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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



Aboitiz to help rehab San Juan River

ABOITIZ Equity Ventures, Inc. (AEV) and its corporate social responsibility arm Aboitiz Foundation signed a memorandum of agreement with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for the rehabilitation of San Juan River.

The San Juan River which is a Pasig River tributary spanning from Quezon City to Manila is considered by DENR as Metro Manila's most polluted waterway.

At present, the river's water quality is considered poor with fecal coliform and is not suitable for fish and other aquatic organisms.

The river's cleanup is part of the larger Manila Bay rehabilitation plan.

Under the agreement, AEV will fund the rehabilitation and cleanup of the river and provide equipment and materials.



Signing the agreement are (from left) Aboitiz Foundation first vice president and chief operating officer Maribeth Marasigan, DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu, and AEV executive vice president and chief operating officer Sabin Aboitiz.

Over the next three years, education campaigns, livelihood programs and cleanup activities, garbage and silt removal, easement recovery and protection will be undertaken by local

chief executives, homeowners associations, private partners and other stakeholders.

This is not the first time the Aboitiz Group has partnered with the DENR as the parties

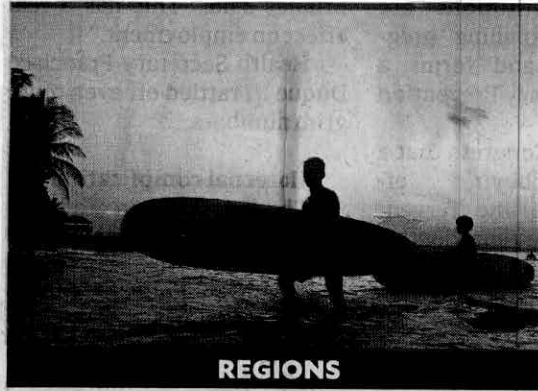
also signed an agreement last year to rehabilitate and adopt the one hectare Boracay Wetland 4 and transform it into a linear urban park for a period of three years.



TITLE:

PAGE 1/ 1/3

23 AUG 2010
DATE



REGIONS

Beach clearing starts in Siargao

CANTILAN, SURIGAO DEL SUR—The government has started a crackdown on illegal structures on the beaches of Siargao Island, a popular surfing destination in Surigao del Norte. Officials said 391 establishments that violated the easement rule were given two months to demolish their structures. Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said there were no plans to close Siargao to tourism for now. —STORY BY ERWIN MASCARIÑAS

A12



Beach clearing starts in Siargao

DENR, DILG vow to save surf spot from environmental woes suffered by Boracay

By Erwin Mascariñas
@InqNational

CANTILAN, SURIGAO DEL SUR —The government has started a crackdown on illegal structures on the beaches of Siargao Island, a booming tourist destination in Surigao del Norte province, taking off from lessons in the environmental rehabilitation of world-famous Boracay Island in Aklan province.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu and Interior Secretary Eduardo Año were in General Luna, Surigao del Norte, this week to oversee the launch of the campaign to rid Siargao's beaches of illegally built structures and free up the intended easement of at least 20 meters from the shore.

Cimatu gave assurance, however, that there were no plans to close Siargao from tourists for now, but that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) was tasked with strictly implementing all environmental laws.

Tourist arrivals in Siargao have been steadily increasing in recent years, driving a boom in the construction of resorts. Surfers and beachgoers comprise the bulk of the visitors.

Together with personnel of the DENR, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the local government of General Luna, Cimatu and Año led the demolition of the function hall of Cabontug Resort,



SIARGAO FUN Beachgoers and surfers, both professionals and beginners, flock to Siargao Island. Among the popular destinations is the town of Del Carmen, where resorts are available to accommodate tourists. —ERWIN MASCARIÑAS

which is owned and operated by the municipal government.

Warning

Authorities also issued notices to business owners to demolish illegal structures in their establishments.

Cimatu warned business operators and resort owners of closure if they would defy the order.

Lawyer Felix Alicer, the DENR director in Caraga, said an investigation done by Task Force Siargao showed 391 of 1,298 establishments violated the easement rule.

The violators were given two months to demolish the illegal structures following is-

suance of the notices of violation, Alicer said.

Cimatu also noted the solid waste management practice of General Luna, citing the lack of a sanitary landfill.

No closure

He advised the provincial government to act on effluents discharged by households directly to the sea.

"I saw about 600 families living within and near the waters, so when they use their comfort rooms, [the waste] will go directly to the water. It is [unsightly] for a tourist destination," Cimatu said.

Año said the DENR, the DILG

and other government agencies were helping fix Siargao's problems to prevent the island's environmental degradation, as what happened to Boracay.

Last year, the government barred tourists from staying in Boracay for six months to pave the way for its rehabilitation after President Duterte publicly lamented that the resort island had turned into a "cesspool."

Boracay was reopened on Oct. 26 last year, but the government had yet to complete road construction and drainage repair in other parts of the island.

"We are not here to close Siargao but to make it sustainable for everyone," Año said. INQ



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A12
PAGE

UPPER
 LOWER

PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

23 AUG 2019

DATE

TITLE:

PAGE 1/

3/3

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Editor
Robert Jaworski L. Abaño



HANGING LOOSE Siargao Island in Surigao del Norte province has become synonymous to a relaxed, easygoing lifestyle, thanks to its surf culture. —ERWIN MASCARIÑAS



Boracay bridge construction opposed

The proposal is for a 1.2-kilometer limited-access bridge between Boracay Island and Caticlan in Malay, Aklan in the main island of Panay

By Jun N. Aguirre

BORACAY, AKLAN – Aklan Provincial Gov. Florencio Miraflores has expressed his opposition to the unsolicited proposal of establishing a bridge linking Boracay Island to Caticlan and instead raised the feasibility of constructing an integrated port terminal for better interconnectivity within the vicinity of the two locations.

Earlier, the Department of Public Works and Highways revealed that they hope to soon grant the original proponent status to San Miguel Corporation for its proposal to build a 1.2-kilometer bridge from Caticlan to Boracay Island for P5.5 billion.

The proposal is for a 1.2-kilometer limited-access bridge between Boracay Island and Caticlan in Malay, Aklan in the main island of Panay but is not envisioned to cater to vehicular traffic so as not to congest the island. The bridge will also be provided with loading/unloading areas on both ends to process the movement of commuters, solid waste, goods and supplies.

Miraflores said that he is instead planning to build an Integrated Port Terminal in Caticlan, wherein the said terminal is envisioned to have complete facilities and capable of accommodating

future cruise ship passengers.

“Breakwater structures will also be put up to upgrade both ports including Cagban into all-weather ports that can allow berthing of motorboats and fast crafts during the monsoon season and will operate 24-7,” Miraflores said.

To decongest the roll on, roll off port in Caticlan, the Department of Transportation has approved the request of the Aklan Provincial Government for the expansion of the Buruanga Port in Alegria and earmarked P200 million for the project.

“The Manoc-Manoc Cargo Port has commenced construction works. When completed, it will receive and dispatch from and to the island a separate berthing area will be allocated for priority use of barges hauling out garbage in Boracay,” Miraflores said.

“We intend to develop the 6,000 square-meter area adjacent to Wetland Number 6 to pave the way for a much presentable and compliant market site for vendors, masseurs and the like. The development will also feature stalls for food businesses,” he added.

The Aklan provincial government is also pushing for the housing project in the mainland for the island’s workers.



BELOW THE LINE

She jousted with windmills



By JOSÉ ABETO ZAIDE

THERE were never two things about Regina Paz LaO Lopez. As President Rodrigo Duterte's putative Secretary of the Department of Energy and Natural Resources (DENR), she renewed the license of 12 mining companies, and cancelled 26. She didn't need the job; the job needed her. On the opposite side, the Chamber of Mines boasted that she wouldn't get past the Commission on Appointments (CA); Goliath mining companies would gang up against her.

Gina Lopez was scandalized at how we ravage nature's endowments. She professed love for the environment and our natural resources as the only driver to save our country and our planet. Mining concessions are a privilege with appropriate conditions, not a right. She spelled it black or white, passionate not about what is hers or ours, but what belongs to future generations.

Together with two wizened news-hawks, I joined Gina Lopez on a private flight to Butuan. I saw close-up this lady to the manor born, who had begged for alms for Ananda Marga, become the moving spirit to save the environment. Our first stop at the Philsaga Mining Corporation in Agusuan del Sur, which produced 120,000 to 130,000 ounces of gold. Mining companies are mandated to set aside 1.5% of their earnings for a Social Management Development Fund. Philsaga is role model, using the annual ₱125-million SMDF not only in its host area, but in neighboring districts. (A monkey on its back – informal miners who operate above the ground or pan for gold. The company buys their produce, thereby avoiding risk of tailings by improper handling.)

Gina Lopez was the star at one stopover, whipping up everyone like a cheerleader with catchwords like "environment" and "social responsibility." Seeing how she played the crowd which hung on her every word, I suggested that if she fails to clear the CA, she could run for the Senate and top the polls. But she demurred that she is unaccustomed to quid pro quo.

We overflow open pit mines left tiwang-wang after miners had sucked out their treasure. Next stop at the Manila Mining Corporation (MMC) in Surigao del Norte, with almost 2,000 hectares of prime mineral lands. Its application for additional 4,850 hectares was put on suspended animation, after two leaks of tailings. (MMC avers that new technology precludes the same tailings disaster. It tried without success to persuade the DENR secretary to grant clearance, on the promise that MMC would bring in more foreign investment. A Chamber of Mines board member also vowed sustainable mining.) Miners would be more persuasive if they show restoration of open-pit sites.

On the putative study by a government inter-agency council to lift the ban against open-pit mining, Lopez asked who bears the consequences when the open pit takes in water which turns toxic. Those affected point out that the loss of mining jobs and revenues could lead to increased criminality, further exacerbating the insurgency problem. Lopez promised to provide jobs to affected workers under DENR's "green economy" program. This was not reaching for the stars...when so much of the resources are endemic. She ticked off nature's blessings of

Philippine flora species preempted by foreign interests:

- Patented by Yves St. Laurent: Ilang-Ilang, for perfume exported to Europe.

- Patented by Japan: Nata de coco; sarong, lagunen, and takip kuhol (Centella Asiatica) lowers blood pressure, rejuvenates, vs. dysentery, fever, headache; saluyot, anti-stress tablet; banaba (Lagerstroemia Speciosa) vs. fever, diarrhea, diabetes, and purgative (Itoen KK).

- Patented by USA: Philippine sea snail (Conus Magus) for toxin SNX 111 painkiller stronger than morphine (NeurexCorp.); Philippine tee tree (Taxis Sumatrana) source of cancer-curing Taxol (University of Philadelphia); ampalaya, Vitamin A rich vegetable, and ampalaya + eggplant as cure for diabetes (Cromak Research Inc).

The ill-starred stint of Gina Lopez as environment secretary came to its predictable end when the CA rejected her appointment with finality on the third hearing on 3 May 2017. Senators who voted for her were saddened, but deferred to the majority. Senate Minority Floor Leader Franklin Drilon said the Liberal Party voted as a bloc for her confirmation. Senator Loren Legarda, an environment advocate, lamented the loss of a DENR secretary who could lead with "the passion, integrity, and political will to implement our environmental laws." Some others shed crocodile tears.

Where is a prophet know in his/her own country? But Gina Lopez wasn't one to sulk and lick her wounds. On 5 October 2017, she was chosen for the Seacology Prize by the David Bower Center in Berkeley, California, for her work protecting the unique habitats and cultures of islands. As a notable exception and to manifest their esteem for the year's awardee, Seacology Founder and Chair Dr. Paul Cox, Vice Chair Ken Murdoch, and Executive Director Duane Silverstein – all four of them – flew in to honor the 26th prize awardee in her home country. On learning of the award, she matched the prize money to double the energy to preserving island environment and culture. She said, "The Philippines is a country of 7,107 islands, and I hope this award will affect the entire country. And because the Philippines has so many diverse ecosystems, and so many animals and plants found nowhere else, saving our islands has direct global impact as well."

I cull from the citation on the Seacology Prize in 2017: "It takes uncommon bravery to speak out for conservation. Powerful interests often oppose people who defend their island's environment. Every Seacology Prize recipient faced resistance, personal sacrifice and risk. Gina Lopez's circumstances are unique and stand out when compared to many former recipients. She has been fortunate to have the benefits of education and opportunity. But she has used those advantages to speak and act for people who are not as fortunate. People without a voice, whose environmental circumstances and way of life are threatened."

A tad long for epitaph for Regina Paz ("Queen of Peace"?) LaO Lopez, environment warrior who passed away at 65. But I couldn't think of anything more deservedly fitting.

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PHOTO: ABS-CBN NEWS

Remembering Gina Lopez

GAB FAB
JET VALLE

@jetvalle



VISIONARY is a word routinely applied to dreamers who see the world differently. And one thing that makes them a visionary is that they seem to go beyond the rules of the world. Heck, sometimes they think it doesn't apply to them. This frightens a lot of people who are stickler for rules. They believe norms and laws, and adherence to these is what makes the world safe—and they're right. But where would we be if we insist on living and following the same rules day after day after day? This is why often visionaries are regarded as crazy or nuts—because they threaten the safety of the constant, the known, the expected.

Imagine if everyone was normal and everyone would just follow the rules? And no one was "crazy" enough to defy them? Nothing would change and everything will be boring and everything that's

ugly will remain ugly. Change, good or bad, can be attributed to "crazy" people. And that is why they are visionaries.

One such visionary is Gina Lopez. She may have been called a lot of glowing names but there were also not a few people who found her eccentric, to say the very least. Stubborn and unreasonable to some. "Na buang na" was what one Facebook commenter posted when footage of her singing "I Believe I Can Fly" made the rounds of social media. But it is undeniable: Gina Lopez was one extraordinary person.

Her achievements are many. Long before it was chic to be civic-minded, Gina already was. She spearheaded a lot of programs for the environment and Filipino communities, and became the managing director of the ABS-CBN Foundation. She initiated Bantay Bata 163, the country's first media-based hotline. She also founded Bantay Kalikasan, and produced various educational TV shows. Gina also served as the vice chairman of the ABS-CBN Bayan Foundation which provided microfinance assistance to microentrepreneurs, and was also the chairman emeritus of Southeast Asian Children's Television.

Gina also initiated the rehabilitation of the Pasig River that led to the cleaning of numerous tributaries, and was also responsible for the reforestation of the La Mesa Watershed Reservation.

Gina was also an anti-mining advocate, giving large-scale miners a splitting headache with her

determination. It was for these efforts that President Duterte appointed her to head the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

She hit the ground running in her new position, ordering an audit of all mining sites and firms in the country, and stripping companies of their environment permits when found to be in violation of environmental laws. She also had plans to create buffer zones and revitalize a lot of protected areas.

Back to Gina being a visionary. Of course it goes without saying a lot of people were up in arms about her and two years ago, her tenure as Environment secretary ended as her appointment was rejected by the Commission on Appointments. She was replaced by former military general Roy Cimatu who, in his own words, was capable of replacing her because "nagtanim naman ako ng puno dati."

But this did not stop Gina. In the press conference after her rejection, she graciously thanked the people who believed in her but, more important, urged legislators to always look after the needs of the poor.

Such was Gina Lopez. She was a woman doing the seemingly impossible in order to achieve great things for the country.

And at a time when our dreams for a better future are getting crushed every minute, it is nice to be reminded that there was a courageous person in Gina Lopez who did things in her own little way that ended up grand in scale. ■



23 AUG 2019

TITLE:

PAGE 1/

DATE

A GENTLE SOUL, A GREAT LOSS

I had no personal encounter with Gina Lopez, but somehow, I feel like a part of me was broken when I heard about her death.

We lost such a beautiful and gentle soul who was also a ferocious warrior fighting for our Mother Earth.

What struck me most about this woman was her humility. Although born to a wealthy family, she gave up a luxurious life and lived in poverty as a yoga missionary. For her to experience extreme poverty is a testament to her pure spirituality. For two years, she lived in a slum area in Kenya and had to queue for water every single day. Who among us could even contemplate doing that, of giving up a comfortable life

in exchange for this incredible challenge?

The Philippines lost a Filipino worthy to be a public servant. When she was refused confirmation as secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, we lost a leader who could have really made a change. Shame to those members of the Commission on Appointments for rejecting her.

As in the case of the late senators Miriam Defensor Santiago and Raul Roco, the death of Gina Lopez is a great loss to all Filipinos, especially the children, the poor and those who love nature.

RADO GATCHALIAN,
Sydney, Australia



**BULONG
AT SIGAW**

Ric Valmonte

**Magiting na
mandirigma si
Gina Lopez**

PUMANAW si Sec. Gina Lopez nito lang Agosto 19. Lumisan siya mismo sa araw ng kapanganakan ni dating Pangulong Manuel L. Quezon. Dalawang araw naman pagkatapos paslangin si dating Senador Ninoy Aquino, 36 na taon na ang nakararaan.

Itinadhana ito upang lubusang makintal sa isipan ng sambayanang Pilipino na may isa na namang tao ang naglaan ng kanyang buhay sa paglilingkod sa kanila. Taos-pusoniyang

ginawa ito nang walang pagpapanggap at hindi nangangailangan ng kapalit maliban sa ikakabuti ng kanyang kapwa. Nagmula siya sa marangya at higit na nakariribasang pamilya, kaya lang, hindi siya lubusang maligaya na nabubuhay sa kasaganaan, habang sa kanyang paligid ay nagdudumilat ang kahirapang kinasasadlakan ng kanyang kapwa. Masidhi ang kanyang pagnanais na maiahon sila sa kanilang kinalalagyan.

Iniwan niya ang komportableng buhay at nagtungo siya sa mga pinakamahirap at napapabayaang bahagi ng mundo. Dito niya ipinadama ang pag-ibig at pagmamahal ng isang tao sa mga higit na nangangailangan ng pagkalinga. Inaruga niya at tinulungan ang mga batang gutom at may sakit na parang kanyang mga anak. Nang magpasiya na siyang manatili sa kanyang bansa, patuloy niyang ipinursige ang kanyang mga adhikain, kabilang na rito ang pagbibigay ng proteksyon sa mga

inabusong kababaihan at kabataan.

"Hindi ka makapagsasalita hinggil sa mga bata, kung walang pagibig," wika niya. Nakiisa siya sa mga komunidad para itaguyod ang mga programang pangkabuhayan habang pinangangalagaan niya ang kanilang mga likas-yaman. Marubdob niyang ipinagtanggol ang kalikasan at kapaligiran laban sa pananalasa ng mga sakim na ang tanging hangarin ay makinabang dito at 'di alintana ang ikapipinsala nito sa mga mamamayan at bayan.

Hinirang si Lopez ni Pangulong Duterte na Secretary ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). Sa maikling panahon ng kanyang paninilbihan, nakasagupa niya ang mga naninira ng kapaligiran sa pamamagitan ng pagmimina. Nakatagpo ang mga ito ng kanilang mga kakampi sa loob mismo ng gobyerno. Pero hindi siya natigatig. Gamit ang isip at puso, ipinagtanggol niya ang

kanyang mga adhikain kabilang na rito ang pagsasara sa mga minahang hindi sumusunod sa mga patakarang nangangalaga sa kapaligiran. Kaya para sa akin, ginawa lamang ni Pangulong Duterte si Gina na palamuti ng kanyang gobyerno. Pero hindi nanghinawa si Gina sa pagpursige ng kanyang mga adbokasiya tulad ng pagtataguyod ng mga programa na magpapaganda at magpapabuti sa kapaligiran.

Tunay na mandirigma si Gina. Ganito rin ang layunin ng mga babaeng estudyante na namamatay sa engkuwentro. Batang-bata pa sila at iniwan din nila ang komportableng silid ng paaralan nang masabak sa labanan. Ang ipinaglalaman nila ay iyong sistemang humadlang kay Gina para magamit sana ni Gina ang gobyerno para sa kapakanan ng lahat. Ito ang lalabanan ng mga estudyante na ang tingin ng mga nasa gobyerno, ay mga terorista o kaalyado ng mga komunista. Pero sa totoo lang, sila ang mga ito.



EDITORIAL

Probe Kaliwa Dam bidding

The project that Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III has described as the “absolute” answer to the water woes that have plagued the metro for the better part of the year is, according to a recent report by the Commission on Audit (COA), also a project riddled with irregularities.

Why, the COA asked, was the New Centennial Water Source-Kaliwa Dam Project—an P18.7-billion behemoth expected to be completed in 2023, with a capacity of 600 million liters of water per day—awarded to a Chinese firm that had failed to fulfill several requirements? With the winning contractor bagging the project despite skipping such requirements, was this, in fact, a negotiated contract under the guise of public bidding?

In an audit observation memorandum dated June 10 but released only on July 18, the COA said the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) Technical Working Group has a lot of explaining to do after it confirmed the shortlist of three Chinese contractors—even if all lacked pre-qualification requirements.

Contrary to MWSS rules, the date of completion for past projects by the three firms, including the winning contractor—China Energy Engineering Co. (CEEC) Ltd., was not specified, a requirement that would have established the validity, existence and technical competence of the bidding companies. Wasn’t this the essence of vetting—determining if the three bidders were actually capable of completing multibillion-peso projects?

The COA also noted that two of the three final bidders presented by the MWSS lacked technical requirements, among them the mayor’s and business permit and an accreditation license. Meanwhile, the third bidder, which passed the technical requirements, overshot the approved budget by P842.743 million, but was still included despite the rule that such overpriced bids would be automatically rejected.

So—were the two bidders included merely to comply with the requirement of at least three bidders for the project? Why were the documentary requirements for the project submitted 135 days after the execution of the contract, and not within 5 days as stated in a 2009 COA circular? And why was the CEEC already conducting preliminary project activities—including topographic and geologic surveys—despite the loan agreement still to take effect?

One will have to look further for the answer to that last question: The dam project, according to MWSS administrator Reynaldo Velasco, had already been greenlighted by the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda), chaired by no less than President Duterte. “With the approval of the highest level at the Neda, done deal *na yan* (it’s a done deal),” Velasco said, adding that he doesn’t think Mr. Duterte would reverse his decision.

That “done deal” had aroused concerns from the outset, relating to the loans offered by China to bankroll the project. Apart from being a possible debt trap for the Philippines (as has happened with other countries crushed by Chinese loans), the agreement made it too easy for China to declare the loan in default and declare “all the principal of and accrued interest ... immediately due and payable,” warned Sonny Africa, executive director of independent think tank Ibon Foundation.

Per the agreement released by the finance department, the loan is governed by Chinese laws, and any disputes will be settled in the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre—a distinct home advantage for the Chinese lenders and contractor. And “China is not just any lender. It is aggressive in asserting its global agenda even at the expense of human rights, environmental protection and feeding corruption in debtor governments,” Africa said.

The dam is also feared to adversely affect the lives, lands and livelihood of the more than 20,000 Dumagat people living along the Kaliwa riverbanks in Quezon and Rizal provinces who would be displaced by the project. Wilma Quierrez, secretary general of Dumagat Sierra Madre, said the 62-meter-high dam would inundate their ancestral lands in at least 18 villages. They were never consulted about the project, she said.

With so many questions hanging over the Kaliwa Dam project, and vast amounts of money in play, where is the urgent Senate hearing that should look more closely into its paperwork and fine print? Neophyte senators could certainly make their mark and prove their mettle by scrutinizing what appears to be another instance of government expediently cutting corners for a behest project—and thereby help forge a balance between essential accountability and transparency, and a pressing public need.

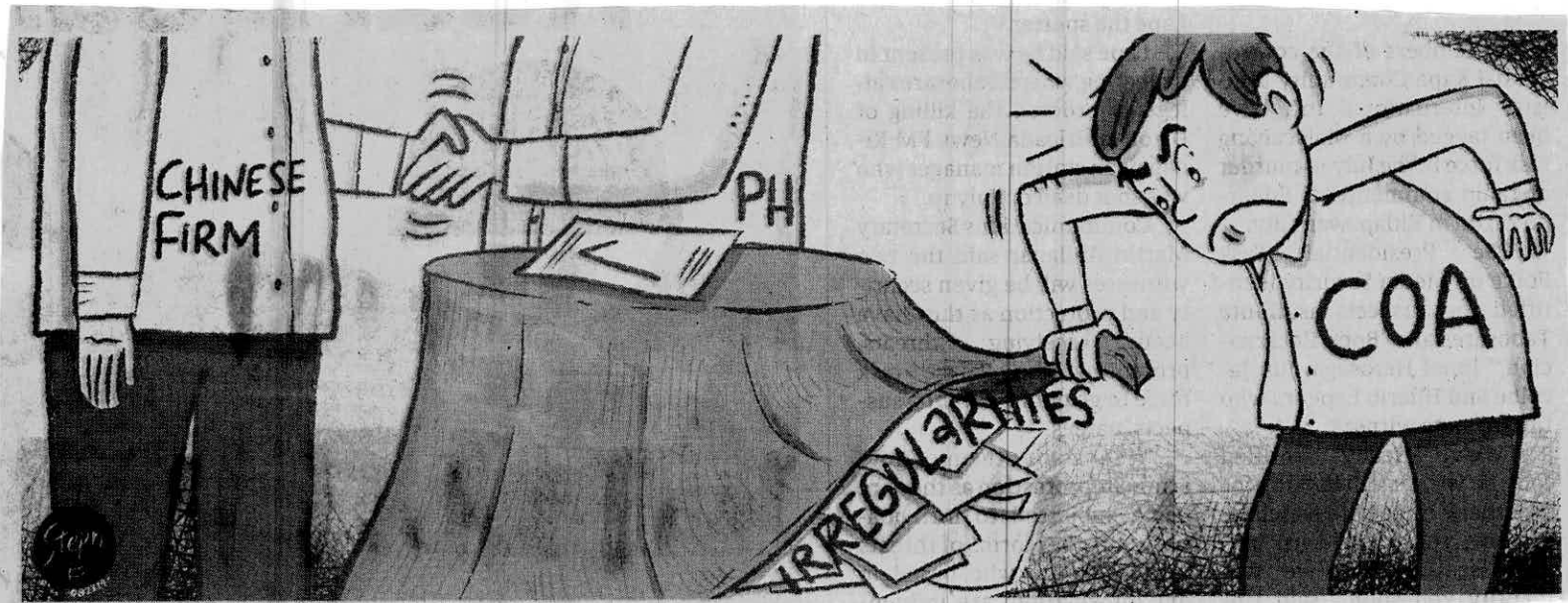


23 AUG 2019

TITLE:

PAGE 1/

DATE





110 of Laguna Lake's 3,308 fish cage owners paid fees: COA

BY PETER TABINGO

GOVERNMENT auditors have criticized the dismal performance of the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) in going after delinquent businessmen who have failed or refused to pay the required charges for operating fish pens or fish cages in Laguna Lake.

In its 2018 report on the LLDA, the Commission on Audit revealed that only 110 or 3.32 percent of 3,308 fish cage/fish pen operators have paid the government for the privilege.

By the estimates of the audit team, the uncollected dues for the year amounted to P29.466 million.

The LLDA management made a commitment to collect the arrearages of delinquent operators once the Zoning and Management Guidelines (ZOMAG) is approved and has become enforceable.

It added that an updated database would be created to facilitate monitoring of violations and compliance in the payment of fees and area limits.

Under existing rules, the LLDA is supposed to collect P6,000 per hectare covered by fish pens and

P4,200 per hectare occupied by fish cages. The agency is supposed to withhold issuance of the annual permits unless the required fees are duly paid.

On February 1, 2017 the government issued a moratorium on the fish culture operations in Laguna Lake for a year. All existing operators were directed to harvest their fish stocks no later than March 31, 2017 as no new stocking of fingerlings would be allowed.

However, the moratorium was lifted on June 7, 2017 after the LLDA Board amended the previous resolution limiting the operating permit only to compliant fish structure owners.

The amendment also introduced a policy that no more fish cage or fish pen exceeding 25 hectares would be allowed.

"Based on available records of the Environmental Regulatory Department (ERD), fish pens, fish cages owners and operators occupied a total area of 7,099.71 hectares as of December 31, 2018. The FP/FC fees collected corresponds to 1,639 hectares or 23.09 percent only of the total occupied area," the COA said.

Auditors said this meant that FP/FC owners occupying 5,460 hectares or 67 percent of the occupied area are not paying a single centavo.

They said the biggest factor causing the problem is LLDA's own lapses in enforcing collection regulations.

The audit team noted that the notices of registration to FP/FC operators as well as the issuance of the guidelines for the registration of aqua structures in Laguna de Bay were not undertaken in 2017 and 2018.

Under the said guidelines, it was underscored that only operators in good standing would be eligible or qualified to continue re-stocking and maintaining their presence.

"In CY 2018, it appears that the delinquent operators are continuously operating even without valid Fish Pen Permit and Fish Cage Permit. The Authority (LLDA) has no available list of Delinquent Fish Pen/Fish Cage Operators," the COA noted.

It pointed out that determining the delinquent fish structure owners should have been easy since the Accounting Unit maintains a ledger or index of payments by each operator.



TITLE:

PAGE 1/

1/2

DATE

Was there a violation of the Clean Water Act?



THE Supreme Court recently ordered the national capital's two water concessionaires—Maynilad Water Services and Manila Water Co.—to pay P921 million each, or a total of close to P2 billion in penalties for violation of the Clean Water Act. On top of these fines, they were also ordered to pay over P300,000 (adjusted by 10 percent per year) for each day of their supposed failure to connect the sewer lines of homes and commercial establishments to the existing sewage line in the metropolis.

Both concessionaires said they are exploring legal options to appeal the unanimous 12-0 decision of the high court. In their separate petitions for review, they told the Court that the penalties imposed on them for their alleged violation of Republic Act 9275 or the Clean Water Act were arbitrary and excessive, and that they were being singled out even if they had done their part in the cleanup job while other concerned institutions like the Departments of Environment and Natural Resources and of Public Works and Highways had been remiss in their duties under this law.

In the first place, the implementation of RA 9275 or the CWA of 2004 requires a coordinated effort that involves not only Maynilad and MWC, but several government agencies as well along with the concerned local government units. Under this law, the DENR is the primary agency responsible for implementing and enforcing

the CWA.

That the implementation of the CWA, especially the cleanup of water bodies, is a joint effort—and not the sole responsibility of Maynilad and MWC—was affirmed by the Supreme Court in the case of MMDA et al. vs. Concerned Residents of Manila Bay, otherwise known as the Manila Bay case.

Under RA 9275 or the CWA, the Department of the Interior and Local Government is mandated to order all mayors of Metro Manila and the governors of affected provinces to inspect and determine if wastewater treatment facilities (e.g., septic tanks) are in place in their respective communities. In case of non-compliance, the concerned

“The call of various groups to renationalize water service is reckless and regressive.”

LGUs shall take action to ensure compliance, the law likewise states.

The DILG was also required by the SC in its ruling on the 2011 Manila Bay case to submit a five-year plan of action that will contain measures intended to ensure compliance of all non-complying factories, commercial establishments and private homes to the CWA.

The DILG and LGUs are likewise required to consider providing land for the wastewater treatment facilities of the two concessionaires or their regulator, the MWSS.

Meanwhile, the DPWH, in coordination with LGUs, was also tasked under the CWA to prepare

Turn to A5



Was...

From A4

a national program on sewage and septage management. The DPWH has not implemented this program.

The DENR, as lead agency responsible for implementing the CWA has not completed drawing up a Water Quality Management Area Action Plan, which includes setting the goals and targets for a sewerage or septage program.

Both Maynilad and MWC claim they have exerted utmost efforts to comply with the provisions of the CWA. As pointed out by MWC, they "have made significant improvements to domestic wastewater management in compliance with their service obligations."

However, the realities show that while the concessionaires have done so, the other agencies involved didn't do their respective jobs as set by the CWA.

Another thing to consider is that

the wastewater treatment facilities that the concessionaires have built so far would be rendered ineffective in realizing the goals of the CWA if informal settlers continue to directly dump their wastes into our rivers, lakes and *esteros*. Again, this is something that should be handled by the LGUs in the concerned communities.

Also, the concessionaires cannot also speed up the construction of STPs because simultaneous construction will cause heavy inconvenience to the public resulting from the ensuing road excavations. Hence, building STPs have to be done in phases to avoid traffic congestion in the affected areas.

As a result of the SC decision imposing fines on Maynilad and MWC, various groups have found a new rallying point against Big Business. They have called on the government to renationalize water service and allow the MWSS take back control of the concessions given to Maynilad and MWC in 1997 at

the height of the water crisis. Before privatization, MWSS was so inept that it only covered 69 percent of the metropolis. Because access to clean water was relatively scarce and so expensive back then, households had to cough up as much as P3,000 to P5,000 monthly for water bought from roving vendors. Nowadays, Maynilad customers pay just about P974 for a normal water consumption level of 30 cu. m. per month.

The call of various groups to renationalize water service is reckless and regressive as it will lead to a return to the pre-1997 era of expensive, if not unsafe, water and erratic deliver of water services. In fact, the takeover by Maynilad and MWC has been cited by the World Bank as a model in privatization, with MWSS Administrator Reynaldo Velasco describing the water privatization as a "successful legal framework" in public-private partnership ventures.

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Heavy-handed government

Relative to its comparable neighbors, the Philippines has a low birth rate—not of humans, though, but of business firms. The 2018 World Development Indicators of the World Bank reports that for every 1 million working-age population, 2,300 new businesses were born in Malaysia in 2016, 1,000 were born in Thailand, while only 300 were born in the Philippines. It was observed that our economy's ability to generate new private sector firms, which in turn create new jobs, is restricted by the complexity of regulations, including those that protect incumbents.

A friend in business describes our problem as having a "heavy-handed government," one that has made an art out of putting a regulatory hurdle every step of the way of doing business, in virtually any enterprise. At the time, that friend was complaining about yet another new regulation imposed on their company by the Department of Labor and Employment (Dole): They were required to hire an in-house licensed mechanical engineer as part of their regular staff. And yet their firm had done well for decades engaging such an expert on a retainer basis, on-call and ready to come on short notice on the intermittent occasions that his expertise was actually needed. They never found a licensed engineer's presence to be necessary on a day-to-day basis. What the Dole requirement did was to unnecessarily raise their production costs, which would ultimately be shouldered by their consumers.

In a recent gathering of practitioners and advocates working toward the reforestation and development of the Laguna Lake watershed, someone passionately argued that the



NO FREE LUNCH

CIELITO F. HABITO

Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) is a misnomer. It would be better called LLRA (R for regulatory), he said, as most of what the agency does and is concerned about is anything but developmental. It seems more interested in putting regulatory hurdles in the way of would-be investors and do-gooders who could help improve the condition of the lake, protect its watershed and lakeshores from environmental degradation, and foster increased livelihoods around it.

Someone volunteered that the Cooperatives Development Authority seemed similarly overly focused on compliance with template requirements, and not enough on enabling innovative approaches to cooperativism. Still another believed that we could probably say the same of most other sectoral government agencies with names ending in the words "development authority." It seems that government bureaucrats tend to have more of a regulatory mindset rather than a truly developmental one. I've written before on how our government bureaucrats have

seemingly become such experts in constantly finding new ways of making things as hard as possible for citizens, especially in frontline services. One gets the feeling that it's a culture that's so deeply ingrained, and will take more than a generation to change.

The World Bank's Manila office recently hosted a consultation forum meant to elicit suggestions on how the bank can be more effective in assisting the country pursue its development goals. Inevitably, the problem of excessive regulation again became a prominent focus of discussion. Someone suggested that perhaps a good way the bank can help is to have officials and staff of regulatory agencies (and regulatory bodies purporting to be "development authorities") visit and learn firsthand from other countries that do regulation right—that is, minimize them.

To be fair, I have encountered countless government officials and rank-and-file staff who depart from the mold, and possess a genuinely enabling attitude in approaching their work. We now have an Ease of Doing Business Act (Republic Act No. 11032), enacted into law in May last year, although it took more than a year for its Implementing Rules and Regulations to be completed and finally adopted—due to the usual bureaucratic rigidities. Everyone is hoping that this will not be yet another example of a good law that falls flat on its implementation and/or enforcement, a story that has become all too common in the Philippine scene. Perhaps with its faithful implementation, the heavy hand of government can finally become a thing of the past.

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GOTCHA

JARIUS BONDOC



Bad water supply noted since 1903 (who cares?)

Not much has changed judging by information from a hundred years ago," historian Dr. Augusto de Viana says. He points to the 1903 Philippine Commission report on unsanitary conditions in Manila at the start of American occupation. The old findings are startling in that the wrongs go on to this day nationwide: garbage dumping into rivers and seas, untreated sewage, and dirty water supply. Toilets are crude, if there are at all. People spit and defecate in public like their work animals. "A catastrophe waiting to happen," de Viana says of the serious threats to public health and environment, in "Night Soil and Other Unmentionables".

That chapter, from de Viana's book "Stories Rarely Told, Volume I" (New Day Publishers, 2013), condenses the Commission's report. City planners, local government officials, and Manila Bay rehabilitators would do well to "learn from this frequently ignored aspect of our history," he says. Excerpts (continued from Wednesday):

"Cemeteries. Manila used to have 13 cemeteries – La Loma, Paco, Santa Cruz, Balic-Balic, Binondo, Tondo, Maytubig, Malate, Pandacan, Santa Ana, San Pedro Macati, American National, and Chinese. The dead were interred in niches or graves. Graves were usually 7 feet long, 2-1/2 feet wide, and 5 feet deep for adults; of smaller proportion for children. The distance between each grave was one meter. Those who die of infectious diseases, if not cremated, were buried covered with quicklime 7 feet deep. Ordinary graves were filled in with earth and left with a mound about a foot and a half high. Sometimes they were covered with mortar made of lime and sand.

"Before and some months into the American occupation of Manila, burials without coffins were permitted. With the organization of the Board of Health for the Philippines, such practice was forbidden. Niches were sometimes used, but were costly so only by the wealthy. Formerly interred bodies in the ground or in niches were undisturbed for five years. The government charged 34.65 Mexican pesos for the niche of an adult and 16.80 Mexican pesos for a child. The fee is good for five years rent. If the bereaved do not renew the rent, the bones of the departed were collected and buried in a common pit or placed in small crypts.

"Water Supply. At the start of the American occupation, Manila water came from four sources: Marikina River, wells, cisterns, and Pasig River. The main supply came from the Marikina River. This system, built in the 19th century, had a daily capacity of 10,000,000 gallons. Water was pumped from the river at Santolan onto two subterranean reservoirs or 'depositos' at San Juan. One 'deposito' had a capacity of 6,300,000 gallons, the other 8,200,000 gallons –

two days' supply for Manila. From San Juan the water was let to flow by gravity to Sampaloc where it branched out to other districts. For constant water pressure these reservoirs were kept full even during the dry season. Maximum pressure was only 40 pounds per square inch. By the time water reaches distant sections of Manila, the pressure was almost negligible.

"Supply from the waterworks was unsafe. The Marikina River passed through heavily populated areas: Montalban, San Mateo, and Marikina. People living along the river used the water to bathe themselves and domestic animals. During the rainy season filth from the Marikina Valley washed into the river. Studying the water bacteriology at several points below and above Marikina, the US Army found as much as 613,703 bacteria to a cubic meter. That was a striking contrast to 73 in Boston and 50-75 in New York. The water was unsafe for drinking unless boiled or filtered.

"There was no accurate record on the number of wells. Most were located in backyards – polluted. That water sourcing was abolished to prevent disease outbreak. Cisterns, or artesian wells, were common in Intramuros and in older, better houses of Manila. Those were made of sheet iron situated above-ground, or concrete if underground.

"Aside from being contaminated, water supply was insufficient. Pumps and hydrants were added. The number of connections for public supply was far below of any American city the size of Manila. In 1903 there were only 1,825 service subscribers. Filtration beds and more pumping stations were planned. Considered was a new water source far from Manila."

* * *



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LEGAZPI CITY

Thin, wounded whales found dead

TWO whales of different species were found dead on the shores of Masbate and Camarines Sur on Wednesday and Thursday, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) said.

Nonie Enolva, BFAR Bicol spokesperson, said one of the whales was abnormally thin, while the other had wounds on its dorsal fins.

A pygmy sperm whale (*Kogia breviceps*) measuring 2.23 meters was "heavily emaciated" and died at 11 a.m. Thursday at Pasay village in Del Gallego town.

Enolva said the pygmy sperm whale, the third stranded in Del Gallego and the nearby town Ragay since 2013, did not swallow any plastic but died due to poor nutrition.

Pygmy sperm whales are listed in the conservation treaty Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora's Appendix II, meaning they might become threatened if no protection is done.

In Batuan town, a short-finned pilot whale (*Globicephala macrorhynchus*) was already dead when reports from the Philippine Coast Guard Masbate reached BFAR in Masbate at 7 a.m. on Wednesday. — *Inquirer*



1/2

Demand for cute selfies puts otters at risk



CUTENESS OVERLOAD A signboard featuring an otter promotes a pet cafe in Tokyo. Conservationists are alarmed by the social media-driven demand for endangered animals as pets.

GENEVA—Social media users are fueling a burgeoning appetite for acquiring wild otters and other endangered animals as pets, conservationists say, warning that the trend could push species toward extinction.

Popular Instagrammers posting selfies with their pet otter may simply be seeking to warm the hearts of their sometimes hundreds of thousands of followers, but animal protection groups say the trend is posing an existential threat to the silky mammal.

“The illegal trade in otters has suddenly increased exponentially,” Nicole Duplaix, who cochairs the Otter Specialist Group at the

International Union for Conservation of Nature, told Agence France-Presse (AFP).

All Asian otter species have long been listed as vulnerable or endangered after facing decades of shrinking habitats and illegal trade in their pelts.

But conservationists say the recent surge in social media hype around the creatures has sparked such a frenzied demand for baby otters in Asian countries, Japan in particular, that it could drive entire species toward extinction.

Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (Cites), currently

in Geneva to evaluate and fine-tune the treaty that manages trade in more than 35,000 species of plants and animals, will consider proposals to increase protection of two particularly imperiled otter species.

Dangerous ‘cute factor’

The Asian small-clawed otter and the smooth-coated otter are already listed as threatened under Cites Appendix II, but India, Nepal, Bangladesh and the Philippines are asking that they be moved to Appendix I, which would mean a full international trade ban.

Conservationists insist that

the move is vital after both species have seen their numbers plunge at least 30 percent in three decades, with the decline believed to have accelerated significantly in the past few years.

“This is especially being fueled by the desire to have otters as an exotic pet and social media is really driving that,” said Cassandra Koenen, who heads the Wildlife Not Pets campaign at World Animal Protection.

Paul Todd of the Natural Resource Defense Council agreed.

“It is really remarkable to see how the latest trends in social media and social influenc-

ing have a direct correlation with the demise of species on the ground,” he told AFP.

Popular figures on Instagram and Facebook often rake in thousands of gushing comments about their otter pictures, such as “cuteness overload,” “otterly adorable,” and “want one!”

In distress

Duplaix acknowledged that otters were “very charismatic creatures,” saying “it is the cute factor that is causing their demise.”

The pictures mask the suffering of the naturally social mammals taken from



Demand for cute selfies puts otters at risk

FROM A2

the wild when they are held in captivity and isolation.

Koenen pointed to the numerous "funny videos" posted of pet otters turning in circles, saying that to a trained eye, it is obvious: "The reason the animal is spinning around is that it is in huge distress."

Amid the growing demand for pet otters, hunters and fishermen in Indonesia and Thailand especially are increasingly killing adult otters and snatching the babies, which are caged and shipped off to become exotic pets.

The main destination is Japan, where one otter pup can fetch up to \$10,000.

Otter cafés

Several "otter cafés" have also popped up in the country, with patrons urged to buy small pieces of food to feed the caged mammals and to snap a selfie with them while drinking a coffee.

"It is a very unnatural environment for them," Koenen said, maintaining that they were often isolated in individual cages, given poor nutrition and little access to water.

Pet otters may have it better, but they still suffer from being far from their natural

environment and away from the large family groups they lived with in the wild, she said.

Koenen also warned that smiling selfies with pet otters provided a "false narrative" about what it was like to live with the wild creatures, which smell and are prone to biting.

"They make very unsuitable pets," she said.

Social media platforms have meanwhile made it too easy to purchase exotic pets like otters, she said, sparking impulse buys with little reflection over the implications of bringing a wild animal into one's home.

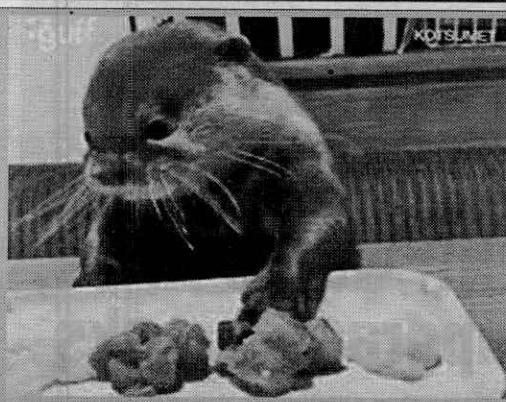
Other animals

Otters are not the only species suffering from a booming and often social media-fueled interest in exotic pets.

Among the 56 proposals on the table in Geneva for increased protection listings, 22 involve species—including lizards, geckos, tortoises and spiders—which suffer because of the multibillion-dollar exotic pet trade.

Todd said there was mounting evidence that "a species can go from completely fine to utterly gone in a matter of a few years because of this drive in desire for images."

"Baby otters are dying, and for what? A selfie," he said. "We have to stop this." —AFP



Demand for cute selfies puts otters at risk

By **Nina Larson**

GENEVA - Social media users are fuelling a burgeoning appetite for acquiring wild otters and other endangered animals as pets, conservationists say, warning the trend could push species towards extinction.

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All Asian otter species have long been listed as vulnerable or endangered after facing decades of shrinking habitats and illegal trade in their pelts.

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Conservationists insist the move is vital, after both species have seen their numbers plunge at least 30 percent over three decades, and with the decline believed to have accelerated significantly in the past few years.

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Amid the growing demand for pet otters, hunters and fishermen in Indonesia and Thailand especially are increasingly killing adult otters and snatching the babies, which are caged and shipped off to become exotic pets.

The main destination is Japan, where one otter pup can fetch up to \$10,000 (about 9,000 euros).

Several "otter cafes" have also popped up in the country, with patrons urged to buy small pieces of food to feed the caged mammals and to snap a selfie with them while drinking a coffee.

Otters are "very charismatic creatures, their cute factor that is causing their demise," according to Nicole Duplaix, co-chair of the Otter Specialist Group at the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Otters are not the only species suffering from a booming and often social-media fuelled interest in exotic pets.

Among the 56 proposals on the table in Geneva for increased protection listings, 22 involve species — including lizards, geckos, tortoises and spiders — which suffer because of the multi-billion-dollar exotic pet trade. **AFP**



Not safe to play

AN environmental advocacy group campaigning against lead poisoning, especially among children, has revealed the sale in the local market of light up toy swords contaminated with lead, a health-damaging chemical.

Taking its cue from a product recall order in the United Kingdom (UK) last August 12 for a China-made light up toy sword due to its lead content, the EcoWaste Coalition recently bought eight samples of such toys for P40 to P100 each from toy wholesalers and retailers in Divisoria, Manila.

The light up toy sword recalled in UK contains a silver paint with lead measuring 112 parts per million (ppm). "A child may put the toy in the mouth," the recall order said, noting that "exposure to lead is harmful for human health and cause developmental neurotox-



icity."

Using a handheld X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF) analytical device, the group detected lead on two of the eight samples of light up toy swords.

One has 136 ppm of lead and the other has 944 ppm, exceeding the 90 ppm maximum regulatory limit for lead in paint. Also, three of the samples were found to contain high levels of antimony and bromine.

"We urge consumers to take the necessary precaution when buying toys for their loved ones. Please exercise your right to product information, as well as your right to be

protected against hazardous chemicals in products," said Thony Dizon, Chemical Safety Campaigner of the group.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), lead is a cumulative toxicant that affects multiple body systems and is particularly harmful to young children.

"Young children are particularly vulnerable to the toxic effects of lead and can suffer profound and permanent adverse health effects, particularly affecting the development of the brain and nervous system," the WHO said.



BRIEFS

Tree planting at Clark

As part of its commitment to promote sustainable living, the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) on Thursday began a series of tree-planting activities in New Clark City.

The activity dubbed "100 Trees for 100 Days" was held 100 days before the opening of the 30th South East Asian Games (SEA Games) hosted by the Philippines, and a week before national athletes transfer to the New Clark City Athletes' Village. Clark

will serve as the main hub of the biennial meet.

The first batch of trees – narra, bignay and dita – were planted by participants from BCDA and its business partners, MTD, the Philippine SEA Games Organizing Committee (PHISGOC), Capas local government unit and police, and the Philippine Army.

BCDA vice president for Business Development and PHISGOC Deputy Director General for the Athletes' Village Arrey Perez said the event "symbolizes the planting of hope."

"We have not come this far to only go this far. We are here because we only have 100 days to go before a major event, the SEA Games. But more than that, we gather today to plant trees for our future, especially our youth," Perez said.

"This is part of BCDA's legacy to do small things that will last," he added.





Honda Foundation Inc. supports Pawikan Conservation Center

HONDA Foundation, Inc., the CSR arm of the Honda Group of Companies, recently partnered with the Pawikan Conservation Center in Morong, Bataan by donating vehicles that will be used in improving the conservation center's ability to better protect these marine turtles. Honda Foundation, Inc. is comprised of four companies, namely, Honda Philippines, Inc., Honda Cars Philippines, Honda Parts Manufacturing, and Honda Trading Philippines. Honda Foundation, Inc. donated one Honda FourTrax Rancher 420 4x4 ATV and two motorcycles (1 Honda TMX with a sidecar and 1 Honda XRM.) The Honda ATV allow its volunteers to patrol the shoreline of the beach every night to search for sea turtle nests and transfer the eggs to a hatchery. Sea turtle nests are vulnerable to poachers, predators, and even flooding from high tides. There were about 116,404 hatchlings released between 1999 to 2018 with an average success rate of 74 percent. It is hoped that the donation will help improve this further.



BUILDING ECO-FRIENDLY, SUSTAINABLE PLAY AREAS

Mondelez Philippines creates playgrounds from recycled plastics

By **JESSICA PAG-IWAYAN**

Proper waste management and sustainable living are among today's pressing issues. Not-for-profit organization for sustainability Global Footprint Network, in fact, reported that people have already used up more of the earth's resources than it can produce for this year. That day, July 29, has been marked as Earth Overshoot Day (EOD) and it means that, for the rest of 2019, all energy that we will use is unsustainable.

In response to this urgent call for sustainability, companies and various organizations have started to do their part in lessening carbon footprint and in educating people about the importance of recycling.

With its sustainable snacking initiative, a program that focuses on creating resilient ingredient supply chains, reducing environmental impact, and developing zero-net waste packaging, Mondelez Philippines partners with First Balfour, Inc. and the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP). Tapping different public schools, they taught children the importance of recycling plastic products and what other items could be produced from such a practice.

The kids also made eco-bricks from plastic bottles filled with all kinds of shredded plastics, weighing at least one kilogram each. By the end of March 2019, the combined efforts of public schools and private organizations resulted to 990 eco-bricks that Mondelez

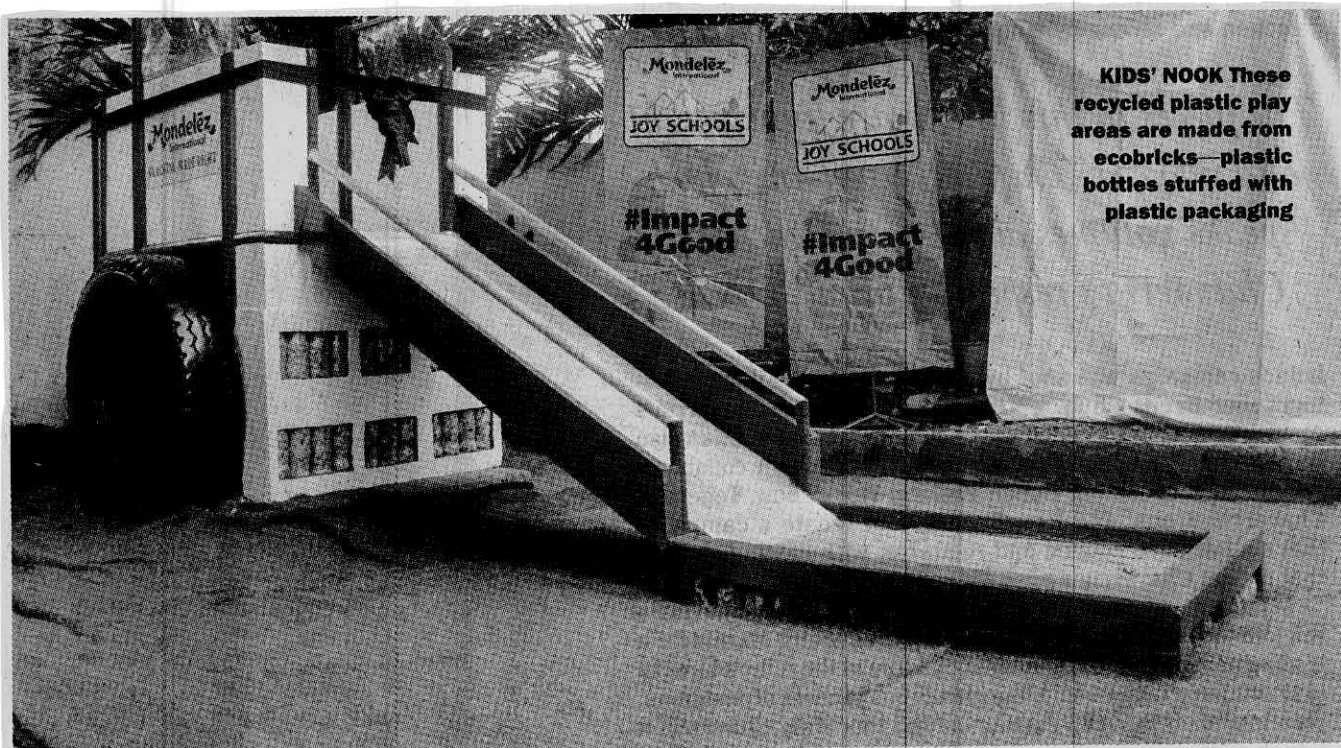
then used to build something that would bring smiles to children.

Apart from their sustainable snacking campaign, Mondelez also has its Joy Schools program. "There are three pillars in the Joy Schools program," **Ashish Pisharodi**, Mondelez Philippines country director tells *Manila Bulletin Lifestyle*. "One is nutrition as well as education, then encouraging access to fresh food and enabling it wherever you can, and the third one is active play."

From the 990 eco-bricks, the company built a small playground composed of a mini-slide and a foundation podium, a product of Mondelez' two sustainability programs. With a total area of three meters by five meters, these playgrounds are spaces where children can play and have fun during breaks and recess.

"The play areas create alternative uses for packaging material, which would otherwise have been wasted. At the same time, it enables students to play more and be active," Ashish says. "In this way we can reduce our environmental impact and ensure that the students and our community become part of the cause of recycling as well."

He also explains that the size of the play area can be adjusted depending on the available space each school has. As of writing, Camp Claudio Elementary School in Parañaque and Holy Spirit Elementary in Quezon City are among the three schools adopted by Joy Schools program and have received a play area. By the end of August, Rogelio Gatchalian Elementary School in Parañaque will also have



KIDS' NOOK These recycled plastic play areas are made from ecobricks—plastic bottles stuffed with plastic packaging

its own playground made of recycled plastic products.

"This project aims to encourage our adopted students and communities to contribute to post-consumer waste management," Ashish adds.

When it comes to choosing a beneficiary school, the Department of Education (DepEd) plays a vital role. "The Department of Education is a valuable ally," says Ashish. "They provide a lot of information both demographic and performance information and the

'We can reduce our environmental impact and ensure that the students and our community become part of the cause of recycling as well.'

performance level of the schools we should adopt."

With DepEd's recommendation, Mondelez applies its own criteria on choosing their beneficiaries.

"Typically we would like to choose schools where we find that the level of nutrition of a child is not met," he adds. "We also look for schools where kids have high levels of absenteeism, and potentially even less than normal levels of growth, both physical and mental."



OCEANAGOLD TRANSFORMS MINERAL RESOURCES INTO HUMAN CAPITAL

Didipio, Nueva Vizcaya--In a bid to help alleviate poverty in the Philippines and to prepare its communities for the end of mine life, OceanaGold (Philippines), Inc. amplified its delivery of quality education and capability-building programs in its communities, in collaboration with community leaders and elders.

From 2013 to 2018, OceanaGold's literacy and education programs have directly assisted more than 4,500 individuals with some Php 266 million (USD 5.3 million) worth of investment.

OceanaGold has opened opportunities for learning and capacity-building in different levels such as the provision of basic and higher education to its communities, various training programs to community residents, pre-employment trainings, and education program for its employees. The Didipio mine employs around 1,500 individuals.

"We aim to create a positive social impact through provision of literacy and education, focusing on wide-spread capacity-building of residents in our host and neighboring communities, the young and old included" OGPI General Manager David Way said.

OceanaGold's 11 beneficiary barangays have approximately 15,000 residents, most of whom are originally from Ifugao and have migrated to Didipio and its neighboring barangays.

Education in Didipio prior to mining

Prior to the existence of large-scale mining, Didipio, OceanaGold's host community, only had primary school offering from Grades 1 to 4. "After fourth grade, students had to relocate to the nearest town to finish elementary and high school, walking more than 20 kilometers every time they travel," Luz Dulnuan, a teacher in Didipio since early 2000, shared.

The community's old elementary school building was made of wood and students had to do with the limited space and the limited number of teachers and teaching materials.

Seeing the plight of the students, employees of the previous

mining company who conducted exploration in Didipio contributed money to build the first high school facility for the children of Didipio.

"During the first operating years of the old high school facility, the rooms were tight.

And then OceanaGold came and through its community development projects, additional elementary and high school buildings were constructed, and we had access to school equipment. With better facilities now, we can provide more efficient learning experiences for our students and host more school activities," Dulnuan added.

At present, youth from nearby barangays may opt to study in Didipio and finish the government's K-12 program. The schools in Didipio boast of new and modern school equipment.

Enrollees in both the primary and secondary schools have seen tremendous increase over the years, reaching 477 and 679 enrollees in 2018, respectively. 759 graduates were already produced from the two educational institutions.

There are also 61 subsidized teachers and school staff in the 11 beneficiary barangays of the Didipio mine.

Young Exuberant Scholars of OceanaGold (YES-OceanaGold)

OceanaGold's literacy and education program includes provision of scholarship to college students from Nueva Vizcaya and Quirino. Children of OceanaGold employees can also avail of financial assistance for their college education.

The Company has produced 144 graduates, including 11 mining engineers, and currently supports 246 scholars who are enrolled in top educational institutions.

"No words can ever repay the goodness of OceanaGold and all I could say is 'thank you.' Thank you because you became an instrument that helped me realize my worthy purpose in life," OceanaGold scholar Stewart Gotana said.

"We care for the young of our communities, offering them quality education and working towards their comprehensive development. We encourage them to excel in

what they do and potentially be the next great leaders of their respective communities," OGPI general manager David Way said.

Robust programs for training and education

With the transition from surface to an underground mine, OceanaGold has partnered with Site Group International and opened Asia's first underground mine training facility in Clark, Pampanga. It provides the Underground Metalliferous Work Readiness Course to local residents of Didipio and its neighboring communities.

The program has already provided International Certificate II to 104 graduates - 97 men and 7 women. They are now globally competitive and already employed in OceanaGold. The Company has spent around PHP50 million in building the UG mine simulator and PHP104 million for the training itself.

"This leading work-readiness program continues to build significant capacity within our local community until the required manpower in our underground mine is met," David Way said.

In partnership with TESDA and DOLE, the Company has provided income-generating technical-vocational trainings to 1,039 residents of Didipio and neighboring barangays. These trainees have either been employed by OceanaGold and its contractors or have already put up their own businesses. With the success of the technical-vocational trainees, OceanaGold was inspired to establish the Didipio Vocational Achievement Center (DVAC) in 2018. The facility is now being utilized for in-house trainings for employees and in-house technical-vocational trainings for local residents.

"OceanaGold's literacy and education program is a community-investment program that is aligned with the needs, values, and priorities of our communities. More importantly, it is a program that empowers Didipio and our neighboring communities to make decisions together with OceanaGold towards a sustainable future, one that extends beyond the life of mine," Way said.



Drinking microplastics in water safe for now - WHO

GENEVA (AP) - The World Health Organization says the levels of microplastics in drinking water don't appear to be risky, but that research has been spotty and more is needed into their effects on the environment and health.

Microplastics are created when man-made materials break down into tiny particles smaller than about 5 millimeters (roughly one-fifth of an inch), although there is no strict scientific definition.

In a report published Wednesday, the UN health agency said the minuscule plastics are "ubiquitous in the environment" and have been found in drinking water, including both tap and bottled, most likely as the result of treatment and distribution systems.

"But just because we're ingesting them doesn't mean we have a risk to human health," said Bruce Gordon, WHO's coordinator of water, sanitation and hygiene. "The main conclusion is, I think, if you are a consumer drinking bottled water or tap water, you shouldn't necessarily be concerned."

Gordon acknowledged, however, that the available data is "weak" and that more research is needed. He also urged broader efforts to reduce plastic pollution.

The report is WHO's first review to investigate the potential human health risks of microplastics. It said people have inadvertently consumed microplastics and other particles in the environment for decades without sign of harm.



Drinking microplastics is probably fine - WHO

The World Health Organization (WHO) said Thursday the level of microplastics in drinking-water is not yet dangerous for humans but called for more research into potential future risk.

In its first report into the effects of microplastics on human health,

WHO looked into the specific impact of microplastics in tap and bottled water.

"The headline messages to reassure drinking water consumers around the world, that based on this assessment, our assessment of the risk is that it's low," said

Bruce Gordon, WHO coordinator of water and sanitation.

WHO said that data on the presence of microplastics in drinking water is currently limited, with few reliable studies, making it difficult to analyze the results.

WHO has called on researchers to conduct a more in-depth evaluation into microplastics and the potential impact on human health.

The organization has also urged a crackdown in plastic pollution to

benefit the environment and reduce human exposure to microplastics.

The report said that irrespective of human health risks caused by microplastics in drinking-water "measures should be taken by policymakers and the public to better manage plastics and reduce the use of plastics where possible".

WHO said that microplastics larger than 150 micrometers are not likely to be absorbed by the human body but said the chance of absorbing very small microplastic particles, including nano-sized plastics, could be higher, although it said data is limited. **(AFP)**



It's final: 2019 Miss Earth pageant in Naga City

Contrary to an initial report, the venue of 2019 Miss Earth pageant will be held not in Legaspi City but in Naga City, at the 12,000-seater Jesse M. Robredo Coliseum.

This was announced by Carousel Productions executive vice president Lorraine Schuck who also revealed the winner of the stage-design contest.

The 90 contestants will travel to Naga City on Oct. 19 and will stay until the culmination of the pageant on Oct. 27. They will visit attractions in Naga City and other places in Camarines Sur, and indulge in various environmental activities. Other pre-pageant events will be held in Metro Manila and nearby provinces from Oct. 2 to Oct. 18.

The two-hour television special will be telecast on ABS-CBN nationwide on Oct. 27 (*Sunday's Best*) and on The Filipino Channel (TFC) worldwide.

Reigning titlist is Nguyen Phuong Khanh of Vietnam.

The winning stage design by Majore Fortin beat five other entries. It revolves

around the floral theme of the event in an abstract manner.

The centerpiece (middle background) consists of three frames representing the flower (rose), women and Earth which forms a circle. The pattern blocks (background) add to the floral concept, made from recycled materials. Illuminated lights can be applied to create a play of colors.

The LED columns have the luminous floating flower complete with stem, leaves and petals. The columns, when synchronized with the LED floor panels, can alter the overall color and display of the stage and can be used in transitions between parts of the program. When the grand announcement is made, lighting on the stage is dimmed, except for the lighting on the floating flower and the front part of the stage.

Candidates will enter from the back stage passing through a ramp leading to the middle entrance and will exit to both sides of the stage, covered from the audience by a horizontal board with water works. The board will illuminate a flower silhouette with lighting effects through water.

— Text & photos by
Celso de Guzman Caparas



Front row, from left: UAP-Manila Archizonian Chapter architects Louisito Domalaon and Majore Fortin, Carousel Productions EVP Lorraine Schuck and board member Carlo Batalla; and (back row, also from left) architect Florencio Cayrel, Ana Monica Tan (2019 Miss Air Philippines), Chelsey Lovely Fernandez (2019 Miss Water Philippines) and Karen Nicole Piccio (2019 Miss Eco Tourism Philippines). Left: The winning stage design.



Naga City to host Ms Earth International

MISS Earth International beauty pageant is coming to Naga City.

A memorandum of agreement (MoA) was signed on Wednesday between co-license holder of Ms. Earth International represented by former Camarines Sur Board member Carlo Batalla and Naga City Mayor Nelson Legacion.

The MoA signing for the hosting of Ms. Earth International on Oct. 26 this year was held at the Naga City Hall.

Batalla said the holding of Ms. Earth International in this city for the first time in Bicol will further bring prestige to Naga as the leading commercial, trading and educational hub in the region.

The coronation night will be held at the Jesse Manalastas Robredo Coliseum. **Sonny Sales**



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

Malaya Business Insight

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PAGE 1
STORY

BANNER
STORY

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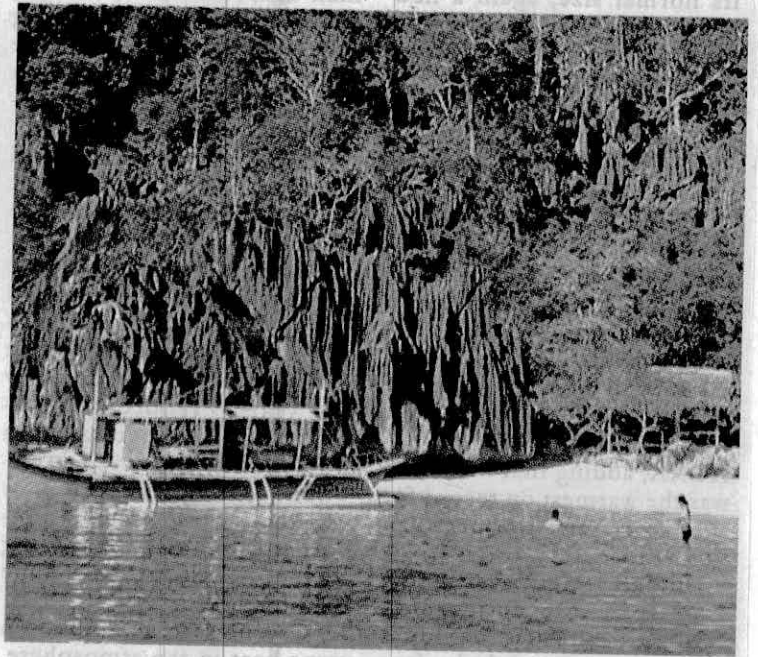
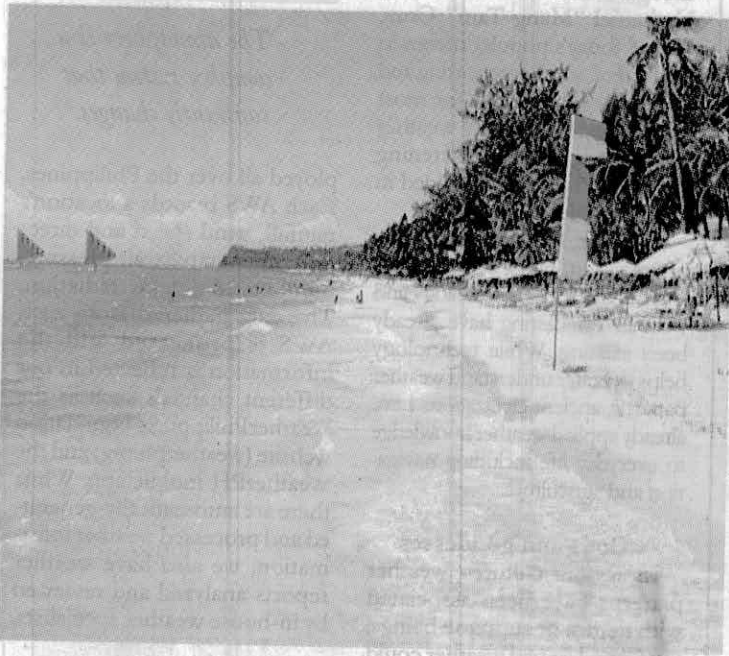
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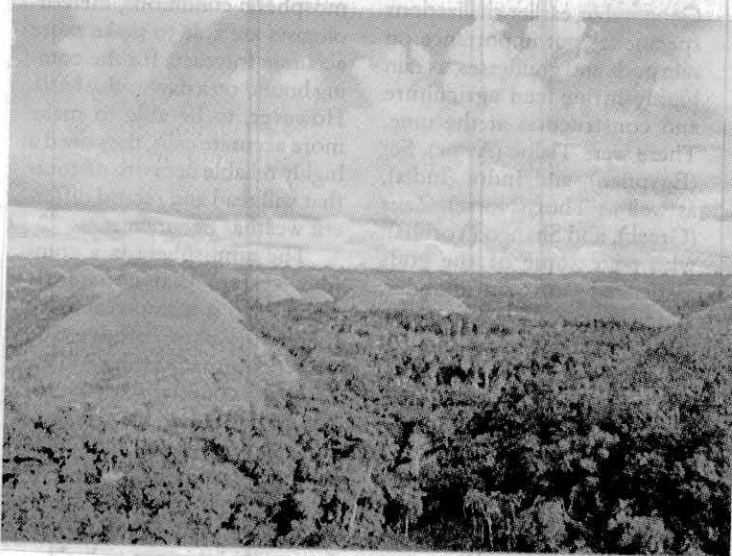
PAGE 1/

1/2

PH tourism industry generates P245T in H1



According to the Dept. of Tourism, the country's top tourist destinations include Boracay, Palawan, Bohol, and Manila. Other top destinations are Cebu, Vigan and Davao. (DOT Photos)





“These economic numbers are exciting but the real purpose [of the government’s hard work] is to push these numbers up year after year is for the Filipino people,” remarked Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat. “At the end of the day, it is the number of lives changed for the better by tourism that would truly count.”

THE Philippines’ tourism industry has generated some P245 billion in receipts from international visitors during the first six months of the year 2019, according to the Department of Tourism (DOT). The corresponding total receipts from the six-month arrivals increased by 17.57 percent from the half-year gross revenues in 2018.

Data provided by the DOT Statistics, Economic Analysis and Information Management Division (SEAMID) show the highest monthly receipts of P42 billion in the month of January.

For June 2019, spending reached an estimated P38 billion, which is 30.56 percent higher than the same month last year, while tourist per capita expenditure increased to \$1,086.61 or 30.97 percent higher than June 2018.

So far, the DOT is keeping up with its target to attract high

spending and longer staying tourists in the Philippines.

As proof that foreign guests truly find it more fun in the Philippines, DOT said average daily expenditure and average length of stay per tourist reached \$120.60 and 9.01 nights, respectively, which is 28.64 percent and 1.81 percent higher than the same month last year.

This is based on the data from arrival and departure cards, shipping manifests, and visitor sample survey.

“These economic numbers are exciting but the real purpose [of the government’s hard work] is to push these numbers up year after year is for the Filipino people. Tourism in 2018 was responsible for 5.4 million jobs in 2018, contributing 12.7 percent or P2.2 trillion to the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP),” remarked Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat.

“At the end of the day, it is the number of lives changed for the better by tourism that would truly count,” she added.

Earlier, the DOT disclosed that 4.1 million foreigners have visited the country from January to June this year, indicating an 11.43 percent increase from 2018.

“We have already breached the 4 million mark within the first 6 months of the year. Seven years ago, it took the entire year to reach 4 million tourists. The Philippine tourism industry has indeed come a long way with better and increased connectivity. New, rehabilitated and expanded airports have contributed much to this growth,” she said.

“By expanding our portfolio of tourism products and by developing and promoting our lesser-known but emerging destinations, we have attracted a large yet diverse set of foreign travelers and have sustained our

growth in the highly-competitive South East Asian region,” she added.

For the month of June 2019, tourist arrivals reached a growth rate of 21.41 percent at 643,780 arrivals versus the 530,267 in June 2018.

South Korea continues to be the top source market with China coming in second. The United States ranks third followed by Japan and then Taiwan, winding up the top 5 source markets.

The DOT also welcomed the US Homeland Security’s decision to lift its public notice on travel to NAIA following the “significant improvements” in the airports security operations.

“With the recent development of the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to rescind its Public Advisory on security issues at NAIA, we can expect more travelers from the US to visit the Philippines in the coming months,” remarked Puyat.

TITLE:

PAGE 1/3

DATE



JOAN VAN KESSEL
Vice Chairman and Board Member
MacKay Green Energy Inc.

The greatness of green

A fuel executive helps to promote a new energy source

BY LOUISE NICHOLE LOGARTA
Photos by Hermes Singson

ff

It's important for the Philippines to be [more self-sufficient]. We aim not only to be self-sufficient, but [also to be able, in due time,] to export energy to the world. And not just energy, but *green* energy."

BACK TO MOTHER EARTH

A renewable technology provider sees the Philippines as the biomass hub of Asia

2010

MacKay Green Energy (MGE), a renewable technology company providing complete, sustainable and integrated eco-solutions for the country, is set up by James Ronaldson Mackay

INVESTING OPPORTUNITIES

MGE welcomes participation as a contract grower, plantation company partner or power plant company partner.

ENERGY SOLUTIONS

MacKay Bana grass, a fast-growing crop with three harvests a year for biomass and MacKay Bana Charcoal, green charcoal from the sustainable Bana grass, which is smokeless, odorless, non-carcinogenic and burns longer. Used by restaurants such as Mang Inasal, Mr. Liempo, Uling Roasters and Digos Lechon Manok Inasal

PLANTATIONS

MGE grows its products in sites throughout the country. In Luzon: Pantabangan, Isabela, Romblon and Pampanga; in the Visayas: the islands of Negros and Leyte; and in Mindanao: Cagayan de Oro and Zamboanga, among others.

CARBON BANK

Bana grass is a major carbon bank due to its lifetime, and it's planted every 25 years. With Bana grass' same grindability as fossil fuel, one's carbon footprint can be lessened by 85 percent.



Vincent's compatriot

Van Kessel hails from Noord Brabant in The Netherlands, as did renowned artist Vincent van Gogh. Van Kessel's family has been in the fuel business for generations.



Shared purpose

Van Kessel met James Ronaldson MacKay of MacKay Group of Companies in the Philippines, where they "just clicked" over the need to find more sources of alternative energy.



Racing fan

The Dutchman is an avid Formula One enthusiast, who enjoys following the career of racer Max Emilian Verstappen, also a native of Noord Brabant.

"SUSTAINABILITY" is one of today's biggest buzz- words. It is no secret that the last few decades saw the planet's health in serious decline. Climate change is here, and it is not looking good. Although people have become more environment-conscious, launching zero-waste movements and banning single-use plastics wherever possible, there is still a ways to go in rehabilitating the environment. One of the most important ways to do so is finding sustainable sources of energy.

That is what Joan (pronounced "Johan") van Kessel, vice chairman and board member of the MacKay Group of Companies, is dedicating himself to. Born in the province of Noord Brabant in The Netherlands, van Kessel belongs to the family that founded and has been running the gas company van Kessel Olie for generations.

Searching for sustainability

He says his true passion lies in the family trade. "After school, I would ride with the trucks and deliver oil to the customers," van Kessel recalls. "I did not attend university anymore. From high school, I went straight to work in our company, learning by experience."

When he took over the company, van Kessel realized the need to shift to greener and more sustainable sources of energy. As an oil supplier, he acknowledged the economy's need for oil products, but was also aware of their impact on the environment.

"In The Netherlands, there are huge developments underway," van Kessel says. "Throughout Europe, they are trying to lower carbon dioxide footprints."

He took the initiative to get van Kessel Olie to contribute to the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions when making fuel deliveries. This led to the development of Greenpoint, a tank concept allowing the introduction of alternative sources of energy into the market, such as hydrogen, liquefied nitro gas and electric.

In his search of other suitable sources of energy, van Kessel decided to explore beyond The Netherlands and saw the potential of biomass, which is basically any type of organic matter that can be converted into fuel, such as wood. Enter MacKay Green Energy Inc. (MGE), a company involved in nurturing renewable energy systems.

Four years ago, van Kessel sent one of his staff to Zamboanga, where he was introduced to bioethanol. Originally, they were looking at *nipa* — a type of palm that is also considered an important Philippine economic crop — that could be converted into bioethanol. Van Kessel himself traveled down south to check out the fuel, and that's when he met James Ronaldson MacKay, head of MGE.

"I met James at a dinner and we just clicked," van Kessel recalls. "They started also with bioethanol

because it's another transformation from gasoline to alternative fuels. We had to supply a factory for energy. But...the [bioethanol project] wasn't protected by the government, so we had to let go of that."

Fortunately, they had another type of biomass that looked like a good way of producing energy: Bana grass. Described as a perennial hybrid crop imported from Australia, Bana grass has a high tolerance to drought and typhoons, [and] is pest-resistant and non-allergenic. Its seeds can yield at least 360 tons of fresh cut Bana grass per hectare each year. This remarkable crop can be harvested three times a year to manufacture charcoal, one of MGE's main products on the market today.

And so, van Kessel decided to support MacKay

in the enhancement of this MGE project. "We have reached a stage where this type of energy production is also protected by a government," he reports. "We stand behind the green energy of Bana grass."

Ideal environment

The question that begs to be asked, though, is this: Of all the countries where Bana grass can be grown, why the Philippines?

"[We had] been having talks with people around the world looking for the best option [for] biomass and we ended up with MGE, [which] had the best practice of biomass [production] we've seen," van Kessel says. "The country is ideal, too. In the Philippines, the environment is good, the

climate is perfect and even the people are perfect. If it can work somewhere, it should work in the Philippines."

"It is important for the Philippines to be [more self-sufficient.] We aim not only to be self-sufficient, but [also to be able, in due time,] to export energy to the world. And not just energy, but green energy."

Van Kessel and MGE's goal has been accomplished steadily. With the cooperation of other nations, they have seen the demand for changes that can be done on a global scale.

"We looked at the development of how the world is changing and how we're all looking for green alternative fuels," van Kessel says. "It's right there in the Paris Treaty" — also known as the Accord de

► **Joan van Kessel B10**

The greatness of green

Paris, which the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change signed on the mitigation and adaptation of greenhouse-gas emissions — “that we have to do something to change the climate of the earth. What we are doing are just small steps, but in time, the whole community will change.”

“Our main goal is to have a firm that can produce a sustainable source of energy and make a social impact in communities in the places where we are attempting to expand,” he adds.

Only one planet

The company is currently strengthening its presence throughout the archipelago. Its plantations can be found in Isabela, Nueva Ecija, Negros, Leyte and Zamboanga, to name a few. MGE has plans to spread out to other continents, as well, the first of which are Africa and South America. “We want to go global,” van Kessel says.

Their aspirations do not stop there. MacKay and van Kessel grew together because they have the same vision: responsible investment in energy, which will ultimately benefit the Philippines and its people.

“We have only one planet and we have to look after it,” the Dutchman says. “We cannot continue to cut trees and not replace them. We cannot continue to use palm oil in a non-sustainable way. We make sure, of course, that the company makes a profit. We want our people to benefit from this. But the bigger picture is we want to transform our people and give them a better life, as well as their children.”

The Philippines is at the forefront of such change. “What is happening now is so extremely exciting for this nation. No matter how big we have grown in other countries, this [the Philippines] will remain [as] the first research and development site. We want to promote the country as...a very green, sustainable, biomass country,” he adds. “MGE and our company is transforming the landscape of biomass in the greenest way possible.”

This admirable effort comes with no shortage of challenges. “We must convince people that we are on the brink of a new era....” van Kessel says. “It is extremely important that we make people realize that we only have one planet. If we don’t look after it, who will? We have no escape. If we talk about plastic floating in the ocean, cutting trees [and the] non-sustainable use of our planet, then in less than a hundred years, things will look very pessimistic.”

This new way of thinking about and looking at things also extends to agriculture, which will be beneficial to farmers in the long run. “There is a new world coming,” he says. “We have to work in a different way. We cannot burn.” This refers to *kaingin*, a traditional agricultural practice in which farmers slash and burn underbrush and trees to make into fertilizer. “It takes time and courage, from a [governmental] and provincial point of view. It’s not easy; it takes a lot of talking and showing. We’ve done demonstrations all over the country.”

“We cannot wait any longer,” van Kessel emphasizes. “We need people who have the same vision and are able to motivate and make a difference.” This is

an ability which, his colleagues say, he and MacKay possess. “The Philippines should embrace Bana grass, because it can transform the entire country. We have to take responsibility as they have begun to do in other countries in Asia and South Asia.”



TITLE:

PAGE 1/

DATE

NAPAKARAMING naganap sa mahal kong Pinas.

Lalo na ang paglutang ng napakaraming problema.

Sana malusutan natin lahat ito para sa kapakanan ng nakarami at mas mabuti kung lahat.

WEST PHILIPPINE SEA

Lumalabas na iginuhit na ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang oras para pag-usapan ng China at Pilipinas ang problema sa West Philippine Sea.

Panahon na umano na igiit ng mahal kong Pinas ang karapatan nitong umangkin sa ilang bahagi ng South China Sea na sakop ng exclusive economic zone ng bansa.

At ang pag-angkin ay sa diwa ng EEZ na kaba sa pag-angkin sa diwa ng talagang teritoryo ng bansa.

Sa pagkakaunawa ng marami, ang national territory at EEZ ay parehong itinatakda at kinikilala ng United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Sa national territory, pupwede tayong maki-giyera para protektahan ito at binubuo ito ng 12 nautical miles o 22.2 kilometro mula sa tinatawag na baselines.

Ang EEZ naman, sa pag-unawa ng marami, magsisimula sa national territory hanggang sa 200 nautical miles o 300 kilometro sa karagatan.

DIGONG SUPORTAHAN

Kung anoman ang iaangat ni Pang. Digong na pag-uusapan sa EEZ, dapat siyang suportahan ng buong bayan sa nalalapit nang pagpunta nito sa China.

Pero napabalitang nagbanta siyang kakan-selahin niya ang biyaheng China kung hindi kasali sa usapan ng mga problemang pandagat sa pagitan ng Pinas at China.

Maghintay tayo ng mga development dito.

DENGUE KAHIT SAAN

Isang napakahalagang isyu ang hinayupak na dengue.

Akalain ba nating Agosto pa lang, eh, malapit nang umabot ang biktima nito sa 200,000 Pinoy, pero siyempre, may mga dayuhan ding nadadamay.

At kung aabot ito sa 200,000, tantiya ng iba,



ni BENNY ANTIPORDA

HALO-HALONG PROBLEMA

aabot din sa 1,000 ang mamamatay.

Sabi ng iba, gusto man natin o hindi, malaki ang epekto ng climate change sa paglakas ng dengue.

Sa climate change, nawawala na ang dati-rating mga buwan ng tagulan at tag-init ngayon.

Ngayon, ang ulan ay dumarating anomang oras at sa taong ito, naganap ito kaya ang daming basang lugar na pinamumugaran at pinangingitlugan ng mga lamok na may dengue na kumakagat na rin.

Kaya Enero pa lang may dengue at tuloy-tuloy ang pagkagat ng lamok-dengue kahit tag-araw.

Ang masama pa, kapag nagka-dengue ang isang tao at kinagat ng lamok tapos kakagat sa iba, magkaka-dengue naman ang huling nakagat kaya maraming kaso na may mga dalawa, tatlo o higit pa ang nagkaka-dengue sa iisang bahay o magkakapitbahay.

DENGVAIXIA

Heto ngayon ang problema.

Gusto ng ilang doktor na gamitin ulit ang Dengvaxia.

Lalo na ang mga nakademanda kaugnay ng pagkamatay ng maraming tao, karamihan bata.

Kasi naman, kapag pinabalik ang Dengvaxia, paniniwala nilang maaabswelto sila sa mga kaso na ikinasa ni Public Attorney's Office chief Persida Acosta laban sa kanila.

Eh, noong 2017, sinabi mismo ng Sanofi Pasteur, may gawa ng nasabing bakuna, na delikado ang kalagayan ng tao, magkakaroon ng matinding dengue, kung maiiniksyunan siya ng Dengvaxia habang hindi pa ito nagkaka-dengue.

'Yun bang mga nangagsimatay ay naturukan ng Dengvaxia nang hindi pa nagkaka-dengue?

Ang problema sa mga nakademanda, anak ng tokwa, pinagtuturuan nila ng Dengvaxia nang mabilisan noon ang 830,000 Pinoy para lang iboto ng tao noong 2016 halalan ang kanilang kandida-tong pam-Pangulo na

naging kalaban noon ni Pang. Digong.

Walang testing-testing at kung meron man, hindi sapat para isulong ang mass vaccination.

Sa mga araw na ito, kung epektibo o hindi ang Dengvaxia ay sekondaryo lang sa mga nakademanda dahil ang importante sa kanila ay maabswelto sila.

Incidentally, kinansela na ng pamahalaan ang certificate of product registration ng Dengvaxia.

TAWA-TAWA

Itong tawa-tawa ay marami sa paligid at matagal nang ginagamit ng mga matatanda na panggamot sa mga namumutla at nanghihina.

Sa huli, sa siyentipikong pag-aaral na mismong ang Department of Science and Technology ang isponsor, ang pagbagsak ng tinatawag na platelet sa dugo ay kaya palang igawan ng paraan ng tawa-tawa.

'Yun bang === kaya ng tawa-tawa na tulungang makarekober sa platelet ang isang nauubusan ng platelet na namumutla at nanghihina.

Itong platelet, mga Bro, sabi ng mga doktor, ang gumagawa ng blood clot o pamumuo ng dugo para mapigilan ang pagdurugo ng isang tao.

Kapag tinira ka, halimbawa, ng lamok-dengue, uubusin ng dengue virus ang platelet.

Kung dinugo ka dahil sa matinding lagnat, wala nang platelet na pipigil sa iyong pagdurugo na lalabas sa ilong, bunganga, mata, puwit at iba pa.

Ang masama, baka kahit dasal ay magiging waepek na para pigilan ang mga magsasaklang-patay na maglagay ng pwesto sa iyong bahay.

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



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
FOREST MANAGEMENT BUREAU
Visayas Avenue, Diliman, 1100 Quezon City
Tel. No. (632) 927-4788 Fax No. (632) 928-9313
E-mail Address: fmbdenr@mazccom.com / Website: <http://forestry.denr.gov.ph>

Invitation to Bid for

**INTEGRATED NATURAL RESOURCES
AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
PROJECT (INREMP)**

**Supply and Delivery of Motor Vehicle
(INREMP-GS-NCB-02-2019-A)**

1. The Government of the Philippines (GOP) has received a Loan from the Asian Development Bank toward the cost of the Integrated Natural Resources and Environmental Management Project (INREMP), and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this loan to payments under the contract for Supply and Delivery of Motor Vehicles with contract No.: IFB No. INREMP-GS-NCB-02-2019-A.
2. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) now invites bids for the Supply and Delivery of eleven (11) units Van. Delivery of the Goods is required 30 calendar days upon receipt of the Notice to Proceed. Bidders should have completed within five (5) years from the date of submission and receipt of bids, a contract similar to this contract. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in the Bidding Documents, particularly, in Section II. Instructions to Bidders.
3. Bidding will be conducted in accordance with relevant procedures for open competitive bidding as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act", with some amendments, as stated in these Bidding Documents and is open to all Bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the applicable procurement guidelines of the Asian Development Bank. The contract shall be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification.
4. Interested bidders may obtain further information from Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) – Forest Management Bureau (FMB) and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during office hours, i.e., 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. from Monday to Friday.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders on **August 23 – September 16, 2019**, from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of **Php5,000.00**.
It may also be downloaded free of charge from the website of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) and the website of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, www.denr.gov.ph, as applicable provided that Bidders shall pay the nonrefundable fee for the Bidding Documents not later than the submission of their bids.
6. The DENR-FMB will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference on August 30, 2019, 2:00 PM** at FMB Conference Room, Ground Floor DENR Compound, Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City, which shall be open to all interested parties.
7. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before **10:00 AM of September 16, 2019**. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Securing Declaration or any other form of Bid security in the amount and acceptable forms stated in ITB Clause 18, as follows:

a. Cash or Cashier's/Manager's Check issued by a universal or commercial bank	286,000.00
b. Surety Bond	715,000.00
c. Bank guarantee/Bank Draft	286,000.00

Bid opening shall be on **September 16, 2019, at 3:30 p.m.** at the FMB Conference Room, Ground Floor DENR Compound, Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below. Late bids shall not be accepted.

8. The DENR-FMB reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.
9. For further information, please refer to:
Dencio R. Dadis
Head, BAC Secretariat
FMB Building
Forest Management Bureau
Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. 926-65-26
Fax No. 926-65-26
Email address: fmb.bacsec@yahoo.com

(SGD.) **EDNA D. NUESTRO**
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee