila’s water shortage.

Critics, however, have assailed the project on the grounds that it would displace indigenous groups and that the terms of the Chinese loans are onerous.

The audit agency has called on the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) to explain the bidding process for the dam project after only one Chinese bidder was deemed eligible as the two others had been disqualified.

In an audit observation



NO COMPETITIVE BIDDING A Dumagat man negotiates Kaliwa River in Barangay Magsaysay, Infanta, Quezon province. According to the Commission on Audit, a dam to be built on the river did not undergo competitive bidding. —RICHARD A. REYES

memorandum (AOM) dated June 10, the COA said it was questionable that only China Energy Engineering Corp. Ltd. (CEEC) was qualified in the two stages of the procurement process “due to the seemingly intentional purposes” of the bidders not to comply.

Required documents

The AOM, addressed to MWSS Administrator Reynaldo Velasco and Leonor Cleofas, deputy administrator for engineering and technical operations group, said the criterion of competitiveness had not been achieved in the bidding.

At the opening of the bids

and evaluation of minimum eligibility requirements, one of the bidders, the consortium of Guangdong Foreign Construction Co. Ltd.-Guangdong Yuan-tian Engineering Co., immediately failed because it lacked certain documents.

These included the license from the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board and the absence of a single largest completed contract.

At the second stage of evaluation, the financial bid of Power Construction Corp. of China reached P13 billion, 6.91 percent higher than the approved budget of contract (ABC), causing its disqualification.

“This raises doubt on the bid ... since the nominated bidders were already informed in the bid documents ... that bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening,” the COA said.

“It can be deduced that two bidders/contractors were included merely to comply with the at least three bidders requirement as stated under the procurement law.”

Lack of track record

The AOM also cited the failure of the three contractors to comply with the MWSS requirement of at least 20 years track record in design and engi-



TITLE: P18.7B KAGWA DAM ...

PAGE 1/ 5/3

neering.

The track record specifically pertains to dam and tunneling works, and the same experience as principal contractor in construction and commissioning of projects of similar nature and complexity.

Both CEEC and Guangdong Foreign Construction Co. Ltd-Guangdong Yuantian Engineering Co. listed projects but did not specify the dates of completion.

Power China Limited, meanwhile, only listed completed projects between 2010 and 2016.

Awaiting ECC

The notice of award was issued to CEEC in December 2018, but the notice to proceed remains pending as it awaits the environmental compliance certificate (ECC) from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the letter of guarantee from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

Field investigation by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples for free and prior informed consent of indigenous communities of the Dumagat to be affected by the dam project is still on the second stage out of five required assemblies.

State auditors also said the loan from Export-Import Bank of China for the project remained ineffective due to the "nonsubmission of documents" required under the loan agreement. —WITH A REPORT FROM JULIE

M. AURELIO INQ



COA spots irregularities in Kaliwa Dam deal

By ELIZABETH MARCELO

The Commission on Audit (COA) has noted several irregularities in the awarding of the contract for construction of the P12.2-billion Kaliwa Dam project in Infanta, Quezon to a

Chinese firm.

In an eight-page audit observation memorandum dated June 10, it said that the technical working group (TWG) of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS)

Turn to Page 4

failed to observe proper bidding and vetting procedures before it awarded the project to China Energy Engineering Corp. (CEEC) in December 2018.

"We recommend that (MWSS) Management demand explanation from the members of the TWG for acceptance of the two bidders/contractors in spite of non-compliance with vetting/pre-qualification requirements," the memo read.

"Also, hold responsible the TWG officers for failure to conduct vetting of the project and or request for replacement of the two not qualified bidders, which deprived the MWSS to select the most qualified contractor," it added.

The memorandum was prepared by officer-in-charge audit team leader Rency Meryl Marquez and officer-in-charge supervising auditor Ma. Nancy Uy. It was addressed to MWSS administrator Reynaldo Velasco and was marked "received" by his office on June 10.

Malacañang promised to look into the issues raised by COA and those in the contract.

"We'll let the President decide, on that," answered presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo when asked if the administration is open to suspending the contract.

Based on the audit team's investigation, the TWG of the MWSS shortlisted and eventually accepted the bid applications of three Chinese firms - CEEC, Consortium of Guangdong Foreign Construction and Power China Ltd. - even if two of them failed to meet the pre-qualification requirements set earlier by the MWSS for the project.

The state audit body said CEEC and Consortium of Guangdong specifically failed to show that they have met the years of experience in design and engineering works as well as construction works as required for the project.

Under the MWSS's guidelines, only the firms that have successfully completed in the last 20 years the design, engineering and construction works for a dam and conveyance structure of similar complexity as the proposed Kaliwa Dam project shall qualify for the bidding.

The COA said bid documents submitted by CEEC and Consortium of Guangdong did not indicate the dates of completion of the supposed hydro stations and dam projects they claimed to have undertaken.

"The TWG should have been more circumspect to verify whether the reported projects were actually completed to establish the validity and existence thereof and to attain the purpose of vetting which is to evalu-

ate whether the nominated Chinese contractors meet the minimum technical qualifications," the audit memorandum read.

Worse, the COA said it seemed that the supposed competitive bidding conducted by the TWG was a sham.

The audit body noted that Consortium of Guangdong was disqualified during the first stage of the bidding procedure as it was found to be lacking with the required documents such as business permit, Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) license, Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) certificate and a valid Single Largest Completed Contract or SLCC.

Power China Ltd. was disqualified during the second stage of bidding as its offer was 6.91 percent higher than the Approved Budget for Contract (ABC).

COA said Power China made a high offer even if all the nominated bidders were earlier informed that any bid higher than the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

"As a result, only the China Energy Engineering Corp. Ltd. qualified, which is questionable considering that the two bidders were disqualified in the 1st and 2nd stages of the procurement process due to seemingly intentional purpose of the bidders not to comply with the TWG requirements and qualify as among those responsive bidders," the COA said

"In summary, it can be deduced that the two bidders/contractors were included merely to comply with the 'at least three bidders' requirement as stated under the Procurement Law. Likewise, the procurement of the project is with the semblance of a competitive bidding when in reality, it is a negotiated contract from the inception of the bidding process," it added.

Furthermore, the COA noted that CEEC had already begun deploying technical equipment and conducting preliminary activities in the project site including topographic and geologic surveys even if it was not given the formal Notice to Proceed or Notice to Commence Construction by the MWSS.

Furthermore, COA said the loan agreement between the Philippine government and China Eximbank remains ineffective due to the non-submission of several documentary requirements such as an environmental compliance certificate from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, a letter of guarantee approved by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and approval from the National Commission of Indigenous People.

- With Alexis Romero



Palace defers comment on COA report on Kaliwa Dam

MALACANANG has not received the report of the Commission on Audit (COA) questioning several procedural issues on the bidding of the P12.19 billion Kaliwa Dam project that involved three Chinese contractors.

Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo, concurrent presidential spokesman, said the Palace would like to see first the COA report and project contract before it could comment on the issue.

"We have not received officially a report on that matter," he said, adding the possible suspension of the project would depend on

President Duterte.

"We will have to look at the report of the COA, and then look at the contract," Panelo added.

COA had asked the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) to explain the procedural issues on the bidding process on the Kaliwa Dam project as "the criteria for competitiveness was not achieved" despite having three Chinese contractors joining the selection process and undergoing evaluation by the MWSS Technical Working Group.

The audit findings showed that

while three Chinese firms joined the bidding, two of the companies failed to comply with the requirement as one firm lacked a Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) license, an absence of Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) platinum certificate and a valid Single Largest Completed Contract (SLCC) while the other submitted a bid of P13.043 billion which was P842.74 million or 6.91 percent above the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC), leaving only one qualified bidder. — *Jocelyn Montemayor*

Palace to review Kaliwa Dam project

BY CATHERINE VALENTE

MALACANANG on Monday said it would look into the report of the Commission on Audit (CoA) that questioned the selection of the contractors for the P12-billion Kaliwa Dam project in Quezon province.

Palace spokesman Salvador Panelo on Monday said he would take a look at the CoA report and the contract awarded to China Energy Engineering Corp. Ltd.

"We have not received officially a report on that matter. *Siyempre* (Of course), we will have to look at the report of CoA, then look at the contract," Panelo told reporters.

He said President Rodrigo Duterte would decide whether or not to sus-

pend the project.

The Kaliwa Dam project is facing opposition from environmental groups and local officials, who fear that it would displace Indigenous Peoples and would have an adverse effect on the environment.

The project, funded through a loan from China, will cost \$248 million or P12.2 billion to complete.

The Audit commission questioned the bidding process done by the Metro-

politan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) for three Chinese contractors — a consortium of Guangdong Foreign Construction Co. Ltd. and Guangdong Yuantian Engineering Co., Power Construction Corp. of China Ltd., and China Energy Engineering Corp. Ltd. (CEEC).

In a memorandum dated June 10, 2019, the CoA said the three firms failed to meet the criteria for competitiveness.

It said the Guangdong firm failed to provide the necessary permits and certificates. It also submitted data on the cost and dam height without specifying the date of completion and the machinery used.

Meanwhile, the Power Construction Corp. of China Ltd. submitted a bid of P13.043 billion, which was P842.74 million above the approved budget for the contract.

Although CEEC has been issued a Notice of Award, it cannot proceed unless it submits documents such as a loan agreement with China Eximbank.

The commission also said the three contractors failed to comply with the MWSS requirements that all must have the minimum 20-year track record in design and engineering specifically in dam and tunneling works.

It also noted that the vetting of the contractors was completed on Dec. 13, 2017, but the bidding documents were confirmed four months later.

CoA asked MWSS to explain the acceptance of the two bidders in spite of their noncompliance. It also held the officials responsible for failure to conduct vetting of the project and replace the two unqualified members.

WITH GLEE JALEA



SAKALING INVALID ANG KONTRATA Kaliwa Dam Project, nakadepende kay Digong

Nasa desisyon umano ni Pangulong Duterte kung ano ang magiging kapalaran ng New Centennial Water Source-Kaliwa Dam Project, sakaling mapatunayan na 'for show' lamang ang bidding na naganap.

Ang pahayag na ito ni Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo, ay tugon sa pagkuwestiyon ng Commission on Audit (CoA) sa pagpili ng contractor para sa nasabing proyekto, na sinabing ang resulta ng bidding ay isa lamang "guise of being a competitive procurement process."

Sa ulat na inilabas ng CoA nitong weekend, dalawa umano sa tatlong Chinese contractors, ang intensyunal na hindi tumugon sa qualification requirements.

Sa press briefing, sinabi ni Panelo na hindi pa natanggap ng Palasyo ang ulat mula sa COA. Gayunman, sinabi nitong pag-aaralan ng Malacañang ang ulat at kontrata na ibinigay sa China Energy Engineering Corporation Limited.

"Siyempre (Of course) we will have to look at the report of COA then look at the contract," ani Panelo.

Sa ulat ng CoA, natagpuang hindi nagpasa ng sapat na requirements ang Consortium of Guangdong Foreign Construction, sa umpisa ng bidding.

Ayon pa sa ulat, ang alok ng Power Construction Corporation of China Limited ay "surprisingly higher" ng 6.91 porsiyento kumpara sa inapubahang budget para sa kontrata.

"It can be deduced that the two bidders/contractors were included merely to comply with the at least three bidders requirement as stated under the Procurement Law," ayon sa ulat.

Kung totoo, sinabi ni Panelo na nakadepende na sa Pangulo kung isusupinde o hindi ang kontrata.

Nahaharap ang Kaliwa Dam project sa Tanay, Rizal sa oposisyon ng mga environmental groups at lokal na opisyal, dahil mawawalan umano ng tirahan ang mga katutubo sa lugar at makaaapekto sa kalikasan.

Pinondohan ang proyekto sa pamamagitan ng loan mula sa China, na nagkakahalaga ng \$248 milyon o P12.2 bilyon.

Argyll Cyrus B. Geducos



MATAGAL ko nang isinulat ang isyu sa kontrobersiyal na Kaliwa Dam. Ito ay nasa bulubundukin ng lalawigan ng Quezon at Rizal. Mainit ang isyu sa pagtatayo ng nasabing dam na nakatuon sa pagdagdag ng suplay ng tubig sa lumalaking populasyon ng Metro Manila. Ramdam na ramdam natin ang kakulangan ng suplay ng tubig nitong nakaraang tag-init. Sa katunayan, nakaranas tayo ng kawalan ng tubig sa ating mga tahanan dahil sa matinding pagbaba ng lebel ng tubig sa La Mesa Dam at Angat Dam kung saan tayo kumukuha ng suplay ng tubig.

Sa dako naman ng mga nakatirang katutubong Dumagat sa Kaliwa Dam, nanganganib na mawalan sila ng ancestral domain. Ang nasabing mga katutubo ay naninirahan na sa Kaliwa River, ilang siglo na ang nakararaan. Natatakot sila na kapag natuloy ang proyekto ng Kaliwa Dam ay malulubog ang kanilang ancestral domain kasama na ang kanilang kultura at tradisyon.

Noong pumutok itong isyu ng Kaliwa

Dam, matatandaan na may isang kompanya mula sa Japan na matagal nang nag-alok ng solusyon sa Kaliwa Dam para hindi mapinsala ang mga katutubong Dumagat. Ang tawag dito ay weir dam. Medyo mababaw lang ang taas ng weir dam kaya direkto lamang ang daloy ng tubig ng Kaliwa River kapag inabot ang rurok ng wier dam. Maliit ang gastos nito. Ayon pa sa kompanya mula sa Japan, sila ang mamumuhunan dito. Walang gastos ang gobyerno. Bakit ayaw ng MWSS ito?

Hindi tulad ng nais ng MWSS, ang Kaliwa Dam ay napakataas, Kaya naman mag-iipon ito ng napakaraming tubig na siguradong malulubog ang malaking parte sa paligid ng Kaliwa River. Kasama sa maaaring malubog sa tubig ang ancestral domain ng katutubong Dumagat pati na rin ang Tinipak National Park na nasa Tanay, Rizal.

Ang mga munisipyo na maaapektuhan ng proyekto ay tutol sa plano ng MWSS. Eh kung ganoon, papaano makakukuha ng permit ang mga kontratista ng Kaliwa Dam? Pati ang mga militanteng grupo

COA REPORT: KUWESTIYONABLE ANG KONTRATA NG KALIWA DAM

ay sinakyan na rin ang nasabing isyu at kasama na rin sa nagpoprotesta sa pagtatayo ng Kaliwa Dam.

Subalit ito ang matinding ulat mula sa Commission on Audit o COA. Kuwestiyonable raw ang pagbibigay ng MWSS ng kontrata sa China Energy Engineering Corporation Limited (CEEC) noong Disyembre 2018. Bagama't binigyan na ito ng 'Notice to Proceed', marami pang nakatenggang dokumento na kailangan nilang isumite sa MWSS

Ayon sa COA report, ang bidding ay "in the guise of being a competitive procurement process" dahil tila sadya raw ang non-compliance ng qualification requirements ng dalawa sa tat-

long Chinese contractors na sumali sa bidding.

Ang bidder na Consortium of Guangdong Foreign Construction ay non-compliant sa eligibility requirements sa pagbubukas ng bids noon, kahit na sinabi na Technical Working Group (TWG) na may "proven track record and work experience" ito.

Sa kabilang dako, ang financial bid ng Power Construction Corporation of China Limited ay 'surprisingly higher' ng 6.91 percent sa inaprub na budget sa kontrata ng Kaliwa Dam. Kaya naman ayon sa COA report, "It can be deduced that the two bidders/contractors were included merely to comply with the 'at least three bidders requirement' as

stated under the Procurement Law."

Kinuwestiyon din ng COA ang CEEC kung bakit sinimulan na nila ang proyekto samantalang malinaw sa kontrata sa pagitan ng MWSS at ng CEEC na magsisimula lamang ang proyekto kapag nakapagsagawa na sila topographic mapping at geologic drilling matakpos nilang makakuha ng Notice to Proceed. Hindi pa yata ito nagawa ng CEEC. Bakit? Dahil hindi nga sila makapunta sa nasabing lugar dahil tutol at galit sa kanila ang mga tao roon. Nanganganib ang buhay nila!

Hay, naku! Tila ang daming gusot nitong proyektong ito. MWSS, mag-isip-isip kayo nang mabuti. Bago pa naman ang administrator ninyo.



COA tamang duda sa Kaliwa dam contract

KINUWESTYON ng Commission on Audit (COA) ang pagkakapili ng contractor na siyang gagawa sa New Centennial Water Source-Kaliwa dam project.

Ayon sa 2018 audit report, pinagdudahan ng COA ang isinagawang bidding sa proyekto dahil parang sinadya ng dalawang bidder na Chinese na hindi sumunod sa requirement.

Hindi sumunod sa eligibility requirement ang Consortium of Guangdong Foreign Construction kahit binanggit sa report ng Technical Working Group na ang contractor ay may "proven track record and work experience." Ang isa namang bidder na Power Construction Corp. of China Limited ay tila sinadya ang pag-bid ng mataas kaysa sa aprobadong budget ng kontrata.

"The procurement of the project is with the semblance of a competi-

tive bidding when in reality, it is a negotiated contract from the inception of the bidding process," ayon sa report.

Ang proyekto ay pinagkaloob sa China Energy Engineering Corporation Limited noong Disyembre 2018. Pero ang Notice to Proceed ay nakatengga pa rin dahil sa hindi pa sinusumite ang ilang dokumento ng contractor.

Kaugnay nito, pag-aaralan ng Malacañang ang kontrata na pinasok ng gobyerno sa China para sa konstruksiyon ng Kaliwa dam project sa lalawigan ng Quezon.

Ito ang inihayag ni Presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo matapos kuwestiyunin ng COA ang pag-award sa proyekto sa China Engineering Corporation Limited.

"Siyempre we will have to look at the report of the COA, and then look at the contract. But as of now, we

have not received officially a report on that matter," ani Panelo.

Ipapaubaya na ng Palasyo kay Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang pagpapasya kung ipasuspinde ang kontrata kapag napatunayang hindi valid o may paglabag sa proseso ng bidding.

"We'll let the President decide on that," ang maiksing dagdag na pahayag ni Panelo. **(Aileen Taliping)**

Angat nears normal level

BY DIVINA NOVA JOY DELA CRUZ

ANGAT Dam, the primary source of water supply in Metro Manila, is on its way to recovery, the weather bureau said on Monday.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geo-physical and Astronomical Services

Administration (Pagasa) recorded Angat Dam's water level at 177.60 meters

on Monday, more than 2 meters away from its minimum operating level of 180 meters.

Water level at the reservoir inched up since the last week of July due to rains spawned by the southwest monsoon and typhoon "Hanna."

Pagasa hydrologist Edgar de la Cruz said another typhoon or a low pressure

area that would bring sustained amount of rainfall over the Angat watershed might bring the dam's level to normal.

The southwest monsoon is affecting the western sections of Northern and Central Luzon. It is expected to bring cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms in the Batanes and Babuyan Group of Islands. Metro Manila

and the rest of the country will have generally fair weather with localized thunderstorms in the afternoon or evening, Pagasa said.

The weather bureau is monitoring a low pressure area off the coast of the eastern part of the country, which may enter the Philippine area of responsibility on Tuesday.



Bangkalasi

River clean-up

Nangako mismo si Navotas City Mayor Toby Tiangco sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources na kanilang lalinisin ang Bangkulasi River sa lalong madaling panahon at mas madadali pa ito kung makikiisa ang concerned agencies at iba pang stakeholders.

Determinadong malinis ito, mismong si DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda ay nakipagpulong sa alkalde at sinabi ng una na kailangang ma-isagawa na ang massive clean-up ng ilog dahil mahalagang bahagi ito ng Manila Bay rehabilitation

program.

Ani Mayor Toby, kanilang uunahin na matanggal ang floating houses at sunken vessels kaya makikipag-coordinate s'ya sa Navotas Fish Port Complex upang mas lalong masiguro ang pagtatanggal.

Nationinbriefs

EAGLE RESCUED IN BATAAN

BALANGA City, Bataan: A farmer rescued a young eagle and turned it over to the Environment and Natural Resources Office (ENRO) at the provincial capitol here. ENRO chief Victor Ubaldo said the bird belongs to the Philippine Serpent Eagle species and is still very young. He said an adult one measures 1.2 meters. Serpent eagles can be seen in cleared forests in major islands in the country. Dr. Alberto Venturina, provincial veterinarian, with two other veterinarians, thoroughly examined the body of the bird. Cyril Dilig said his father, farmer Lorenzo, rescued the eagle from a dog that was chasing it in their farm in Balanga City last Saturday before turning it over to the ENRO on Monday.

ERNIE B. ESCONDE

COAST GUARDS APPREHEND 4 VIETNAMESE POACHERS

ZAMBOANGA CITY: Four Vietnamese crew members were apprehended on Friday afternoon by the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) for illegal fishing in sea waters off Taganak Island, Tawi-Tawi, a report received here from Taganak Mayor Mohammad Faizal Jamalul. The PCG from the adjacent Bakungan Island station were conducting maritime patrol when they spotted a foreign fishing vessel five nautical miles off nearby Langaan Island. Upon inspecting the boat, the PCG discovered the sea craft had no Safety Security Environmental Number (SSEN) tag. Upon search and inspection, the PCG found several drums full of sea cucumbers, according to Taganak, adding "Vietnamese vessels enter Taganak and other local islands early afternoon up to night time to catch fish and many turtles which lay their eggs in surrounding beaches," the mayor said.

ANTONIO P. RIMANDO



YOUNG BLOOD

Nature's reminders

KEANU PAUL B. SYGACO

When nature is silent, it conveys contentment, and everything is in place. However, when it speaks through strong winds, heavy downpour or tremors, it invokes fear, which paralyzes us. We definitely suffer from the whiplashes of nature and we must act, prepare for the inevitable, or do something to find solutions to nature's maladies.

I encountered nature's wrath in February 2012 when I was 10 years old. The school floor trembled, the walls swayed, and I stood petrified until our teacher ordered us to get out of the room. When the swaying abated, my father and I headed home, but the jolts still came intermittently, and I could barely eat lunch. Classes were suspended; with nothing to do, I curled in bed pretending to fall asleep. I learned later that a 6.9-magnitude earthquake hit Guihulngan, some 130 kilometers from my hometown of Dumaguete City. Some roads near the epicenter were sliced up while a hill collapsed, the townsfolk buried in an instant grave.

My father, who was closely monitoring the situation, saw our neighbor in tears. She was saying over her mobile phone that the shoreline had extended, implying a possible tsunami. Taking the news seriously, dad drove us to higher grounds. Along the roadside was an apocalyptic sight of houses and structures in disarray.

In the Philippines, we are trained for earthquake drills but in a very cursory way—only how to get out of the classroom. There was no comprehensive disaster preparedness system in place, as I saw people walking about, bringing their kitchen utensils and pots, which I assumed were filled with food, together with sleeping accessories and bags. Tagging along with them were their domesticated animals. Our ears were glued to the car radio; while city people rushed uphill, some crazy teenagers had gone to the shoreline, waiting for the waves to engulf them.

The vehicles moved uphill like a funeral march, and my parents discussed if we should proceed. Fearing overcrowding in the mountains, we decided to return to the house. Of course, I was unable to sleep the entire night; my bed was a swaying pendulum from the aftershocks.

In December 2011, a few days before New Year, a flash flood unfortunately swamped my hometown. That single day's downpour was equivalent to a month's rainfall. Tropical Storm "Sendong" was so terrifying that dad had to rush to my grandmother, who could hardly move because of her stroke. Dad and my uncle had to evacuate her and her things to the second floor of her old house. The water rose to about head level, but subsided that night.

Each year that I encounter nature's wrath (Typhoon "Pablo" in December 2012, the Bohol earthquake in October 2013, Super-typhoon "Yolanda" in November 2013), I learn, or relearn, the lesson that when we abuse our environment, it retaliates too, taking away what we have toiled for, and even our lives.

By changing our lifestyles and routines, we can do little acts of conservation such as turning off running water while brushing our teeth, using laundry water to sprinkle on our organic garden, pulling out electric plugs when not in use, buying groceries in bulk to reduce plastic bags, planting more trees in open spaces, segregating garbage and going digital to reduce paper consumption. Campaigns to promote environmental care and awareness are also essential.

Nature is a constant provider for all our needs; it never asks for anything in return, just to be handled with care. Young people like me and the entire world should join hands in promoting activities that encourage solidarity with nature. Who knows, with the aid of technology, we can re-engineer the world back to its infancy stage, when it was young and clean.

Keanu Paul B. SyGaco, 17, is a student at the Silliman University Senior High School.

Notice to Young Blood contributors:

If you are sending your contributions by e-mail, please address it to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address and information about your age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with.

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SHOOTING STRAIGHT

BOBIT S. AVILA

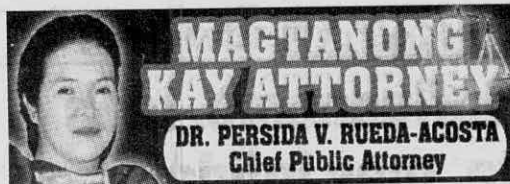
People shouldn't be buying cars w/o garage

Last weekend, thousands of Cebu City volunteers went down the Guadalupe River that divides the north and south side of Cebu City led by Mayor Edgardo Labella. I didn't read this report in the news, but it was splashed in the social media and indeed, Mayor Labella was true to his word that he would clean up the waterways of Cebu City starting with the Guadalupe River. Mind you, this clean up is not a campaign gimmick.

* * *

Email: vsbobita@mozcom.com or vsbobita@gmail.com





KASABWAT NG NAGSUNOG NG KAGUBATAN, KULONG AT MULTA RIN!

Dear Chief Acosta,

Magandang araw! Nais kong malaman kung ano ang kaparusahan sa taong tumulong o naging instrumento sa pagsusunog at paninira ng parte ng forestland?
— Ira

Dear Ira,

Para sa inyong kaalaman, ang batas na nakasasaklaw sa inyong katanungan ay ang *Presidential Decree (PD) No. 705* o mas kilala sa tawag na *Revised Forestry Code*. Nakasaad sa *Section 69* na ito na:

"Section 69. Unlawful occupation or destruction of forest lands. Any person who enters and occupies or possesses, or makes kaingin for his own private use or for others any forest land without authority under a license agreement, lease, license or permit, or in any manner destroys such for-

est land or part thereof, or causes any damage to the timber stand and other products and forest growths found therein, or who assists, aids or abets any other person to do so, or sets fire, or negligently permits a fire to be set in any forest land shall, upon conviction, be fined in an amount of not less than five hundred pesos (P500) nor more than twenty thousand pesos (P20,000) and imprisoned for not less than six (6) months nor more than two (2) years for each such offense, xxx"

Ayon sa nasabing batas, ang sinumang tutulong o magiging instrumento sa paninira at pagsusunog sa forest land ay pagmumultahin ng P500 hanggang P20,000 at pagkakakulong ng hindi bababa sa anim na buwan at hindi hihigit sa dalawang taon bawat pagkakasala.

Nawa ay nasagot namin ang inyong mga katanungan. Nais naming ipaalala sa inyo na ang opinyong ito ay nakabase sa inyong mga naisalaysay sa inyong liham at sa pagkakaintindi namin dito. Maaaring maiba ang opinyon kung mayroong karagdagang impormasyong ibibigay. Mas mainam kung personal kayong sasangguni sa abogado.

Kung kayo ay may katanungan o nais ihingi ng payong legal, sumulat sa **MAGTANONG KAY ATTORNEY** ni Persida Acosta, BULGAR Bldg., 538 Quezon Ave., Quezon City o mag-email sa attorney.bulgar@gmail.com



PAGPAPALIPAD NG LOBO, FIREWORKS DISPLAY IBABAWAL

NANANAWAGAN ang isang obispo ng Simbahang Katolika sa mga local government units (LGUs) na ipagbawal na ang pagpapalipad ng mga lobo at pagsasagawa ng fireworks display dahil nakakadagdag ito sa nalilikhang mga kalat at polusyon sa kalikasan.

Ayon kay Tagbilaran Bishop Alberto Uy, ang mga toxic na inilalabas ng fireworks ay lubhang mapanganib sa kalusugan ng tao kung nalalanghap ito at nagiging dahilan din ng polusyon sa hangin habang lumitaw naman sa isang pag-aaral, hindi nabubulok ang mga pinalipad na lobo at magiging malaking pinsala ito sa marine ecosystem kung sa karagatan mapupunta sapagkat magdudulot ito ng

pagkasira sa mga yamang dagat tulad ng mga isda.

"Local Government Units and Churches should stop the practice of releasing Balloons practice of fireworks display," panawagan pa ni Uy, sa panayam ng church-run Radio Veritas.

Sinabi ng obispo na dapat na magtulungan ang lahat ng sektor ng lipunan upang pangalagaan ang kapaligiran at sugpuin ang mapaminsalang aktibidad na nakasanayan para sa ikabubuti ng susunod na henerasyon.

Batay sa ulat ng Ocean Conservancy noong 2017, ikatlo ang Filipinas sa mga bansa sa Asya na nagtatapon ng mga basurang plastik sa karagatan habang ang Estados Unidos ay

nakapagtala naman ng 33.6 milyong tonelada ng mga plastik kung saan halos 10 porsiyento lamang ang na-recycle.

Nabatid na sinisikap ng obispo na mapagkaisa ang mananampalataya sa nasasakupang diyosesis upang lingapin ang unti-unting nasisirang kalikasan upang mapigilan ang tuluyang pagkasira at maisalba ang kinabukasan ng mga kabataan.

Una na ring hinimok ng Obispo ang mamamayan na makiisa sa tree planting activity sa darating na Setyembre 1, para higit na maparami ang mga punong kahoy na makatutulong upang mabawasan ang pagkasira ng kalikasan partikular na ang mga kabundukan. **ANA ROSARIO HERNANDEZ**

P-1

1/2

Streamlining government

IF Congress can keep itself from being distracted by unproductive nonsense it could accomplish a great deal of progressive work during the current legislative session, including the creation of two new and very much needed government departments. If handled properly — which of course, is a perpetually uncertain prospect — they could go a long way toward establishing a framework for reducing government bloat and improving efficiency.

The two proposed departments are the Department of Disaster Resilience and the Department of OFW Affairs, both of which would create larger umbrellas over their respective areas of concern, and both of which appear to be favored by Congress. The Department of Disaster Resilience, which we'll refer to as the DDR, would gather the government's



**ROUGH
TRADE**

**BEN
KRITZ**

disaster mitigation and relief programs under a single agency, while the Department of OFW Affairs, or DOA, would do the same for the management of overseas workers' concerns.

The current policy and administration of both of these matters are a fragmented, inefficient mess. Disaster management is handled by National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), an ad hoc body comprising 39 members representing 28 different national departments and agencies, and representatives of local governments, civil society

► **Kritz B4**

P.2

7/2

■ KRITZ FROM B1

Streamlining

organizations, the private sector, and the Philippine Red Cross, which typically ends up doing most of the work.

The sentiment that created the NDRRMC and its mirror bodies at the provincial and municipal levels was reasonable enough, but the results have been less than satisfactory according to the well-known principle that "none of us is as stupid as all of us." Disaster response and rehabilitation is chronically slow, unnecessarily costly, and characterized more by conflict than cooperation. Risk management, or so prevailing wisdom says, can be managed according to collegial policy, but actual disaster response, which requires actions that necessarily lie outside the norm, requires a hierarchical approach, preferably one managed by specialists.

The new DDR can work if that is the approach that is applied. The alphabet soup of 'councils' should be abolished, and the new agency staffed with people who actually know what they are doing and not political appointees.

The current administration of the institution of exported labor is not quite as messy as that of disaster response, but it does involve a number of government offices including two bloated and in some ways redundant agencies, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and the Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration (OWWA). Even as large as these two agencies are, they seem to struggle to keep up

with the volume of work that must be done; the major impetus behind the proposal to create a new, single agency was the vast number of complaints that they act very slowly, particularly in instances when workers overseas are in distress.

Merging the two agencies to create an even bigger one risks increasing the bureaucratic inefficiency, but if the government has the good sense to enlist the help of experts in organizational design, that does not necessarily have to be the case. Eliminating areas of overlap, rolling similar functions into larger departments, equipping the new agency with an effective and up-to-date information system, and above all, right-sizing the workforce with qualified personnel will make it work. Treating the DOA as its parent agencies are now – inefficient by design and filled with political rewardees – will not.

Making the positive assumption, however, that the new DDR and DOA will be soundly constructed and skillfully managed, they could serve as good models for downsizing the government, reducing costs, and improving efficiency. A few possible changes that could be considered include eliminating the National Food Authority (NFA) and having the Department of Agriculture absorb its functions; doing the same with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), the Board of Investments, and the Department of Tourism, all of which could be assimilated by a revamped Department of Trade and Industry; and merging the Department of Transportation and the Department

of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

As a final thought, it seems appropriate to acknowledge the tragic passing of one of the country's more colorful public figures, environmental and social activist and one-time Environment Secretary Gina Paz Lopez, whose death from brain cancer at the age of 65 was announced yesterday (Monday).

I only met her once, when during her brief stint as the head of the DENR she paid a visit to *The Manila Times* for a roundtable discussion. Up to that time, knowing of her only from what I read or heard in the news, I frankly had the impression that she was a dingbat. Nevertheless, I thought her appointment by President Duterte was sublime; who is better to run the DENR, after all, than an unequivocal environmentalist. So when offered the chance to meet her and hear what she had to say, I felt bringing an open mind was at the very least an appropriate courtesy.

And I was pleasantly surprised to learn that Ms. Lopez was not, in fact, a dingbat at all, but one of the sharper people I've met in these parts in a long time. Oh sure, she had a personality that could wear one out just being in the same room with her – imagine standing next to the sun for about an hour – but people who are so uncompromisingly committed to anything, particularly causes that are so unarguably noble, are rare and encourage hope. May she rest in peace.

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**PAGTANAW
AT
PANANAW
Bert de Guzman**

**Sino ang 2 cabinet
member?**

JUST a whiff of corruption." Meaning, "Kahit higing lang ng katiwalian." Banta ito ni Pres. Rodrigo Roa Duterte (PRRD) sa mga puno ng mga departamento at opisyal ng mga ahensiya na sisibakin sila agad kapag may nahingingan o narinig siyang anomalya sa kanilang tanggapan.

Sinero si Mano Digong sa paglaban sa kurapsiyon. Sapul nang maupo bilang presidente, marami na siyang pinalayas sa puwesto, kabilang ang malalapit na kaibigan, at mga taong humikayat sa kanyang tumakbo sa panguluhan. Palakpakan ang mga

mamamayan.

Habang sinusulat ko ito, napaulat na dalawang miyembro ng gabinete ni PRRD ang iniimbestigahan ng Presidential Anti-Corruption Commission (PACC) dahil umano sa kurapsiyon. Ayaw sabihin ni PACC Commissioner Greco Belgica ang kanilang pangalan.

Aba, Mr. Belgica kung atubili kang pangalanan sila, ibigay mo ang impormasyon sa ating Pangulo at hayaang siya ang maghayag nito sa publiko. Sanay ang ating Presidente sa paghahayag ng mga pangalan ng mga tao at opisyal na sangkot sa illegal drugs at kawalang-hiyaan.

Hinangaan at bumilib ang mga Pinoy kay PDu30 nang ihayag niya noon ang pangalan ng mga Heneral na umano'y sangkot sa ilegal na droga. Hiniya niya sa publiko ang mga ito bagamat wala pa namang kaso laban sa kanila. Ang pinagbasehan yata ng Pangulo ay ang listahan ng mga drug

lord at protector na ibinigay sa kanya ni dating AFP chief of staff Gen. Dionisio Santiago, na hinirang din niya bilang puno ng Dangerous Drug Board (DDB). Dakong huli, tinanggal niya sa DDB si Gen. Santiago.

Hiniya rin niya sa publiko ang mga politiko, kongresista, gobernador, mayor, barangay captain na sangkot din daw sa ilegal na droga. Ngayon, nagtatanong ang mga netizen at mamamayan kung bakit umiiwas at ayaw pangalanan ni Mr. Belgica ang dalawang cabinet member na iniimbestigahan nila sa kurapsiyon. Ibigay mo sa Pangulo ang kanilang pangalan.

Bukod sa dalawang miyembro ng Duterte cabinet, iniimbestigahan din ng PACC ang mga pinuno at kawani ng Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), Bureau of Customs (BoC), Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department

of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at Department of Transportation (DoTR).

Pagtalima sa direktiba ni PRRD na tabasin at sugpuin ang katiwalian at kabulukan sa gobyerno, kung kaya nagsasagawa ng pagsisiyasat at lifestyle checks ang PACC sa mga departamento at ahensiya upang matuklasan nila kung sinu-sino ang nagsiyaman, nagkaroon ng mga ari-arian, mga kotse, malalaking bahay nang sila'y maupo sa puwesto.

Maganda ang ginagawang ito ng PACC at ng Pangulo. Sana ay ipagpatuloy ang pagtugis at pag-uusig sa mga tiwali, bulok at gahamang mga pinuno ng bayan na puno ng pera ang mga bulsa at maraming deposito sa bangko habang ang mga ordinaryong mamamayan ay halos hindi makakain ng tatlong beses sa maghapon at natatrapik nang kung ilang oras sa lansangan sa pagpasok at pag-uwi sa trabaho, lalo na sa EDSA.



P4.1-T budget for 2020 submitted to Congress today

By **DELON PORCALLA**

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) will submit to the House of Representatives today the proposed P4.1-trillion national budget for 2020 that was recently approved by President Duterte and his Cabinet.

Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano, Majority Leader Martin Romualdez and Minority Leader Bienvenido Abante have expressed confidence that the spending bill will be passed before Congress goes on break on Oct. 4.

"Our target is to immediately pass the national budget without delays. Our target is efficiency, quality and yet faster," Cayetano said, expecting acting Budget Secretary Wendel Avisado to submit the National Expenditure Program (NEP).

Romualdez said the "timely passage of the national budget and other priority measures will further propel the country's economic growth."

Davao Rep. Isidro Ungab, chairman of the House committee on appropriations, said they will pass the Gen-

eral Appropriations Bill on third and final reading before Oct. 4, the start of 18th Congress' first congressional break.

Ungab said his panel will conduct hearings on the national budget from Monday to Friday, starting on Aug. 22, to ensure its timely passage.

"We will do our best to approve the budget on time and exercise our constitutional duty to scrutinize the budget to make sure that every peso that we appropriate will contribute to the overall growth

and development of the country," Ungab said.

He said the appropriations committee hopes to finish the budget hearings by the second week of September and start plenary deliberations as soon as the panel approves its committee report.

The budget hearings will kick off on Thursday with a briefing of the Development Budget Coordination Committee, the inter-agency body that determines the overall economic targets, expenditure levels and budget of the government.

The DBCC is composed of the DBM, National Economic and Development Authority, Department of Finance and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

On Aug. 23, the Ungab committee will review the budget proposals of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office and the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.

Despite the early submission of the NEP, the government was forced to operate on a reenacted budget due to the impasse on the 2019 General Appropriations Act that

stemmed from lawmakers' debate over supposed insertions.

Malacañang has since appealed to Congress for the timely passage of the 2020 national budget.

The total proposed national budget for 2020 at P4.1 trillion is 9.1 percent higher, or P343 billion more than the proposed P3.757-trillion national budget for 2019.

The P4.1-trillion cash-based budget for 2020 is equivalent to 19.4 percent of the country's gross domestic product, which amounts to P21.17 trillion.



TITLE:

NAKAHUKAY ang pulis-Cavite ng mga buto ng tao na pinaniniwalaang sangkot umano sa droga sa Dasmariñas City, Cavite nitong nagdaang araw.

Ginagalugad pa ang lugar ng mga pulis sa paniniwalang may iba pang bangkay ang mga sangkot sa droga na inilibing sa lugar.

Napag-alamang karaniwang mga hindi nagre-remit ng pinagbentahan ng droga, kasama na ang shabu, ang dahilan ng pagpatay sa mga biktima at pagbaon sa kanila sa lugar.

NABUKING

Nadiskubre ang pagpatay at libingan makaraang maaresto sina Richard Lozanta and Sonny Toledo sa pagiging tulak.

Itinuro nina Lozanta at Toledo and lugar na pinaghukayan ng mga buto.

Gumagawa ng rason ang dalawa na hindi sila sangkot sa pagpatay at nalaman lang nilang may puntod sa lugar dahil sa kanilang pagtatanim ng sitaw.

Anoman ang kahihi-natanan ng paghuhugas-kamay ng dalawa, ang mahalaga, muling napatunayan ang bagsik ng droga sa hanay mismo ng mga gumagawa at nagpapakalat ng droga.

MGA BINATILYO

Ayon sa isang mapagkakatiwalaang saksi at nakakita ng pagpatay ng mga sangkot sa droga sa mga kapwa nila sangkot sa droga, pati mga binatilyo ay natutong pumatay.

Sa kaso ng pinsan ng ating source, pinuntahan mismo ng mga teenage killer ang bahay ng adik at tulak na kaedad nila para patayin lamang.

Kung sino ang nag-sanay at nag-utos sa mga killer na iyon para pumatay sa kanilang mga kapwa kabataan, dapat alamin ng pulisya.

Pero ito ang panahon na nagkakamatayan dahil sa droga sa gitna ng giyera sa droga ni Pang. Rodrigo Duterte.

HALO-HALO

Halo-halo ang problema sa droga.

May mga pulis na sangkot, may sundalo, may mga politiko.



BAGSIK NG DROGA MULING LUMITAW

Sa hanay ng mga ito, marami ang naitalang kwento na sila mismo ang pumapatay o nag-utos ng pagpatay.

Lalo na nang umu-usad na ang matinding giyera sa droga.

Isang dahilan ng pagpatay ang balak nilang pagtakip sa pagkaka-sangkot nila sa droga.

Sibilyan, pulis, sundalo, politiko ang mga pinapatay.

Pero may sariling galaw ang mga druglord at tulak at may tinatawag silang mga tumbador.

Maaaring mga sibil-yang sanay sa pagpatay o mga awtoridad mismo na kanilang mga kasabwat o tauhan.

Klaro ito mismo sa mga record meron si Pang. Digong ukol sa mga nasa narcolist.

At pinatutunayan din ng mga sangkot mismo sa droga.

WALANG BITAY

Enjoy ang mga sangkot sa droga sa Pinas dahil walang parusang bitay.

At lalo silang enjoy dahil marami sa mga piskal at huwes na humahawak sa kanilang mga kaso ay takot sa kanila.

Magtanong pa kayo sa piskal at huwes.

Hindi basta rin may humahawak sa kanilang mga kaso.

Kapag naging negatibo sa mga nasa droga ang mga desisyon ng mga piskal at huwes, magtago-tago na sina piskal at judge.

Ilang piskal at judge na ba ang napapatay dahil sa droga?

Lalo na ang mga nag-diin sa mga sangkot sa droga sa piskalya at hukuman.

Enjoy rin sila dahil may mga piskal at huwes na pumapayag na ibaba ang kaso ng mga sangkot sa droga upang makapag-piyansa ang mga ito at magpatuloy sa gawain nilang masama.

Kasama sa mga nage-enjoy rin ang mga gunagamis sa mga Pinoy na bilang tagahatid-sundo

ng droga sa paliparan o kaya sa abroad.

Ang mga nagpapadala ng bulto-bultong droga na hindi bawal sa kanilang bansa ay enjoy rin sa pagnenegosyo rito gaya ng mga ecstasy at partydrugs.

Mahuli man, wala namang bitay sa mga nagpapadala at tuma-tanggap.

BOSES NG BAYAN

Ngayon, sa demanda ng mga kritiko sa ibang bansa laban mismo kay Pang. Digong, nasa 20,000 na umano ang napapatay ng gobyerno sa ilalim ng giyera sa droga.

Sa International Criminal Court at United Nations Human Rights Council ang mga demanda.

Ayon naman sa pulisya, mahigit lamang 5,000 at nag-ugat ito sa pakikipaglaban ng mga sangkot sa droga.

Kung sino ang nag-sasabi ng totoo, paturunan nila, lalo na ang mga kritiko.

May hamon nga mismo ang pamahalaan sa mga kritiko: pangalanan nila ang 20,000 na sinasabi nilang namatay sa ilalim ng giyera sa droga at pamahalaan ang may gaya ng lahat.

Anak ng tokwa, wala pang malinaw na punto ng mga kritiko rito hanggang ngayon at luma-labas na higit na pulitika ang nasa likod ng paninira kaysa paghahanap ng tunay na katarungan.

Pero heto ang pinakamahalagang sangkap sa mga patayan at giyera sa droga.

Magtanong sa higit na nakararami kung aprub sila sa giyera o hindi na nangangahulugan ng kamatayan sa marami sa mga hindi nakikinig ukol sa mga babala laban sa droga.

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

The Economist report on rising sea-levels

First word

THIS past week, my monitoring and research on the climate debate was unusually busy and productive — both on the side of climate alarmism and of climate realism.

I will assign special attention to both, because this time both sides were solid in their studies and journalism.

I want to start off with the alarmist side, because it features mainly the work of *The Economist* and its journalists.

The Aug. 17, 2019 issue of *The Economist* is a must-read. Even if you are a climate skeptic or realist as I am, you should take a look.

The issue features two pieces on the threat of rising sea levels. They are:

First, a leader (British word for editorial) titled "A world without beaches."

Second, an in-depth briefing on the rising oceans titled, "Climate change is a remorseless threat to the world's coasts."

The issue should be of special interest to Filipinos, because our country has one of the longest coastlines in the world. It has long been the contention of our policymakers that rising sea level is the biggest existential threat to our island home.

I reprint the leader complete below, and summarize the main points of the briefing.

Leader: 'A world without beaches'

"The ocean covers 70.8 percent of the Earth's surface. That share is creeping up. Averaged across the globe, sea levels are 20cm higher today than they were before people began suffusing the atmosphere with greenhouse gases in the late 1800s. They are expected to rise by a further half-meter or so in the next 80 years; in some places, they could go up by twice as much — and more when amplified by storm surges like the one that Hurricane Sandy propelled into New York in 2012. Coastal flood plains are expected to grow by 12 to 20 percent, or 70,000-100,000 square kilometers, this century. That area, roughly the size of Austria or Maine, is home to masses of people and capital in booming sea-facing metropolises. One in seven of Earth's 7.5 billion people already lives less than 10 meters above sea level; by 2050, 1.4 billion will. Low-lying atolls like Kiribati may be permanently submerged. Assets worth trillions of dollars — in-



OBSERVER
**YEN
MAKABENTA**

cluding China's vast manufacturing cluster in the Pearl river delta and innumerable military bases — have been built in places that could often find themselves under water.

"The physics of the sea level is not mysterious. Seawater expands when heated and rises more when topped up by meltwater from sweating glaciers and ice caps. True, scientists debate just how high the seas can rise and how quickly (see Briefing) and politicians and economists are at odds over how best to deal with the consequences — flooding, erosion, the poisoning of farmland by brine. Yet argument is no excuse for inaction. The need to adapt to higher seas is now a fact of life.

"Owing to the inexorable nature of sea-swelling, its effects will be felt even if carbon emissions fall. In 30 years the damage to coastal cities could reach \$1 trillion a year. By 2100, if the Paris agreement's preferred target to keep warming below 1.5°C relative to pre-industrial levels were met, sea levels would rise by 50 cm from today, causing worldwide damage to property equivalent to 1.8 percent of global GDP a year. Failure to enact meaningful emissions reductions would push the seas up by another 30 to 40 cm, and cause extra damage worth 2.5 percent of GDP.

"In theory minimizing the damage should be simple: construct the hardware (floodwalls), install the software (governance and public awareness) and, when all else fails, retreat out of harm's way. This does not happen. The menace falls beyond most people's time horizons. For investors and the firms they finance, whose physical assets seldom last longer than 20 years, that is probably inevitable — though even businesses should acquaint themselves with their holdings' nearer-term risks (which few in fact do). For local and national governments, inaction is a dereliction of duty to future generations. When they do recognize the problem, they tend to favor multibillion-dollar structures that take years to plan, longer to erect, and often prove inadequate

because the science and warming have moved on.

"As with all climate-related risks, governments and businesses have little incentive to work out how susceptible they are. Some highly exposed firms are worried that, if they disclose their vulnerabilities, they will be punished by investors. Governments, notably America's, make things worse by encouraging vulnerable households to stay in harm's way by offering cheap flood insurance. More foolish still, some only reimburse rebuilding to old standards, not new flood-proof ones.

"However, there are ways to hold back the deluge. Simple things include building codes that reserve ground levels of flood-prone buildings for car parks and encourage "wet-proofing" of walls and floors with tiles so as to limit the clean-up once flood waters recede. Mains water, which is desirable in its own right, may stop people without access to it from draining aquifers, which causes land to subside; parts of Jakarta are sinking by 25 cm a year, much faster than its sea is swelling. If more ambitious projects are needed to protect dense urban centers, they ought to be built not for the likeliest scenario but for the worst case, and engineered to be capable of being scaled up as needed. The New York region has funneled \$1 billion out of a reconstruction budget of \$60 billion to such experiments in Sandy's wake.

"Authorities must also stop pretending that entire coastlines can be defended. Unless you are Monaco or Singapore, they cannot. Elsewhere, people may need to move to higher ground. Bangladesh, for instance, is displacing 250,000 households.

"All this requires co-ordination between different levels of government, individuals and companies, not least to prevent one man's levee from diverting water to a defenseless neighbor. Market signals need strengthening. Credit-raters, lenders and insurers are only beginning to take stock of climate risks. Making the disclosure of risks mandatory would hasten the process. And poor, vulnerable places need support. Just \$70 billion a year of the \$100 billion in pledged climate aid to help them tackle the causes and impact of global warming has materialized. Less than one-tenth of it goes to adaptation. This must change.

"Actuaries calculate that governments investing \$1 in climate re-

silience today will save \$5 in losses tomorrow. That is a good return on public investment. Rich countries would be foolhardy to forgo it, but can probably afford to. Many developing countries, by contrast, cannot. All the while, the water is coming."

Briefing: 'Remorseless threat to the world's coasts'

The Economist's in-depth briefing on the rising oceans is titled "Climate change: A remorseless threat to the world's coasts."

It is both alarming and hair-raising.

Its main theme is that the world is not ready for the sea levels it will face.

It paints this grim scenario:

"Imagine a huge horizontal A-frame: a recumbent, two-dimensional Eiffel Tower. Pin a pivot through its tip, so it can swivel around 90 degrees. Then add to its splayed feet something like the rocker of a rocking chair, but 210 meters long, 22 meters high and 15 meters wide. Now double it: picture, across a 360-meter-wide canal, its mirror image. Paint all their 13,500 tons of steel glistening white.

"What you have imagined, the Dutch have built.

"Few places are as vulnerable as the Netherlands, 27 percent of which is below sea level. But many other places also face substantial risk, and almost all of them are far less able to water-proof themselves than the Dutch.

"There are some 1.6 million kilometers of coastline shared between the 140 countries that face the sea. Along this they have strung two-thirds of the world's large cities. A billion people now live no more than ten meters above sea level. And it is coming to get them."

A massive problem for some; an existential risk for others. Atoll nations like Kiribati — average elevation less than two meters — risk losing almost all their territory to floods.

The Economist report is designed to alarm the reader and turn him into a climate change believer.

I have written in this column on climate scientists who have dismissed the sea-level forecasts of the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

The climate debate will go on.

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