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DENIR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



DENR action plan launched for mercury phaseout

By RHODINA VILLANUEVA

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) led the recent launch of the country's National Action Plan (NAP) for the phaseout of mercury-containing products and wastes.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu has pointed out that making the Philippines a mercury-free country is a shared responsibility of the government, private sector, civil society and the general public.

"Each of us has a role to play, and with the Philippines' upcoming ratification of the Minamata Convention, it is incumbent upon us to properly manage mercury and its wastes in an environmentally sound manner," Cimatu said.

The Minamata Convention is the world's first legally binding treaty to phase out mercury, a highly toxic substance that poses threats to the environment and human health.

The NAP was crafted under a project jointly implemented by the DENR and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

Funded by the Swiss government, the project also assisted the Philippine government in the management of mercury-containing products with a life cycle approach in accordance with the Minamata and Basel Conventions.

"The NAP is a crucial and important document that will enable us to successfully carry out the elimination of mercury from consumer products and other materials utilized in the industry, greatly reducing the risk to human exposure and contamination of the environment," Cimatu said.

The NAP is a product of collaboration among 10 government agencies, and provides a detailed five-year full implementation document of the activities and actions that the government will undertake.

"The completion of the NAP likewise increases confidence in the country's readiness for the implementation of the Minamata Convention on mercury," Cimatu noted.

In 2013, the Philippines was one of 128 countries that signed the Minamata Convention, which regulates the use and trade of mercury.

The convention is named after the Japanese city where industrial emissions of the toxic substance caused a poisoning disease affecting thousands of people in the 1950s.

The Senate has yet to ratify the convention, which entered into force in August 2017.

Cimatu said that the DENR has "spearheaded the ratification process in consultation with the relevant government agencies and stakeholders."

He also revealed that the ratification document has already been endorsed by the Department of Foreign Affairs to the Office of the President.



DENR backs Samar UNESCO nomination

SINP has a large biodiversity hosting 38 species of mammals, 51 species of reptiles, over 1,000 species of plants and 215 species of birds including the critically endangered Philippine Eagle

By Elmer Recuerdo

TACLOBAN CITY – The Protected Areas Management Board (PAMB) under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) recently approved a resolution endorsing the Samar Island Natural Park (SINP) for inclusion in the tentative list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites which has been lobbied by three Samar provinces almost a year ago.

SINP, the country's largest terrestrial protected area with an area of 333,300 hectares, also has the largest contiguous tract of old-growth forest in the Philippines. Its buffer spreads north to south over the island's three provinces – Eastern Samar, Northern Samar and Samar province – and totals 458,700 hectares or about a third of the entire island of Samar.

The park includes some of the island's well-known protected natural landmarks and landscapes like the Sohoton Natural Bridge National Park, Calbiga Caves Protected Landscape, Taft Forest Wildlife Sanctuary, Jiconto Watershed Forest Reserve and Bulosao Watershed Forest Reserve.

Data of the DENR shows SINP has a large biodiversity hosting 38 species of mammals, 51 species of reptiles, over 1,000 species of plants and 215 species of birds including the critically endangered Philippine Eagle.

Maita Suggang, regional public affairs chief of DENR in Eastern Visayas, said the resolution from PAMB was sought to give weight to the nomination, considering the authority of the body to decide on matters relative to the proposal, action plans and guidelines for management of protected area.





DENR deputizes officers to help protect environment

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has started appointing DENROs or deputized environment and natural resources officers to help the agency in its several tasks in line with protecting the environment.

The DENROs are expected to assist in the enforcement of laws, rules and regulations as well as engage in the conduct of information, education and communication campaign on concerns pertaining to the environment.

At the same time, the DENR said DENROs are also tasked to help in the documentation of the conduct of administrative confiscation proceedings, such as issuance of apprehension receipts, seizure orders and notices of hearings.

"They are also authorized to arrest, even without a warrant, any person who has committed an offense under environmental laws, rules and regulations, as well as appearing as a witness in court against complaints regarding environmental violators."

The appointment of DENROs is

part of vigilant efforts to protect and conserve the country's natural resources. Support from other government agencies and stakeholders is important in upholding these efforts.

Through the initiative of DENR Calabarzon Enforcement Division, a DENRO Summit was recently held in Calamba City. Participants included DENROs from all over Calabarzon.

The DENR Calabarzon Public Affairs Office said the summit was organized to encourage camaraderie and collaboration among DENROs of the region. "It also aims to increase the effectivity of enforcement and implementation of environmental laws, rules and regulations, as well as management of action and information."

Members of the local government unit, military and police officers and/or members of nongovernment organizations may apply for deputization. Application details including the list of qualifications and procedure for DENRO may be accessed from Department Administrative Order 2008-22. — Rhodina Villanueva



DTI, DENR push stricter standards for steelmaking

By LOUELLA DESIDERIO

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) are pushing for stricter environmental standards for steelmakers to ensure that their products are of good quality and safe for use.

In a meeting held Monday, DTI Secretary Ramon Lopez and DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu agreed to review existing environmental standards and production technologies used in steelmaking.

"This collaboration with DENR will help us in promoting industrial capacity building with the use of advance technology in steelmaking, while protecting our environment. This is also a testament that as we drive economic growth, we encourage responsible businesses in the country," Lopez said.

Part of the collaboration is the creation of a technical working group (TWG) to align policies and strategies in ensuring steelmaking facilities are compliant with environmental standards and product quality.

The TWG will review the compliance of steel producers through an online monitoring system linked to the DENR.

Lopez said both agencies would also study proposed regulations on the use of secondhand equipment or machineries in the steel industry, and look at bringing the approval for all environmental compliance certificates (ECC) for critical heavy industries like steelmaking and cement at the national level.

Bringing the ECC approval to the national level would pave the way for more comprehensive and faster review of ECC applications.

The TWG shall likewise look at increasing penalties for violations on environmental standards or the terms and conditions in the ECC.

On the part of the DTI's Bureau of Product Standards, Lopez said there would be a review on the Philippine Standard license certification scheme procedures for steel products and more intensive monitoring at the retail trade level.

The collaboration is being undertaken following reports of the use of induction furnace facilities by some steelmakers.

Induction furnace facilities for steel manufacturing may be more pollutive and produce steel products which do not comply with standards.

China, one of the top steelmakers in the world, has banned the use of induction furnaces in 2017 due to its impact on the environment as well as the inconsistent quality of products made.

"What we need in the country are modern, environmentally friendly technologies that will consistently produce quality products," Lopez said.

"We do not want those used pollutive induction furnaces to transfer to our country," he added.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

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DENR, MWSS nanguna sa public consultation sa Kaliwa Dam

NANGUNA ang Environmental Management Bureau ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) sa idinaos na public consultation para sa Kaliwa Dam kung saan naging matagumpay ang pulong.

Sa pagpapatupad o paggawa ng Kaliwa Dam Project (KDP) ay tatlong public hearing ang isinagawa. Ito ay sa General Nakar, Quezon;

Teresa, Rizal at sa Infanta, Quezon.

Magiging host ang Infanta at ang General Nakar kung saan itatayo ang dam site. Ang sa Teresa, Rizal naman ang siyang nasa dalawang kritikal na component ng KDP — ang tunnel outlet at water treatment plant.

Ang Municipal Council ng Teresa ang una sa LGU na nagbigay ng endorsement para sa implementasyon ng proyekto. Bukod sa mga representante mula sa iba't ibang ahensya

kabilang ang NEDA, DILG, DPWH, NCIP, NIA, PNP at DepEd, may 200 tao na kinabibilangan ng municipal at barangay official at mga residente ng Teresa na dumalo sa public consultation sa Ynares Covered Court at inihayag ang mga kanilang concern at tiwala sa proyekto.

Nagbigay naman ng clearance ang Provincial Development Council ng Quezon sa proyekto na bubuo sa natitirang requirement ng Regional Development Council-Region IV-A.



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SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS FOR KALIWA DAM

THE Environmental Management Bureau of the DENR and the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) successfully conducted three public hearings in General Nakar, Quezon; Teresa, Rizal; and Infanta, Quezon for the impending implementation of the Kaliwa Dam Project (KDP).

Infanta and General Nakar are host to the location of the dam site while Teresa, Rizal is host to two critical components of the KDP — the tunnel outlet and water treatment plants.

The Municipal Council of Teresa is among the first LGUs who gave its endorsement for the implementation of the project. Aside from representatives from various agencies (NEDA, DILG, DPWH, NCIP, NIA, PNP, DepEd), some 200 people composed of municipal and barangay officials and residents of Teresa showed up at the public consultation at the Ynares Covered Court to voice their concerns and express their confidence on the need for the project.

The Provincial Development Council of Quezon granted clearance to the implementation of the project, which forms part of the remaining requirement of the Regional Development Council-Region IV-A.

The issues and concerns raised by the attendees centered on land acquisition, livelihood restoration, employment, including compensation for affected families, and community investments.



Public consultations for Kaliwa Dam successful

THE Environmental Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR-EMB) and the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) successfully conducted three public hearings in General Nakar, Quezon; Teresa, Rizal; and Infanta, Quezon for the impending implementation of the Kaliwa Dam Project (KDP).

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During the consulta-

tion, MWSS was able to present the social and environmental safeguards particularly on the issue of flooding and dam break and other hazards and risks mitigation measures of the project.

A program for the resettlement and land use, and recognition of the indigenous peoples rights were discussed and addressed.

In compliance with Republic Act 8173 or the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Acts, the MWSS through the National Commission of Indigenous Peoples has successfully completed the community assemblies on the six clusters of IP communities in Quezon Province as part of the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process.

Another FPIC process is scheduled for the province of Rizal.



OPISYAL NA PAHAYAG NG PRRC NG PAGHIRANG SA DENR BILANG BAGONG CHAIRMAN

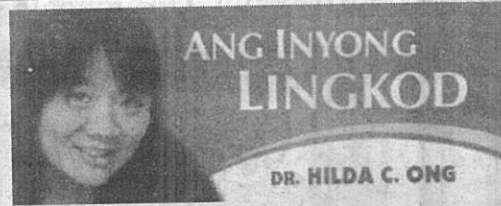
ANG Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) ay nagagalak sa paghirang sa bagong Chairmanship, ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) bilang suporta sa pinakabagong direktiba ni Pangulong Rodrigo Roa Duterte sa ilalim ng Executive Order No. 90, na nilagda noong Agosto 28, 2019, na epektibong kinikilala ang Kalihim ng DENR bilang aming bagong Chairman ng Lupon ng mga Komisyoner.

"Ang aming minamahal at pinagkakatiwalaang DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, ang aming mabuting kaibigan, isang tagapagtanggol ng daigdig (Earth), at isa na nagmamalasakit sa kapaligiran. Ang pamunuan ni Kalihim Cimatu ay walang kaparis at nagsisilbing inspirasyon sa amin sa aming ibinahaging pangako upang gawing ng mas mahusay ang mundong ito para sa lahat", ayon kay Executive Director Jose Antonio E. Goitia.

Sa ilalim ng Administrative Order No. 16, ang PRRC ay

matagal na nagtatrabaho kasama ang mga miyembro ng Manila Bay Task Force na pinamumunuan ng DENR. Naglunsad ang PRRC ng maraming mga kampanya upang masubaybayan ang rehabilitasyon ng mga pangunahing river systems at waterways ng Metro Manila.

"Paalam sa aming mga dating Chairpersons, ang yumaong Gina Lopez (2009 hanggang 2016) at Kalihim Benjamin E. Diokno na nagsilbing kauna-unahan Chairperson ng PRRC noong 1999 at bumalik sa katungkulan at nagsilbi ng dalawang dekada



DR. HILDA C. ONG

bago naging Gobernador ng Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) ngayon taon na ito, na pagpasyahan naming ipagpatuloy ang mga marangal na gawain na sinimulan namin upang maibalik ang Pasig River sa kanyang makasaysayang kondisyon", sabi ni Goitia.

Sa pamumuno ni Chairman Roy A. Cimatu, maka-kaasa tayo na siya lamang ang makakapagdala ng isang bagong yugto ng pamumuno na magiging batayan natin sa pagpapatupad ng ating pagpapanumbalik ng ilog at mga pagsisikap sa pamamahala

upang makamit ang ating mandato sa pinakamabilis na paraan, dagdag ni Goitia.

Kami ay may tiwala na ang paglilipat ng pagkapangulo o chairmanship, magiging kapaki-pakinabang sa lahat ng mga ahensya na may mala-sakit para sa interes ng karaniwang gumagawa ng mabuting gawain sa publiko, at ang pinalakas na kolektibong aksyon na ito ay magbubunga ng mga pagbabago, higit sa lahat, mag-aambag ng mata-gumpay na rehabilitasyon ng Pasig River at sa kapaligiran, ang pagtatapos ni Goitia.



Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission 2019

#Piso para sa Ilog Pasig



GOOD RIDDANCE

ni ARLIE CALALO

Paglilinis sa Bangkulasi River, sinimulan
Sinimulan na ng pamahalaang lungsod, kasama ang mga kinatawan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at iba pang ahensya ng pamahalaang nasyunal, ang paglilinis ng Bangkulasi River.

Nangako si Mayor Toby na gagawin ng pamahalaang lungsod ang makakaya nito para malinis ang ilog at mapaunlad ang kalidad ng tubig nito.

"Noong nakaraang linggo, nagsagawa kami ng dayalogo kasama ang mga mangingisdang maaapektuhan ng cleanup drive. Ipinaliwanag namin kung bakit kailangan nilang ilipat ang kanilang mga bangka sa Navotas Fish Port."

Inatasan din ng alkalde ang ilang tanggapan ng pamahalaang lungsod at mga barangay na siguruhing tuloy-tuloy ang paglilinis ng ilog at imonitor ang tagumpay nito.

PH nickel output seen to recover soon

By **MADELAINE B. MIRAFLOR**

The nickel production in the Philippines, one of the highest mineralized countries in the world, is seen to recover after years of decline, but the overall growth of the country's mining sector is still hanging by a thread on the weight of several regulatory issues.

Fitch Solutions Macro Research, a unit of Fitch

Group, said in its latest report that the Philippines may soon see "modest growth" in nickel mine production due to restarting mines and gains from current operations.

But the group is also not keeping its hopes high, adding that the sector is still at the risk of more mine closures and suspension.

"Over the coming years, we are maintaining a subdued growth forecast, held down by declining

ore-grades and strict environmental regulations that could result in mine closures. Despite some mines receiving clearance to re-open this year, since 2016, a number of mining operations, including nickel, have been ordered to shut down due to environmental concerns, which has kept production growth subdued," Fitch Solutions said.

One mine that has not yet been given the permission from the De-

►B-2

partment of Environment and Natural Resources to restart operations is domestic miner Zambales Diversified Metals Corp., a subsidiary of Consuji-led DMCI Mining Corporation.

The firm that its Zambales unit has already submitted all the necessary requirements to the DENR.

"We expect the country's path of increasingly strict policies towards miners to undermine investment potential into projects from new players, thus keeping growth subdued," Fitch Solutions said.

In August, Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) proposed amendments to the DENR's Administrative Order (DAO) that will introduce an Environmental Damaged Compensation Fee to all nickel mining operations which would be used in the event of an environmental disaster.

Furthermore, declining ore-grades at mines will continue to strain growth. For example, Fitch Solutions said that government officials have reportedly revealed of a closure of mid-size miner in the country, SR Languyan Mining Corp, due to declining nickel grades at its operations.

Still, Fitch Solutions does not see this year as an entirely bad year for the mining sector. According to it, the decision of the government in Indonesia, the largest nickel producer globally, to bring forward a nickel ore export ban "will pose upside risks to lackluster nickel production forecasts in the Philippines".

The Indonesian government last week announced a planned nickel ore export ban from 2020 to 2022.

Fitch Solutions said this has created an opportunity for Philippine nickel miners to alleviate the impending supply shortfall in Indonesia.

"We believe nickel smelters

in China, which currently import the majority of their ore from Indonesia, will likely look to the Philippines as an alternative source of supply, due to its proximity and substantial nickel mining capacity," the group said.

"This sudden increase in demand could lead to an acceleration of nickel mine development and increased investment into current operational projects, aimed at increasing production in 2020," it added.

Over the past years, the country has seen declining nickel mine production, with output falling from 554,000 metric tons (MT) in 2015 to 340,000 MT in 2018, a trend that was attributed to mine closures and ore-grade declines.

The closures were the result of the government's environmental crackdown on mining operations. Following a round of mine audits in 2018 to determine which operations should be allowed to continue, many of the operations had passed the set standards.

As mines begin to restart over this year, Fitch Solutions believes there is room for an aggregate increase in production when factoring in the increased production at current operations already.

For example, the first quarter nickel production data from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) has shown a 2.5 percent year on year (y-o-y) increase in nickel ore production to 2.97 million dry MT, which led to an 11.7 percent increase in tons of nickel content to 38,100 MT from 34,000 MT previously.

Dominant domestic producer Nickel Asia Corp. also showed a slight increase in nickel ore sold. Over the first half of the year, the company was able to increase ore sale volumes by 2.1 percent with increases at the Cagdianao and Hinatuan mines offsetting declines at its other operations.



Improved PH nickel mining seen this year

FOLLOWING years of decline, the country's nickel mining industry may improve in 2019 as suspended mining firms are expected to resume operations, an international research group said.

"We expect the Philippine nickel mining sector to see improved growth in 2019 on the back of restarting nickel operations and gains at current operations," Fitch Solutions' Philippine nickel mining outlook said.

The sector has seen declining production over the past years as a result of ore-grade declines and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) banning and suspension of open-pit mining in the country. Total nickel mine output tremendously dropped from 554,000 metric tons (MT) in 2015 to 340,000 MT in

2018, according to United States Geological Survey.

"As mines begin to restart over 2019 we believe there is room for an aggregate increase in production when factoring in the increased production at current operations already," Fitch Solutions said.

In particular, Fitch Solutions said Nickel Asia, the biggest nickel producer in the country, will remain the driver of nickel production in the Philippines. This, as the mining firm saw an increase in ore sale volume by 2.1 percent in its Cagdianao and Hinatuan mines, offsetting declines at its other operations in the first half of 2019.

The macro research firm, however, maintained its subdued nickel mining outlook for the Philippines due to "stringent

environmental regulations and policy uncertainty" that could result in mine closures. While some mines have received clearance from the DENR to reopen this year, a number of mining operations, including nickel, have been ordered to shutdown due to environmental concerns, Fitch Solutions said.

For instance, the DMCI's subsidiary Zambales Diversified Metals Corp. still awaiting the decision from the DENR to resume operations despite the firm stating it has met the necessary requirements to do so.

"We expect the country's path of increasingly strict policies towards miners to undermine investment potential into projects from new players, thus keeping growth subdued," Fitch Solu-

tions said.

Moreover, it noted that declining ore grades at mines will continue to strain the industry's growth, citing the year-end closure of mid-size miner SR Languyan Mining Corp.

Despite this, Fitch Solutions said Indonesia's recent announcement of planned nickel ore export ban from 2020 to 2022 will likely increase demand for Philippine nickel ore, creating opportunity for nickel miners here "to alleviate the impending supply shortfall in Indonesia."

"This sudden increase in demand could lead to an acceleration of nickel mine development and increased investment into current operational projects, aimed at increasing production in 2020," it added. **EIREENE JAIREE GOMEZ**



Phl nickel output seen to improve this year

The country's production of nickel is seen to improve this year due to the resumption of operations of some nickel firms.

"As mines begin to restart over 2019, we believe there is room for an aggregate increase in production when factoring in the increased production at current operations already," Fitch Solutions Macro Research said in its latest note.

First quarter data from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau showed a 2.5 percent increase in nickel ore production to 2.97 million dry metric tons which led to an 11.7 percent increase in nickel content.

Fitch estimated that local production declined by an average of 22.7 percent from 2016 to 2019 as a result of the closure and suspension orders on mines.

The Indonesian government's decision to bring forward a nickel ore export ban will pose upside risks to lackluster nickel production forecasts in the Philippines, Fitch said.

"Indonesia's announcement to bring forward a planned nickel ore export ban has created an opportunity for Philippine nickel miners to alleviate the

impending supply shortfall in Indonesia - the largest nickel producer globally," it said.

"We believe nickel smelters in China, which currently import the majority of their ore from Indonesia, will likely look to the Philippines as an alternative source of supply, due to its proximity and substantial nickel mining capacity," Fitch said.

The sudden increase in demand could lead to an acceleration of nickel mine development and increased investment into current operational projects, aimed at increasing production in 2020.

However, Fitch maintained its subdued nickel mining growth outlook for the Philippines over the medium to long term, underpinned by the country's stringent environmental regulations and policy uncertainty will undermine investment into the Philippine's thin nickel project pipeline.

Despite some mines receiving clearance to re-open this year, a number of mining operations remain closed due to environmental concerns, keeping production growth subdued.

— Louise Maureen Simeon



Nickel output growth seen 'subdued'

PHILIPPINE production of nickel is expected to continue "modest growth" in the next few years as a negative policy environment and falling ore grade offsets the effect of mines restarting after a 2017 crackdown on environmental law violations, Fitch Solutions Macro Research said in a Sept. 3 industry trend analysis e-mailed to journalists on Wednesday.

"We expect the Philippines to see modest growth in nickel mine production in 2019 due to restarting mines and gains from current operations," Fitch Solutions said in its note, titled: "Philippine nickel mining outlook showing upside potential."

At the same time, it clarified: "We maintain our subdued nickel mining growth outlook for the Philippines over the medium to long term, underpinned by the country's stringent environmental regulations and policy uncertainty that will undermine investment into the Philippine's thin nickel project pipeline."

The Philippines — which is the world's second biggest supplier, next to Indonesia, of the metal that is used to make stainless steel and which is estimated to account for a fifth of global mined nickel supply — saw "declining nickel mine production over the past few years," with volume falling to 340,000 tons last year from 554,000 tons in 2015, Fitch Solutions noted, citing data from the United States Geological Survey.

Fitch Solutions particularly blamed the government's environmental crackdown on mining operations in 2017.

"Following a round of mine audits in 2018 to determine which operations should be allowed to continue, many of the operations had passed the set standards," the note read.

"As mines begin to restart over 2019, we believe there is room for an aggregate increase in production when factoring in the increased production at current operations already."

It cited data from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) Mines and Geosciences Bureau showing that nickel ore production edged up by 2.5% year-on-year to 2.969 million dry metric tons in the first quarter.

Fitch Solutions noted that major producer Nickel Asia Corp. grew ore sale volume by about

Nickel, SI/2

Nickel, from SI/1

2.1% annually to 9.08 million wet metric tons last semester on output increases at its mines in Cagdianao, Dinagat Islands and Hinatuan, Surigao del Sur that offset declines at its other operations.

At the same time, DMCI Mining Corp.'s Zambales Diversified Metals Corp. is still awaiting DENR's green light to resume operations "despite the firm stating it has met the necessary requirements to do so," according to the note.

"Over the coming years, we are maintaining a subdued growth forecast, held down by declining ore-grades and strict environmental regulations that could result in mine closures. Despite some mines receiving clearance to re-open this year, since 2016, a number of mining operations, including nickel, have been ordered to shut down due to environmental concerns, which has kept production growth subdued," Fitch Solutions said.

The industry looks forward to lifting of a moratorium on new permits that has been in place since 2012, but that will happen only after enactment of a new fiscal regime that will give the government a bigger share in mining revenues. Such a measure had been proposed in the 16th and 17th Congress-

es but failed to bag approval. It has been reintroduced in the current 18th Congress that began last July.

"We expect the country's path of increasingly strict policies towards miners to undermine investment potential into projects from new players, thus keeping growth subdued," Fitch Solutions said, adding that "declining ore-grades at mines will continue to strain growth."

One development that could spur growth of Philippine nickel production is Indonesia's plan — announced last Monday — to stop nickel ore exports from January 1, 2020, two years earlier than first intended, as it pushes local producers to process more ore at home.

"We believe nickel smelters in China, which currently import the majority of their ore from Indonesia, will likely look to the Philippines as an alternative source of supply, due to its proximity and substantial nickel mining capacity," Fitch Solutions said.

"This sudden increase in demand could lead to an acceleration of nickel mine development and increased investment into current operational projects, aimed at increasing production in 2020." — **Vincent M. P. Galang**

Miners cry injustice



Val A. Villanueva

BUSINESSWISE

OUR previous topic has virtually opened a Pandora's box and generated feelings of frustration and hopelessness among the first batch of mining companies, which were cleared to operate based on their good scores on an audit done last year, but have not been allowed to operate for unknown reasons.

To recap my previous column: The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) shut down the operations of 27 mining companies in 2017 presumably because their mines sat on "functional" watersheds.

The audit was conducted by the Mining Industry Coordinating Council (MICC), cochaired by the DENR and the Department of Finance (DOF). Its members are the Department of Justice, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines. From the first batch of miners audited, 24 were given the green light for following environmental and other government regulations. Only three failed the test, but were allowed to appeal the decision with the Office of the President.

According to DOF Undersecretary Bayani Agabin, the firms were assessed based on the criteria and the benchmarks on social, technical, legal and environmental aspects of their operations. Agabin said: "The system was such that '3' is the highest score; '2' [means] minor reforms [are] needed, [and] '1' is for [undergoing] major reforms. Zero is not acceptable...the passing score is '1.5.'"

BusinessWise got hold of the list and published it on August 29 (*Mining industry in limbo*).

In a phone interview, Agabin confirmed the authenticity of the list. Asked why the result was not made public and the mining firms which passed the audit remained closed, he said that it is up to the DENR or the Office of the President to release the list and act on the MICC's recommendation for the audit passers to be allowed to operate. "The audit is only recommendatory," he replied. "The DENR and the Office of the President have the last say,"

Agabin said that the second batch of miners ordered closed will undergo the same audit, which is scheduled for completion within this year. I guess, as things have been going, the second audit's findings will likewise remain unpublished.

At this point, what is incomprehensible for me is how the government can spend P50 million in taxpayers' money for the mining audit, and then shell out P20 million more in the next, only to consign the results to the dustbin and continue to leave the people dependent on the industry deprived of their means of livelihood. Such a deplorable waste of time, money and opportunity!

What I also find disconcerting is the fact that the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) of which these miners are members in good standing has not acted or lifted a finger to push government regulators to reopen the mines.

Former DENR secretary, the late Gina Lopez (may God bless her soul!) promised to abide by whatever the audit team decides. The current DENR chief has remained mum to date, two years after the first audit has been concluded.

Interviewed some of the affected miners who requested anonymity for fear of reprisal. This is what they have to say:

"After the passage of two years, why have the MICC audit results not been made public or even provided to the affected closed mines despite earlier pronouncements of transparency?

"Without the audit results, how do we address the findings or vindicate ourselves from the closure charges

of DENR Secretary Gina Lopez [and prove] that [we] were wrongfully and arbitrarily closed? Has government deprived the industry of due process for the second time? Is government afraid to be sued for damages

resulting from the audit, which will acquit the miners of wrongdoing? Is there an orchestrated gag order by DENR-MICC?

"Over two years ago, the Commission on Appointments rejected the appointment of then DENR Secretary Gina Lopez, and repudiated her directives and orders for being outright unconstitutional, acting beyond her authority, acting with arbitrariness, issuing orders outside the law and without legal basis, issuing closure orders without the benefit of due process, among others. Despite the repudiation by the COA, why do these illegal orders remain in place even after the appointment of a replacement at the helm of the DENR?"

"Who is in charge of the development of the mining industry in this country? Why does it seem that the DENR-MGB is more concerned with regulating and penalizing the industry for violations and infractions but cannot seem to behave in partnership and consonance with the miners that have risked their capital, and brought employment and development and education and health services to the rural countryside where government is very much absent? Nowadays, it seems that government initiatives and pronouncements are directed toward more taxes and higher revenue-sharing from an industry that is already gasping for breath [although] there is no assistance initiative coming from government.

"The failure to release the audit results has caused delay in the lifting of Gina Lopez's closure orders for those miners who have passed the audit. Isn't it about time that these miners be allowed to finally operate? It is unfair to all the stakeholders, communities and employees involved who have been left hanging and whose futures remain uncertain. This unwarranted delay has resulted in the creation of a new industry of influence peddlers...Corruption 101.



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BusinessMirror

Visions look at today's trends



05 SEP 2019

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P-2 of Miners cry injustice

“Why hasn’t the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines placed an official statement reacting to the findings and even questioning the MICC-DENR regarding the authenticity of the findings? Does the COMP care at all about the results of the first Audit and its continuing adverse effects on its mining members, or is it each member for himself? If so, how pathetic is that? The Philippine Nickel Industry Association has been just as quiet, although a number of its members are as affected by Gina’s closure orders and the first audit. Where are our lawmakers and the DOF officials who courageously stood in defense of the mining industry two years ago against the impending shutdown of half of the industry and the dislocation of thousands of stakeholders?”

As the annual Mining Philippines International Conference and Exhibition comes closer—it will be held from September 10 to 12, 2019, at the Sofitel Philippine Plaza Manila—it will be interesting to see how this issue will be tackled, or if it will be given any attention at all.

*For comments and suggestions, e-mail me at
mvala.v@gmail.com*



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5 SEP 2011

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Kiko pushes for protection of mangrove forests

Sen. Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan is pushing for protection of all mangrove forests, which will help provide forest products and sustain the fisheries industry.

Pangilinan filed Senate Bill 239 seeking to establish Mangrove Reservation Areas, or portions of land in all coastal areas in each municipality allotted solely for the preservation, protection, afforestation and sustainable management of mangrove forests.

"Let us all be heroes for the future and our children, and preserve our environment," Pangilinan said, seeking the enactment of his bill on national mangrove forest protection

and preservation which he filed on National Heroes Day.

"All mangrove forests would be protected when this bill becomes law," he said.

Mangroves are an underrated natural resource and also reduce the impact of tsunami waves, erosion and storm surges, Pangilinan said.

He said the bill also seeks to penalize violators of the law, or those who cut, uproot or destroy any mangrove tree, dump waste, construct or reclaim in mangrove reservation areas, and illegally fish.

"Despite its many benefits, mangrove forests face increasing deforesta-

tion from clearing, as well as overharvesting, overfishing, and pollution. We must recognize the importance of mangroves. Because mangroves may be our last shield against the might of nature," Pangilinan said.

Over the last 100 years, the Philippines has already lost half its mangroves, data from the United Nations Environment Program show, with mangrove forests worldwide destroyed three to five times faster than the average rate of deforestation.

Only 100,000 of 500,000 hectares of Philippine mangrove remain, according to the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity. — **Cecille Suerte Felipe**



In CDO, protecting river is key to stop tragedy

Groups say rehab of Cagayan de Oro river basin will avoid repeat of devastation wrought by 'Sendong' in 2011

By Jigger Jerusalem
@inqmindanao

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Environment officials and advocates here have joined hands to drum up support in protecting the Cagayan de Oro river basin, saying the waterway's health is crucial in preventing floods in this city, the regional center of Northern Mindanao.

Raoul Geollegue, former regional director of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, said he was worried about the section of the river basin in central Bukidnon, which he described as a "picture of impending danger."

"When I look at the map, I have this feeling of fear because that area is the headwater," said Geollegue, who is now with Hineleban Foundation Inc., a group working for the protection of the river basin.

Challenge

According to Geollegue, this part of the river basin, covering 16,000 hectares, has turned into a grassland and can no longer retain rainwater since there are fewer trees left there.

"The people of Cagayan de Oro bear the brunt whenever there is heavy rain," he said.

Geollegue said it remained a challenge how to reforest the area. "There should be massive



RIVER IS LIFE The Cagayan de Oro River plays a significant part in the social, cultural and economic life of Cagayan de Oro City, the regional center of Northern Mindanao. —JIGGER JERUSALEM

public participation and huge funding so that the 16,000 ha could be rehabilitated," he said.

The urgent call for sustaining efforts to protect the Cagayan de Oro river basin has become crucial after heavy rain dumped by Tropical Storm "Sendong" in 2011 caused the river to overflow, resulting in massive destruction and deaths in the city.

More than 600 people died and 20,000 houses in the city were either destroyed or damaged by the floods. Infrastructure damage was pegged at P500 million in the disaster that hit 41 of the city's 80 villages.

Cooperation among local governments and agencies has been identified as a key element in protecting the river basin as it covers areas outside of the Cagayan de Oro government's administrative jurisdiction.

The basin, one of the country's 18 major river systems, spans

more than 137,000 ha straddling the provinces of Bukidnon and Lanao del Norte, and the cities of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan.

The Mt. Kitanglad Range, which is part of the basin, covers more than 47,000 ha in the towns of Lantapan, Talakag, Baungon, Libona, Manolo Fortich, Impasugong, Sumilao and a portion of Malaybalay City, all in Bukidnon.

Greening projects

A multisectoral river basin council, chaired by Cagayan de Oro Archbishop Antonio Ledesma, oversees its protection efforts.

On Monday, the council recognized 23 groups, cooperatives and companies which took part in protection and conservation activities within the river basin. The groups' logos were pinned on a large map of the river basin, signifying the areas covered by their greening projects.

Felix Mirasol, assistant regional director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said: "It cannot be done by one institution. Instead, a lot of partners contribute ... to implement the plan. The challenge is how to sustain these efforts."

Guarding Kitanglad

Benjamin Maputi Sr., head of the Kitanglad Guard Volunteers, said incidents of illegal tree cutting had declined since their group started guarding the area in the 1980s.

Maputi said a P23-million grant from the Forest Foundation of the Philippines provided them with livelihood, technical support and firefighting equipment, and other tools needed to guard Kitanglad.

Ledesma said the Catholic Church would continue to assist indigenous peoples guard the forests. INQ

The 'new thinking' and dealing with climate change

Last of two parts

THE events during the past days were quite overwhelming, as there is growing support from local government units (LGUs)



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to undertake collective action with the Department of Agriculture (DA) to assist their rice farmers during this time of bad, stormy weather. And other players or stakeholders could follow suit, including the private sector.

As this column goes to press, a total of 30 provincial LGUs have committed to support their rice farmers by allotting funds to bankroll the buying, drying and milling of *palay* (unmilled rice) and the marketing of the milled rice. Initially, governors of 13 rice producing provinces made their commitment: Isabela, Nueva Ecija, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, Pangasinan, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino, Tarlac, Pampanga, Bulacan, Cagayan and Bataan, who collectively have allotted a total of P3 billion in funds.

After a meeting on Tuesday at the Bureau of Soils and Water Management headquarters in Quezon City, 17 more provincial LGUs expressed their intent to partner with the DA in the endeavor: Camarines Sur, Apayao, Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Biliran, Sarangani, Iloilo, Kalinga, Zamboanga Sibugay, Mountain Province, Oriental Mindoro, Marinduque, Bohol, Capiz, Lanao del Sur, Albay and North Cotabato. They could allocate an average of P200 million to raise another P3.4 billion.

I would like to commend League of Provinces of the Philippines President and Marinduque Gov. Presbitero Velasco Jr. for leading his organization in supporting the country's rice farmers.

The 30 provincial LGUs could also be tapped for the implementation of the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Program (RCEP).

I find this very encouraging, as among the main objectives of RCEP is to improve the incomes of rice farmers by lowering the cost of producing palay in the Philippines, which currently is at an average of P12.72 per kilo. This is higher than Thailand's P8.86 per kilo and Vietnam's P6.22 per kilo.

The 30 provincial LGUs pitching in to assist rice farmers would be complemented by the roll-out of the Expanded Survival and Recovery Assistance Program for Rice Farmers (SURE) Aid Program jointly undertaken by the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Credit and Policy Council and the Land Bank of the Philippines. And on Monday, I along with LandBank President Cecilia Borromeo personally handed over P15,000 worth of checks to farmer-beneficiaries in Zaragoza, Nueva Ecija under the expanded program.

The support of the 30 provincial LGUs also comes at a time when the country is being visited by strong storms and typhoons, but at this point, we should be thankful that the damage sustained by the agriculture sector has not been huge yet. More importantly, we should start preparing our smallholder farmers and fisherfolk, agripreneurs and agribusiness enterprises to deal with the effects of climate change by increasing their incomes.

In the first part of this series, I mentioned that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change clearly stated in a recent press release that addressing income inequality and increasing the incomes of those affected by extreme weather events are one of the solutions to dealing with the effects of climate change.

And under the "New Thinking for Agriculture," modernizing and industrializing the agriculture sector is among the paradigms to double the incomes of farmers and fisherfolk, making them resilient and able to deal with the effects of climate change.

A modernized agriculture sector also thrives



TITLE: *The 'new thinking' ad dealing with climate change* PAGE 1/2

on technology, innovation and enterprise, and this means machines, the latest in farming technology, the most relevant research and development (R&D) outputs and the most productive cultivars getting into the hands of farmers, so their losses from extreme climate events could be minimized.

Farm machines could lessen the time it takes to grow crops and harvest them, and even equipment like mechanical planters allow roots of crops to take establish themselves more deeply in the soil. And if improved cultivars or varieties are used, the survival of crops are enhanced during extreme weather events like storms. The deployment of combine harvesters also dramatically decreases the time to harvest palay compared to the manual system still used in most rice farms.

But the adoption of mechanization by smallholder farmers, agripreneurs and even agribusiness enterprises would almost be impossible if they are not consolidated, so one of the eight paradigms of the New Thinking for Agriculture is to consolidate small farmholdings into highly-productive, profitable, resilient and sustainable economic units. The transfer of matured R&D outputs is also facilitated if farmers are organized and, notably, the distribution of farm equipment and high-yielding rice seeds and training of farmers under RCEP would be through organized farmers as recipients.

Enterprise development could also be facilitated through organized farmers, and that could help smallholders in the agriculture sector gradually enter the value chain and engage in value adding. And that should result in them earning more, thus making them more resilient to extreme weather events.

More from the 'new thinking'

Going further down the list of the eight paradigms for the New Thinking for Agriculture, infrastructure development and increased investment are also very important in making agriculture smallholders become more resilient against extreme weather events. And this is where LGUs can perform a pivotal role.

Infrastructure development for the agriculture sector should include building structures to divert and store water during heavy rains and strong storms, and to make the water available during the dry season. Diversion canals from dams to deal with overflow of water could be established so these could be stored downstream. The water stored from overflowing dams could also be used for non-farming activities.

For increased investment in agriculture, LGUs could step this up and not be limited to farm-to-market roads, irrigation systems and water diversion systems.

And going back to the 30 provincial LGUs, their total investment could reach over P6 billion that could also help rice farmers cope with the effects of extreme weather conditions.

With those investments from the 30 provincial LGUs and the DA's loan assistance under the Expanded SURE program covering rice farmers with lands 1 hectare and below, I must state anew that nothing beats collective action to level up the country's agriculture sector.

I believe that more LGUs are gradually seeing the need to invest in resiliency measures for their agriculture sectors, as the IPCC report said the worsening effects of climate change could cause massive migration from lost livelihood, especially from the rural areas.

But definitely, much more needs to be done and more collective action is what I am calling for, guided by the New Thinking for Agriculture, to deal with the effects of climate change especially on the sector's smallholders.

CHEAPEST SOURCE OF POWER

ECO GROUPS: USE RENEWABLE ENERGY TO ADDRESS PALAWAN'S POWER WOES

By **Jhesset O. Enano**
@JhessetEnanoINQ

An environmental group has called for the proper implementation of the Palawan Island Power Development Plan to address Palawan's power woes through renewable energy.

The call of Environmental Legal Assistance Center (Elac) came amid the 'green groups' continued resistance to the proposed 15-megawatt coal-fired power plant in Narra town, which many considered an economic and environmental threat to the province.

"Palawan does not have an issue with power supply; our issue is with power distribution," Elac executive director Gerthie Mayo-Anda said in a press briefing on Tuesday.

Palawan crafted the power development plan in 2014 through participative planning involving local governments and civil society organizations, becoming the first province to do so.

The 20-year plan points to renewable energy as the cheapest source of power for Palawan. It identifies potential run-of-the-river hydro projects as well as solar and wind energy to power the province that has been suffering from blackouts.

Both green groups and residents were caught off-guard by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) issuance of an environmental compliance certificate (ECC) to the DMCI Power Corp.-backed project in June.

Groups, including the Philippine Movement for Climate Justice, Greenpeace, and the Center for Energy, Ecology and Development, had warned that the coal project would plunge the country deeper into a climate crisis.

Anda said the coal project is seen to benefit the nearby nickel mining operations also under DMCI, not Palawenos.

"We call on the DENR to revoke the ECC," Anda said. INQ



The Philippines is the largest wind power generator in the ASEAN region. Wind energy is the process of creating electricity using air flows that occur naturally in the earth's atmosphere. Wind turbines are used to capture kinetic energy from the wind and generate electricity.

This type of alternative energy offers many advantages. First of all, it's a clean energy source. Unlike power plants that rely on fossil fuels or coal, wind energy doesn't pollute the air. It is sustainable too because for as long as the wind blows, energy can be produced.

Wind turbines can be built on existing farms or ranches which greatly benefit the economies of rural areas. Wind farms are not just a source of clean energy, but also a major tourist attraction for sightseeing and recreation.

Here are just a few destinations around the country where you can find these scenic wind farms.

Ilocos Norte

Mention Ilocos Norte and you immediately get images of wind turbines. It's become part of the ingrained identity of Ilocos Norte and local tourism use imagery of towering turbines in their advertising materials and commercials.

Operated by the NorthWind Power Development Corporation, the Bangui Wind Farm is the country's oldest wind farm as well as the first power generating windmill farm in Southeast Asia.

Located at the northwest tip of Luzon island, the turbines are arranged in a single row stretching along a nine-kilometer shoreline off Bangui Bay.

Phase 1, completed in 2006, consists of 15 wind turbines and stands 70-meters high which produce a total of 24.75 MW of electricity. Phase II added five more wind turbines with the same capacity, bringing the total capacity to 33 MW.

Getting to the wind farm involves driving at least 11 to 14 hours from Metro Manila, making the wind farm by the sea a postcard-worthy backdrop for road trip photos. Hundreds of tourists flock to Ilocos Norte, especially during long weekends and the summer season of March to May and Holy Week, with a stop at the Bangui Wind Farm almost mandatory.

The presence of the wind farm has led to a boost in small businesses. Local farmers often sell garlic and onions in stalls along the road, straight from their farms to tourists. The more skilled vendors sell wooden replicas of the windmills, complete with rotating blades, pebbles and seashells.

While the Bangui Bay Wind Power is the most accessible and commonly visited wind farm in Ilocos Norte, there are actually two other wind farms in this northern province.

The 150-MW Burgos Wind Farm is currently the largest wind farm in the country and in Southeast Asia, with 50 wind turbines covering 600 hectares

'This type of alternative energy offers many advantages. First of all, it's a clean energy source. Unlike power plants that rely on fossil fuels or coal, wind energy doesn't pollute the air. It is sustainable too because for as long as the wind blows, energy can be produced.'



P-2

Mighty Wind

and three barangays of Burgos, namely Saoit, Poblacion and Nagsurot.

Meanwhile, the Caparispisan Wind Farm in Pagudpud has 27 individual wind turbines occupying a 625-hectare land area. If you're passing any of these towns in Ilocos, the scenic wind farms are definitely worth a stop.

Rizal

For those coming from Metro Manila, the Pililla Wind Farm in Rizal, operated by Alternergy Wind One Corporation, is the most easily accessible wind farm you can visit, roughly 1.5 to hours away from the city, depending on the traffic.

The farm currently has 27 towering wind turbines, generating 54 MW of clean energy.

Since it started construction in 2015, the wind farm has become a popular spot for cyclists, motorcycle riders, and road trippers who come to enjoy the breeze and view during weekends. Even the welcome arch of Pilillia now features small windmills.

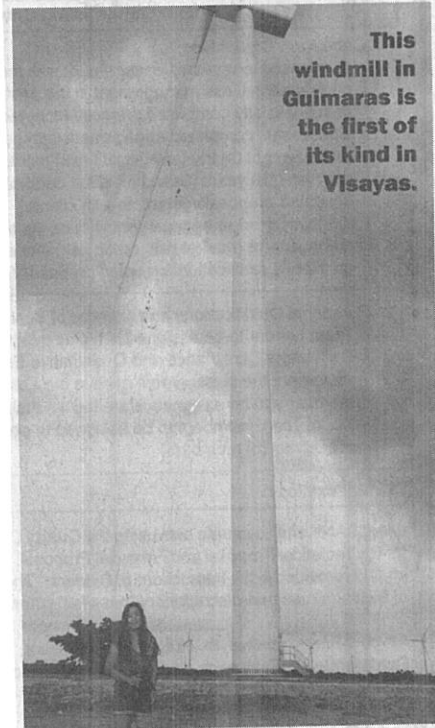
A tourist information center has been constructed in the area, providing more information on the project and several view decks that provide various vantage points for photo ops.

Noting the increase in tourist arrivals, enterprising vendors have set up small stalls and eateries selling local snacks and windmill-related souvenirs. Similar to spots in Ilocos Norte, tourists can now find a variety of souvenirs including ref magnets, keychains, patches, stickers, pinwheels and mini-windmills made of wood.

Guimaras

The island-province of Guimaras in Western Visayas is embracing renewable energy as well. The first of its kind in the Visayas, the 54-MW San Lorenzo Windmills, operated by Trans-Asia Renewable Energy Corporation, provides electricity to majority of the island making it energy self-sufficient.

The Department of Energy-supported wind farm has 27 wind turbines that stand approximately 123 meters tall. While the wind farm is located in a remote area, far from the main town proper, it is often included as a photo op stop in Guimaras Island tours because of the picturesque atmosphere.



This windmill in Guimaras is the first of its kind in Visayas.

Aklan

The Nabas Wind Power Project, operated by Petro Wind Energy Inc., is another worthy stop for those traveling by land around the province of Aklan. Situated in Barangay Pawa, about 25 kilometers from world-renowned Boracay beaches, the Nabas Wind Farm now regularly supplies clean and renewable power to the Western Visayas grid.

The farm currently consists of 18 turbines supplying 36 MW of clean energy while increasing the tourism potential of the once-sleepy town.

The Nabas Wind Farm aims to provide new ecotourism and livelihood opportunities for the local government units and host barangays, as it continues to attract tourists, especially those coming from Boracay.



Extreme precipitation may affect region's food security

By **ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ**

Southeast Asian climate experts have warned that extreme precipitation brought about by climate change may adversely affect the region's food security.

"In a 1.5-degree warming scenario, Southeast Asia will have a 70 percent increase in precipitation; while in a 2-degree warming world, there will be a 10 percent increase in extreme precipitation. That will have a huge impact in agriculture," said Lourdes Tibig, lead author of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and a member of the Philippine Climate Change Commission's National Panel of Technical Experts.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), by 2050, crop yields will decrease by 25 percent if climate change is not addressed now.

"Numbers do not tell lies. All the more that scientists' collaboration across Southeast Asia is needed," Tibig said.

Southeast Asia is one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change. It

is bound by more than its proximity but also with their cultures and customary practices.

Responding to the climate challenge, the group of climate, forestry, and agriculture scientists from Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam laid the foundation for a regional network to use science as basis for long-term development strategies.

"We should be aware of our vulnerability. The level of readiness in facing the impacts of climate change among countries in Southeast Asia is different. By sharing our practices, we can collectively address the knowledge gaps that exist in the region," said Mahawan Karuniasa, chairman of the Indonesia Expert Network for Climate Change and Forestry.

"We need a network to strengthen our engagement because this is the key factor in enhancing capacity and improving our resiliency," Karuniasa said.

Southeast Asia is among the world's largest producers of rice after India and China. The region is also a global hotspot of biodiversity, with the third largest intact forest area in the world.



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Maynilad to spend P6 B for new sewer lines

By LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON

West zone concessionaire Maynilad Water Services Inc. is investing over P6 billion to install 30 kilometers of sewer lines in Las Piñas to expedite the provision of sewerage services for its customers.

This forms part of the planned 80-kilometer sewerage system project for Las Piñas City.

Once completed in 2021, the sewerage system will enable Maynilad to catch wastewater generated by some 600,000 customers in 20 barangays in the city, and convey it to the Las Piñas Water Reclamation Facility for proper treatment.

The Las Piñas Water Reclamation Facility is designed to comply with the

Water Quality Guidelines and General Effluent Standards of 2016, a standard mandated by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

It will be Maynilad's largest sewage treatment plant in terms of capacity, treating about 88 million liters of wastewater per day.

"Our commitment is such that we have allotted the largest portion of this year's capital expenditure budget to wastewater management for programs aimed to protect the health and sanitation of our customers and the environment," Maynilad president and chief executive officer Ramoncito Fernandez said.

Maynilad is also currently laying sewer lines in Valenzuela, Cavite City,

and Barangays Cupang and Tunasan in Muntinlupa City.

From only two wastewater treatment facilities before re-privatization in 2007, Maynilad has already built 20 more, enabling it to treat over 600 million liters of wastewater per day.

Maynilad is the largest private water concessionaire in the country in terms of customer base. It serves the areas of Caloocan, Pasay, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa, Valenzuela, Navotas, Malabon, and certain portions of Manila, Quezon City, Makati and Cavite.

The company is owned and managed by Maynilad Water Holdings Co. Inc. a joint venture between Metro Pacific Investments Corp., DMCI Holdings and Marubeni Corp.



Maynilad allots P6 billion for sewer lines in Las Piñas

MAYNILAD Water Services, Inc. on Wednesday said it is allocating more than P6 billion for the installation of 30 kilometers (km) of sewer lines in Las Piñas City this year.

In a statement, the west zone concessionaire said the 30-km conveyance will be implemented in the fourth quarter. This project is part of an planned 80-km sewage system for Las Piñas.

Maynilad said it will use a "trenchless" method for the project to lessen the impact of pipe diggings on traffic.

The sewage system, once completed by 2021, allow Maynilad to "catch wastewater generated by some 600,000

customers in 20 barangays in the city, and convey it to the Las Piñas Water Reclamation Facility for proper treatment."

Construction on the Las Piñas facility began in March this year and will be finished by 2021. The facility will comply with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) Water Quality Guidelines and General Effluent Standards of 2016 (DAO 2016-08).

"We are determined to do our part in ensuring the proper treatment and disposal of wastewater in our concession area. Our commitment is such that we have allotted the largest portion of this year's

capital expenditure budget to wastewater management for programs aimed to protect the health and sanitation of our customers and the environment," Maynilad President and CEO Ramoncito S. Fernandez was quoted as saying.

Maynilad is also installing sewer lines in Valenzuela, Cavite City, and Barangays Cupang and Tunasan in Muntinlupa City.

In August, the Supreme Court upheld fines totaling close to P2 billion on Maynilad, Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) and east zone concessionaire Manila Water Company, Inc. for violations of an environmental law.

The case stemmed from the fine of P29.4 million imposed by the DENR for non-compliance with the clean water law due to the concessionaires' failure to finish sewerage projects by May 2009.

Metro Pacific Investments Corp., which has a 52.8% interest in Maynilad, is one of three Philippine units of Hong Kong-based First Pacific Co. Ltd., the others being Philex Mining Corp. and PLDT, Inc. Hastings Holdings, Inc., a unit of PLDT Beneficial Trust Fund subsidiary MediaQuest Holdings, Inc., has interest in *BusinessWorld* through the Philippine Star Group, which it controls.



IN BRIEF

Maynilad investing P6b in sewerage

WEST zone concessionaire Maynilad Water Services Inc. is investing more than P6 billion to install 30 kilometers of sewer lines in Las Piñas City in the fourth quarter.

"We are determined to do our part in ensuring the proper treatment and disposal of wastewater in our concession area. Our commitment is such that we have allotted the largest portion of this year's capital expenditure budget to wastewater management for programs aimed to protect the health and sanitation of our customers and the environment," said Maynilad president and chief executive Ramoncito Fernandez.

The 30-km sewer conveyance, which is part of the planned 80-km sewerage system project for Las Piñas City, will be implemented in the fourth quarter of 2019.

Maynilad will utilize trenchless methodology for the project to minimize the impact on traffic of the pipe diggings. Once completed in 2021, the sewerage system will enable Maynilad to catch wastewater generated by some 600,000 customers in 20 barangays in the city and convey it to the Las Piñas Water Reclamation Facility for proper treatment.

Othel V. Campos



Maynilad to install 30 km of sewer lines in Las Piñas City

WEST Zone concessionaire Maynilad Water Services, Inc. (Maynilad) is investing over P6 billion to install 30 kilometers of sewer lines in Las Piñas City this year, to expedite the provision of sewerage services for its customers.

This 30-km. sewer conveyance—which is part of the planned 80-km sewerage system project for Las Piñas City—will be implemented in the last quarter of 2019. Maynilad will utilize trenchless methodology for this project to minimize impact on traffic of the pipe diggings.

Once completed in 2021, the sewerage system will enable Maynilad to catch wastewater generated by some 600,000 customers in 20 barangays in the city, and convey it to the Las Piñas Water Reclamation Facility for proper treatment.

The Las Piñas Water Reclamation Facility, constructed beginning March 2019 and also tar-

geted for completion by 2021, is designed to comply with the Water Quality Guidelines and General Effluent Standards of 2016 (DAO 2016-08)—a standard mandated by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. It will be Maynilad's largest sewage treatment plant in terms of capacity, treating about 88 million liters of wastewater per day.

"We are determined to do our part in ensuring the proper treatment and disposal of wastewater in our concession area. Our commitment is such that we have allotted the largest portion of this year's capital expenditure budget to wastewater management for programs aimed to protect the health and sanitation of our customers and the environment," said Maynilad President and CEO Ramoncito S. Fernandez.

Maynilad is also currently laying sewer lines in Valenzuela, Cavite City, and Barangays

Cupang and Tunasan in Muntinlupa City.

From only two wastewater treatment facilities before privatization in 2007, Maynilad has already built 20 more, enabling it to treat over 600 million liters of wastewater per day.

Maynilad is the largest private water concessionaire in the Philippines in terms of customer base.

It is the agent and contractor of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) for the West Zone of the Greater Manila Area, which is composed of the cities of Manila (certain portions), Quezon City (certain portions), Makati (west of South Super Highway), Caloocan, Pasay, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa, Valenzuela, Navotas and Malabon all in Metro Manila; the cities of Cavite, Bacoor and Imus, and the towns of Kawit, Noveleta and Rosario, all in Cavite Province.



Publiko hinikayat ng CBCP TUMULONG SA PANGANGALAGA SA KALIKASAN

HINIKAYAT ni Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) Vice President at Kalookan Bishop Pablo David ang mga mananampalataya na tumulong sa pangangalaga ng kalikasan.

Ayon kay David, maraming simpleng pamamaraan upang makatulong ang bawat isa sa pangangalaga ng kalikasan.

Isa aniya rito ay ang simpleng pamamaraan lamang nang hindi na paggamit ng plastik.

Ipinaliwanag ng Obispo na hindi sapat ang pag-recycle ng mga plastik dahil kinakailangang ihinto na ang produksyon at paggamit pa nito.

"Ugaliin natin yung walang plastikan, bawasan natin ang kaplastikan both literally at figuratively," aniya pa, sa panayam ng church-run Radio Veritas.

Ang panawagan ay ginawa ni David sa pagsisimula ng isang buwang pagdiriwang sa panahon ng paglikha o Season of Creation, na ang lahat ng nilalang ng Diyos ay may kaugnayan sa bawat isa.

Binigyang-diin ng Obispo, na kapag sinaktan o sinira ang isang bahagi ng kalikasan at naapektuhan na ang kabuuang balanse ng kapaligiran.

"Ang lahat ng bagay na nilikha ng Diyos ay magkakaugnay-ugnay. Kapag sinaktan mo ang isang bahagi, sinaktan mo ang buong sangnilikha. When we destroy the world, we destroy ourselves." pahayag ni David.

Nito lamang 2018, naitala ang Pilipinas bilang pangatlong bansa sa buong mundo na pinakamaraming nalilikhang plastic na basura.

Samantala, inihalintulad naman ni Cubao Bishop

Honesto Ongtioco ang kalikasan sa isang inang mapagaruga.

Ayon sa Obispo, tulad ng isang ina, ang kalikasan ay nagkakaloob sa tao ng buhay, pag-asa at kalakasan.

Gayunman, binalaan ng Obispo ang mananampalataya na kung pababayaang ang kapaligiran ay magdudulot ito ng pagkawasak na maaaring humantong sa kamatayan ng daigdig.

Dahil dito, mahalaga aniya ang pagkakaisa ng sangkatauhan, upang pigilan ang mga gawaing patuloy na sumisira sa kapaligiran.

Matatandaang nitong Setyembre 1 ay pormal nang binuksan ang Season of Creation sa pamamagitan ng isang Walk for Creation, na pinangunahan ni Manila Archbishop Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle.

Taong 2003 nang unang inendorso ni dating CBCP President Cotabato Archbishop Emeritus Orlando Cardinal Quevedo ang naturang pagdiriwang sa Pilipinas.

Ngayong 2019 naman ang ikatlong taon ng pagsasagawa ng Walk for Creation bilang tanda ng pagsisimula ng panahon ng paglikha. **ANA ROSARIO HERNANDEZ**



ARTA to be first paperless govt agency

THE Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA) aims to become the country's first paperless agency by going digital, its director-general, Benjamin Belgica, said on Wednesday.

Belgica said digitalization will make transactions easier. But in order to do so, departments must first rationalize their own system, he added.

"We cannot automate until we rationalize the system," Belgica told reporters in a news briefing.

ARTA will require departments to provide an email system where citizens can file their complaints,

which must be attended to within 24 hours. If the concerned office will not act immediately, it will be investigated.

"The real success would be, if we would be able to restructure, integrate it into a rationalized IT (information technology) system, inter-link this government agencies and make it smooth sailing," Belgica said.

He said this initiative is in accordance with President Rodrigo Duterte's directive for government agencies to "improve services and fight corruption."

EVA CASALJAY



Jeremiah Belgica PHOTO BY RENEH.DILAN



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ANG nagaganap na balitaktakan sa Senado ukol sa Good Conduct Time Allowance law ay malinaw na palatandaan na may depekto o may malabo sa batas na ito.

Ang masama pa, ti-la walang lumabas sa publiko na kopya ng Implementing Rules and Regulation nito.

Ang GCTA law ay madaling makuha sa internet pero ang IRR nito ay mahirap hagilapin.

Sinadya ba ito?

Maganda ring isipin na ginawa ang batas noong 2013 na panahon ni ex-President Noy-noy Aquino at pinagtu-lungang gawin naman ang IRR nito noong 2014 nina dating Department of Justice Secretary Leila de Lima at dating Department of Interior and Local Government Sec. Mar Roxas.

IBANG USAPAN

Kung may katiwalian sa pagpapalaya ng mga detenido o preventive prisoner kung tawagin na nililitis pa ang mga kaso o tapos nang napatunayang nagkasala ang isang akusado ay ibang usapan.

Kung higit na nakalayaya ang mga may pera at maimpluwensya kaysa sa mga mahihirap na nakulong ay ibang usapan din.

Hayaan nating kumilos ang mga kinauukulang ahensya ng pamahalaan para alamin kung may paboritismo o kaya ay pinepera ng mga taga-Bureau of Corrections, kasama ang ilang taga-DOJ, ang mga pagpapalaya.

Malaki ang tiwala natin malilinan din ang lahat ng ito pagdating ng panahon.

Alalahaning habang may imbestigasyon ang Senado at Kamara rito, may sariling imbestigasyong isinasagawa rin ang Malakanyang.

Anoman ang kahihi-natnan sa imbestigasyon sa katiwalian dito, ti-wala ang ULTIMATUM na mapupunta ang lahat sa tamang ending.

ANG GCTA LAW

Problema talaga ang nasabing GCTA law.

Mantakin ninyo, kanya-kanya ang pag-unawa rito.

Para sa DOJ, hindi raw dapat kasama sa mga mabibigyan ng benepisyo na pagbabawas ng panahon ng pagkakulong ang mga may gaya ng heinous crime



DEPEKTIBO NA ANG BATAS, IRR HINDI PA MAKITA

gaya ni ex-Calauan, Laguna Mayor Antonio Sanchez na gumahasa at pumatay kay Eileen Sarmenta at sa boypren niyang si Allan Gomez.

Ayon naman sa legal department ng Bureau of Corrections, pare-parehong mabibiyayaan ng benepisyo sa batas ang mga may gawa ng mga nakademandanda at convict, kasama ang mga may gawa ng heinous crime, paulit-ulit sa paggawa ng parehong krimen, paggawa ng iba't ibang krimen at pag-eskapo sa kulungan.

Katwiran pa ng mga taga-Bucor, ginagawa nila ang patas na pagtrato sa pinagsamang mga probisyon ng GCTA law at ng IRR nito.

Mismong ang mga senador naman ay nakaramdam ng pagkahati-hati.

May nagsasabi tuloy na dapat amyendahan ang batas at ang IRR nito o kaya ibasura na lang ang batas at ang IRR nito at pairalin na lang ang ibang mga batas na nagtatakda rin ng GCTA gaya ng Kodigo Penal o Revised Penal Code ng Pilipinas.

May nagsasabi ring dapat iakyat ang problema sa Supreme Court, kabilang na ang problema sa pagpapabalik sa kulungan ng mga pinalayang bilanggo na convict o nililitis pa lang ang kaso.

TODO-TODONG PAGLAYA

Noong una, mga Bro, tipid na tipid umano ang pagpapalaya sa mga bilanggo, maging sa mga convict sa heinous crime.

Pero nang maglabas ang Supreme Court ng desisyon nitong nakaraang Hunyo 2019 na lahat ng mga preso ay dapat makinabang sa biyaya ng GCTA, biglang lumobo ang gustong lumabas ng kulungan, kasama si Sanchez.

Pero dahil nga sa natanang nang patakaran ni Bucor chief Nicanor Faeldon na lahat ay dapat na makinabang kahit wala pa ang desisyon ng Supreme Court, napalaya ang maraming bilanggo, kasama

na ang nasa 120 na inamin ni Senador Ronald 'Bato' dela Rosa na pinalaya sa kanyang ilang buwan lang na pag-upo bilang bosing ng Bucor.

Nasa 800 umanong convict sa heinous crime ang lumaya sa anim na buwan ni Sen. Bato sa Bucor sa mga buwan ng Abril hanggang Oktubre, 2018 at sa 9 na buwan ni Faeldon mula Nobyembre 2018 hanggang sa ngayon.

Ibig sabihin nito, mga Bro, may mahigit nang 1,000 ang napalaya bago pa umupo sina Bato at Faeldon dahil nga nagsimulang umiral ang batas noong 2014 o dalawang taon bago umupo si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na Pangulo ng ating bansa.

FAELDON SINIBAK

Sa huli, pinagbibitiw mismo ni Pang. Rodrigo Duterte si Faeldon hanggang sa tuluyan na rin niya itong sinibak.

Ipinauubaya na rin niya sa kinauukulang ahensya ang masusing nimbestigasyon dito.

Pero kung titingnan ang kasaysayan ng pagpapalaya ng mga convict sa heinous crime, nagsimula ito sa panahon nina Noy-noy, De Lima at Roxas.

Lumilitaw ring nag-aaway mismo ang mga abogado ng pamahalaan at mga mambabatas ukol sa malabo o depektibong batas at nakadagdag pa ang desisyon ng SC sa problema na ipinangatwiran naman nito na tama.

Sa gitna ng lahat, pinakamagandang hindi dapat na pulitikahin ang mga problema rito kundi lumahok ang lahat na may maitutulong upang maituwid ang lahat sa batas at IRR nito na pinagmulan talaga ng kaguluhan.

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