

DATE : 25 Sept. 2019

DAY : Wednesday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



Cimatu condemns killing of DENR informant

ENVIRONMENT Secretary Roy Cimatu has condemned the killing of an informant as he called on the police to identify and put the killers behind bars.

Two motorcycle-riding assailants gunned down Gaudencio Arana, 56, last September 11 in Rizal town, Nueva Ecija.

According to Cimatu, Arana, a long time DENR

informant and assigned at the office of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer (CENRO) in Muñoz town, had been for giving accurate information about the illegal activities within Pantabangan and Rizal, Nueva Ecija areas.

CENRO Florencio Lalu said that it was Ara-

na who leaked a vital information that resulted in the confiscation of several illegally-sourced wood products, conveyances and chainsaws.

He said this could have earned the ire of unscrupulous individuals conducting illegal activities within the mentioned municipalities.

Joel dela Torre



'Sewage plants crucial in cleaning Manila Bay'

METRO Manila's water concessionaires should do their part in rehabilitating Manila Bay by complying with Republic Act 9275 or the Clean Water Act of 2004.

In a statement, the Manila Yacht Club and Buhay Party-list said the water concessionaires should address the bay's pollution by providing sewage facilities.

"The DENR [Department of Environment and Natural Resources] cannot solve this issue without the water companies speeding up the construction of the sewage treatment plant," said MYC Commodore Robert Lim Joseph.

"We need to divert all the sewage going into the bay [to the treatment plants]," added Buhay Party-list Rep. Lito Atienza,

a former Environment secretary. "Otherwise, there's no way we can save Manila Bay."

The water concessionaires collect an environmental fee from its customers that should go toward water treatment efforts, the lawmaker explained.

"Every month, when you pay your water bill, 20% of that is supposedly for the cleaning of our wastewater. If this was done, then the water going to Manila Bay should have been clear water and without stench," he said.

"They've been collecting what they used to call sewage fee—now environmental fee—since 1997. It's been 22 years!" Atienza exclaimed.

Rehabilitating Manila Bay is a formidable task, Joseph said. To date, waste collectors have amassed 27,000 tons of garbage, he added.

"They will collect around 30,000 tons more from October to December," said Joseph. "This is 60 years of accumulated waste."

Manila Bay's rehabilitation kicked off this January, after the DENR accepted President Rodrigo Duterte's challenge to rehabilitate and restore the bay's coastal and marine ecosystems.



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DOH fight on polio will help DENR with Manila Bay

THE Department of Health (DOH) has called for the construction of at least 3.5 million toilets in the country, as part of a solution to the problem of polio, which has returned to the Philippines after almost two decades that the disease was declared eliminated in 2000.

While the big drop in the nation's vaccination program was held to be the immediate cause of the return of polio, the DOH and the World Health Organization (WHO) said a big factor was inadequate sanitation and hygiene.

When a child is immunized with the Oral Polio Vaccine, the WHO explained, a weakened form of the virus multiplies in the intestine and the body reacts by producing antibodies to fight the virus. The polio virus is then excreted with the feces, and where there is inadequate sanitation and hygiene, the excreted polio virus spreads in the community before finally dying out.

The DOH thus called for a "zero open defecation" environment which, apparently is not the case in many parts of the Philippines today. Thus the DOH said the government must build 3.5 million toilets in the country, most of them in Metro Manila.

"Out of the 3.5 million na kailangan na toilets, majority is in the National Capital Region," Health Undersecretary Enrique Domingo said. "Toilet

ng mga pamilya at bahay ito. Talagang maraming families ang walang sanitary toilets."

There we have finally an explanation for the other problem we are now grappling with in Metro Manila – the pollution of Manila Bay and all the rivers and esteros flowing into it. The pollution is such that swimming and all other contact with the water is prohibited. The last time the waters off Malate, Manila, were tested, the finding was 2.44 billion MPN (most probable number) per 100 millimeters, way above the safe swimming level of 100 MPN.

The DENR was given the job of cleaning up the bay, after it successfully cleaned up Boracay in six months last year. But Manila Bay's pollution is such, the DENR found, that it will take more than 10 years to clean it up.

Where is all the pollution coming from? The DOH has now provided a big part of the answer. It is coming from millions of households in Metro Manila. It is also coming from piggeries and factories which throw their wastes into the river and its many tributaries and esteros. But most of it comes from millions of houses which have no toilets.

The DOH is now moving to build 3.5 million toilets – most of these in Metro Manila – to help solve the polio problem in the country. This should also help solve the DENR's huge pollution problem in Manila Bay.



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CLEANING UP BISLIG'S COASTLINE – Volunteers join the clean-up campaign in five coastal districts in Bislig City as part of the International Coastal Clean-up Day last Saturday. (Photo courtesy of DNR13-RPAO Herzon Gallego)



EDITORIAL

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EDITORIAL

Makatutulong din ang laban ng DoH kontra polio sa DENR para sa Manila Bay

NANAWAGAN ang Department of Health (DoH) para sa pagtatayo ng nasa 3.5 milyong palikuran sa buong bansa, bilang bahagi ng solusyon sa problema ng polio, na nagbalik sa Pilipinas makalipas ang halos dalawang dekada mula nang ideklarang naglaho na sa bansa ang sakit noong 2000.

Bagamat masasabing ang malaking pagbagsak sa bilang ng nakilahok sa programang pagpapabakuna ng bansa, ang sanhi ng pagbabalik ng polio, sinabi ng DoH at ng World Health Organization (WHO) na malaking salik din ang kawalan ng maayos na sanitasyon at hygiene.

Sa paliwanag ng WHO, kapag ang isang bata ay nabigyan ng Oral Polio Vaccine, dumarami ang mahinang uri ng virus sa bituka at tumutugon naman ang katawan sa pamamagitan ng paglalabas ng mga antibodies upang malabanan ang virus. Kasunod nito, mailalabas na ang polio virus sa kasama ng dumi ng tao, at kung saan wala ang maayos na sanitasyon at hygiene, na nagiging dahilan ng pagkalat ng polio virus sa komunidad bago pa ito mamatay.

Kaya naman nanawagan ang DoH para sa isang "zero open defecation" na kapaligiran, na malayo sa kaso ng maraming lugar sa bansa sa kasalukuyan. Dahil dito sinabi ng DoH na kailangang makapagtayo ang pamahalaan ng 3.5 milyong palikuran sa bansa, na karamihan ay sa Metro Manila.

"Out of the 3.5 million na kailangan na toilets, majority is in the National Capital Region," pahayag ni Health Undersecretary Enrique Domingo. "Toilet ng mga pamilya at bahay ito. Talagang maraming families ang walang sanitary toilets."

Ngayon, may paliwanag na sa wakas para sa iba pang problema na lumalaganap sa Metro Manila - ang polusyon ng Manila Bay at ang lahat ng mga ilog at esteros na dumadaloy rito. Matinding polusyon na dahilan upang ipagbawal ang paglangoy o pagtatampisaw sa tubig ng look. Sa huling pasusuri sa tubig ng Manila Bay sa bahagi ng Malate, Manila, natuklasan ang nasa 2.44 billion MPN (most probable number) per 100 millimeters, na malayo sa lebel na 100 MPN para maging ligtas sa paglalangoy.

Ibinigay sa DENR ang trabaho para sa paglilinis ng look, matapos ang matagumpay nitong paglilinis sa isla ng Boracay sa loob ng anim na buwan noong nakaraang taon. Gayunman ang polusyon ng Manila Bay ay higit na malala, sa pagsasabi ng DENR, na aabutin ng higit sampung taon bago pa ito malinis.

Saan nagmumula ang polusyon? Naibigay na ng DoH ngayon ang malaking bahagi ng sagot dito. Nagmumula ito sa milyong kabahayan sa Metro Manila. Nanggagaling din ito sa mga babuyan at pabrika na nagtatapon ng kanilang mga dumi sa ilog at maraming kadugtong na anyong tubig at mga esteros. Ngunit karamihan sa mga ito ay nagmumula sa milyong mga kabahayan na walang palikuran.

Hangad ngayon ng DoH na magkapagtayo ng 3.5 milyong palikuran - na karamihan ay sa Metro Manila - upang makatulong na masolusyunan ang problema sa sakit na polio sa bansa. Dapat ding itong makatulong sa paglutas ng DENR sa malaking problema ng polusyon sa Manila Bay.



DENR cracks whip on big, small mines

By Rio N. Araja

AFTER the cleanup of Aklan's world-famous Boracay Island and Manila Bay, the Environment department wants mining companies and even small-scale miners to strictly comply with the laws, rules and regulations, and guidelines of responsible mining.

Turn to A3

DENR...

From A1

At a news conference in Quezon City on Tuesday, Wilfredo Moncano, the department's Mines and Geosciences Bureau director, vowed to ensure full compliance with environmental laws and policies.

"We want to show that DENR and MGB have done something to correct the mistakes in the past," he said.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau also said Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu had "favorably" endorsed the renewal of OceanaGold Corp.'s Financial or Technical Assistance Agreement to the Office of the President.

Moncano said "the President [Rodrigo Duterte] was the signatory to the renewal.

But he said should any deficiency be found because of the Indigenous People's Rights Act, the President may not grant the approval.

After an audit of mine firms by the inter-agency Mining Industry Coordinating Council, Moncano said, the DENR had begun to conduct a crackdown on illegal mine operations and violations in the provision of the Mining Act.

"We found many issues in the audit," he said in a statement.

"And we addressed them. We have made sure that our policies to enforce responsible mining now have more teeth."

In 2018, Moncano said the DENR even issued Administrative Order 2018-19 to heighten the level of compliance with the mining law and rules and regulations, and to intensify the rules on rehabilitation, environmental protection, social development and even employment of indigenous workers in mining communities.

"One of the things we learned in the MICC audit was the lax compliance with the maximum disturbed area policy," he said, adding "so we addressed this by limiting the maximum disturbed areas. This means rehabilitation and re-vegetation starts sooner in mining operations."

According to Moncano, the MGB had already compelled miners to collect the top soil and subsoil of a disturbed area to prevent the soil from eroding and polluting rivers and other areas once it rained.

"Before, the top soil was just being bulldozed to the side of the mining site," he said.

To further intensify the promotion of responsible mining, he said, there was a need to create an environmental enforcement task force into its bureau pending congressional approval.



MGB OKs interim renewal of OceanaGold FTAA

By LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau is recommending the interim renewal of OceanaGold's financial and technical assistance agreement (FTAA).

This even as the Office of the President found deficiency in OceanaGold's FTAA.

"The OP found a deficiency based on the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act. Their first 25 years were not covered by the IPRA law and their area was outside the ancestral domain of the Bugkalot tribe," MGB director Wilfredo Moncano said in a briefing yesterday.

"But during their renewal, the tribe also filed an application for expansion which technically covered the area of OceanaGold," he said.

The OP returned the renewal application to the De-

partment of Environment and Natural Resources with the instruction for OceanaGold to comply with the free, prior informed consent (FPIC) by the NCIP.

The interim renewal would allow OceanaGold to continue with their operations.

"We are trying to bring this up to the (DENR) secretary (referring to Roy Cimatu). For me, I will support this, but of course, we don't know the position of the secretary on this matter," Moncano said.

"The process with NCIP is a long one and might take two years. Hopefully, we can issue the interim renewal within the year," he added.

MGB recommended the interim renewal amid issues with funding agencies and market movements.

OceanaGold, which operates in Nueva Vizcaya, is

listed at the Toronto Stock Exchange.

"That [interim renewal] is an assurance on the part of funding agencies and bankers that for the next 25 years, their operations can be stable," Moncano said.

Meanwhile, Alyansa Tigil Mina expressed disappointment over the latest development.

"This interim renewal smells tragically as an attempt of DENR to circumvent the already vague and anti-poor Mining Act of 1995," ATM said.

This development even becomes more ironic as the government decided to renew this mining contract during the UN General Assembly which had tackled climate change as its main theme," it said.

An FTAA is entered into between a contractor and the government for the large-

scale exploration, development and utilization of gold, copper, nickel, chromite, lead, zinc and other minerals. It is granted to foreign-owned corporations wanting to operate in the Philippines.

The President has the final decision on the grant and renewal of an FTAA upon the endorsement of the MGB and DENR.

Nueva Vizcaya is host to two of the largest mining projects in the country, OceanaGold's Didipio mine and FCF Mineral's Rurnruno gold-molybdenum project.

The local government and communities in the province have long been opposed to the mining industry due to its negative impacts to the people and the environment. They are pushing for more development related to ecotourism and agriculture sector.



Open-pit mining ultimately a 'political' decision — regulators

THE RESUMPTION of open-pit mining will ultimately require a "political" decision with the government weighing the need to protect the environment against the desire of mining companies to operate as efficiently as possible, mining regulators said.

"There is a lot of pressure (because) business people have a lot of influence... it's a political decision. Ultimately, (the) impact will be environmental and social," Antonio N. Apostol, a head of division at the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) told reporters on the sidelines of a bureau news conference.

The ban on open-pit mining was imposed by former Environment Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez, an environmental advocate, in April 2017. She was supported by President Rodrigo R. Duterte, who rejected a proposal by the Mining Industry Coordinating Council (MICC) to lift the ban in November 2017.

Another mining regulator the lifting of the ban will also depend on the recommendation of the current environment secretary, Roy A. Cimatu.

"It depends on the DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) Secretary to convince the President *kung ili*-lift (if it will be lifted) or not) based on the scientific evidence," Rodolfo L. Velasco, head of the MGB's

Mine Safety, Environment, and Social Development division.

Mr. Cimatu was asked to comment but had not replied at deadline time.

At the news conference proper in Quezon City, another mining regulator, Teodorico A. Sandoval, described open-pit mining as "economical" from the point of view of miners.

Mr. Sandoval is the MGB's head of division for mining technology.

Mr. Apostol added that open-pit mining is safer than underground mining, and that the government can easily regulate mining companies since this method is very visible. The visibility of open pits is also a disadvantage because people can see that it is "destroying" the environment.

Mr. Velasco noted that the ban has had a significant impact on the attractiveness of the country for mining investors.

He noted that the most significant project that was put on hold is the \$5.9-billion Tampakan project in South Cotabato, touted as one of the largest gold prospects in the world.

The project was rejected by Ms. Lopez in 2016.

Its operator is Sagittarius Mines, Inc. (SMI) which was able to secure declaration of mining feasibility and was steps away from starting operations. — **Vincent Mariel P. Galang**



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Developmental approach to mineral resources

Developing the mining potential of our country necessitates a far more complex and progressive way of capitalizing opportunities and benefits.

Recently, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) launched the Mining Philippines 2019 International Conference with the theme, "Riding the Wave: Capitalizing on Opportunities," featuring various enlightening speeches and presentations suggestive of serious economic and policy challenges.

The Philippines, being the fifth most mineralized country in the world, has the potential of attracting billions of dollars in capital investments that can jumpstart progress in remote areas of the country, and this cannot be ignored. This is acknowledged by Environment and Natural Resources Undersecretary for Climate Change and Mining Concerns Analiza Teh, but these potentials are "yet to be completely realized."

According to her, five mining projects could boost the contribution of the mining sector to the economy. These are the Tampakan Copper-Gold project in South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, and Davao del Sur with a total capital investment of \$20 billion; the Kingking Copper-Gold mining project in Compostela Valley, \$2.29 billion; the Silangan Copper-Gold in Surigao del Norte, \$40.43 billion; the Pujada Nickel project in Davao Oriental, P540.36 billion; and the Balabag Gold-Silver project in Zamboanga del Sur, P1.04 billion.

Consequently, she rightly expressed that "Our goal now is how to maximize this potential to boost growth without compromising the protection of the environment and ensuring the sustainability of mining practices."

This is exactly the policy direction that the COMP is gearing towards. On Dec. 19, 2017, the COMP became the first Southeast Asian mining association to adopt the TSM standard. It is the fourth mining association outside of Canada to do so after Botswana, Argentina, and Finland.

The COMP has announced the creation and the composition of the Community of Interest (COI) advisory panel. This panel is tasked to not only make recommendations or sug-

THINKING BEYOND POLITICS CARMELO BAYARCAL

gestions about the implementation of TSM but also to review TSM implementation results.

The panel is multi-sectoral in nature, comprised of 12 regular members from the following sectors: indigenous peoples, local government, environment expert, policy/technical, CSO/academe, religious, legal, academe, labor, media, forestry/environment, and finance. It also includes three ex-officio members from the mining industry.

The existence of a COI panel and community consultations would facilitate developing a desired level of social acceptance to mining as a responsible and sustainable means of livelihood and economic growth. The social license for large scale mining to operate will thus be achieved from an experiential level. In the context of the TSM's general objectives, the panel is an added mechanism to further insure the accountability, credibility, and transparency of mining operations in the designated areas of our archipelago.

Open pit mining has acquired a controversial reputation due to public misinformation. Worse, large-scale mining is outright dismissed.

Without the benefit of firsthand information, government and the public at large fail to see that rehabilitation is indeed doable and effective after open pit mining operations are carried out.

Several mining companies — under the standard practice of progressive rehabilitation that is strictly implemented by COMP — have successfully undertaken rehabilitation. To wit, one should see the progressive rehabilitation practiced in Bataraza, Palawan that has long been implemented by Rio Tuba Nickel Mining Corp.; the Bulawan and Sibutad Projects in Negros Occidental and Zamboanga del Norte by Philex Mining Corp.; the Taganito Mining Corp.'s mine in Claver, Surigao del Norte; and TVI Resource Development's Canatuan Mine in Zamboanga del Norte. Legitimate mining operations are highly regulated and must

operate in compliance with all mining and environmental laws.

The developmental approach to mining and the principle of balanced environmental governance align with the mission of the Philippine Business for Environmental Stewardship (PBEST). Launched in November 2013, PBEST has endeavored to "promote national developmental policies that integrate responsible stewardship of the environment as a positive factor for economic growth."

PBEST acknowledges the urgent need to establish the necessary legal and regulatory environment to realize the full potentials of the mining industry and its contribution to economic growth. It supports the efforts of the DENR and the COMP in the promotion of "genuine responsible mining."

On this note, the restrictive and negative approach of government toward mining should shift toward a developmental policy regime of environmental stewardship and responsible mining. Balanced environmental governance is the key to realizing and unlocking the transformative potentials of sound resource management and sustainable mining activities.

Together, the private stakeholders, the national government, the LGUs, the concerned communities, and the public should forge and establish the needed legal and regulatory environment under which the mining industry could thrive. Policy differences between and among national laws and local ordinances about mining practices should be ironed out and made harmonious. Consequently, confusion is avoided, and the conduct of uninterrupted business operations is facilitated.

An invigorating legal and regulatory environment, domestic responsibility, and global competitiveness could all make the Philippine mining industry a precursor to national progress — job promotion, poverty alleviation, infrastructure development, and robust economic growth. ■

CARMELO BAYARCAL is a convener, Philippine Business for Environmental Stewardship (PBEST) which is an environment project of the Stratbase ADR Institute.

Killers of earth activists bolder under Du30, watchdog notes

By Melvin Gascon
@melvingasconINQ

Murders of environmental activists and land defenders in the Philippines have risen sharply under President Duterte, an international rights watchdog said on Tuesday, alleging his speeches and policies have "emboldened" the killers.

Campaigners who challenge powerful logging, mining and fruit growing interests have long faced deadly violence in the country, but the recent increase marked a "disturbing" jump, according to a report from Global Witness.

In July, the group said 30 killings last year made the Philippines the deadliest country in the world for land defenders, a first since the group began reporting such deaths in 2012.

Three promises

In an 86-page report released on Tuesday at a press briefing in Quezon City, Global Witness said the toll was at least 113 since Mr. Duterte became President in mid-2016, while no fewer than 65 were killed in the three years before his rule.

The group said the government had failed to protect its citizens who made a stand against

coal, agribusiness, mining and tourism projects.

Ben Leather, Global Witness' senior campaigner, said that when Mr. Duterte came to power, he promised to eliminate corruption, to protect the environment and to safeguard marginalized groups, such as indigenous communities.

"Our new investigation could not be clearer—Duterte's government has failed enormously on all three promises, and has left land and environmental defenders to be attacked with impunity," Leather said.

Malacañang dismissed Global Witness's claim that the President's "aggressive rhetoric" emboldened the killers of environmental activists and land defenders.

Presidential spokesperson Salvador Panelo said it was wrong to make generalizations about the motives or reasons behind the murders of the activists.

"I do not think so," Panelo said when asked to comment if he thought Mr. Duterte's speeches may have been a factor in the rise in the killings of environment and land activists.

Don't generalize

"You know when somebody dies, we have to investigate whether or not what concerns or

whatever advocacies he has or that is a personal thing. We cannot just generalize," he added.

The Global Witness report follows its July 2018 report that named the Philippines as among the world's deadliest country for land and environment defenders.

"If the Filipino government is going to deliver on its promises, it has to protect land and environmental defenders and stand up to big business and corrupt politicians," Leather said.

The report cited cases of "systematic attacks" on activists, environmentalists and human rights

advocates, who faced harassment after opposing projects by big firms like Dole Philippines, Del Monte Philippines, San Miguel Corp., Standard Chartered and the World Bank.

The administration has been marked by Mr. Duterte's internationally condemned antidrug campaign that authorities say has resulted in more than 5,500 dealers or users being gunned down by police.

Rights groups say the true toll is at least four times as high. "The President's brutal 'war on drugs' has fostered a culture



WITNESS TO IMPUNITY Activists and "lumad" representatives present the report of Global Witness, an international watchdog, on the Philippine situation at a news briefing in Quezon City on Tuesday. —GRIG C. MONTEGRANDE

of impunity and fear, emboldening the politically and economically powerful to use violence," the report added.

It cited a series of killings carried out since he won a landslide election victory on his promise to fight crime and corruption.

In 2017, a member of an environmental watchdog group was shot dead while attempting to confiscate illegally cut timber destined for boutique hotels being built amid a tourist boom on Palawan Island, known as the country's last ecological frontier, the report said.

The victim was the 12th member of the group to be killed since 2004, it added.

A community leader in Mindanao was shot dead in a 2016 ambush after speaking out against a mining project run by a company headed by a businessman who was an election campaign donor for Mr. Duterte, Global Witness said.

Pineapples, bananas

It said it also investigated cases of ranchers growing pineapples and bananas for fruit multinationals on land claimed by tribesmen, one of whom was killed allegedly by security guards of a Del Monte Philippines contract grower in 2017.

In 2016, security guards of another rancher who grows bananas for Dole Philippines destroyed the houses of tribesmen claiming the land, uprooted their crops and chased them off the property with gunshots, the report said.

Continuing to do business with these ranchers "makes both companies complicit with the violations," Leather said.

In a statement, Del Monte Philippines denied the report's allegations, adding that it "vigorously promotes the welfare of stakeholders across its global supply chain."

Dole Philippines, controlled by Japan's Itochu Corp, did not immediately reply to a request for comment.

The report also took to task the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) for its "mixed and inadequate response" to the complaints of tribal communities displaced by business projects.

It urged the government to launch an "independent" investigation into allegations of corruption and malpractice in the NCIP, publish a national human rights action plan and appoint a corporate accountability czar.

—WITH REPORTS FROM AFP AND JULIE M. AURELIO INQ



Rody blamed for rising slays of land activists

By Rio N. Araja
and MJ Blancaflor

MURDERS of environmental activists and land defenders in the Philippines have risen sharply under President Rodrigo Duterte, an international rights watchdog said Tuesday, alleging his speeches and policies have "emboldened" the killers.

The Global Witness report said the toll was at least 113 since Duterte became president in mid-2016, while no fewer than 65 were killed in the

Turn to A3

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From A1

three years before his rule.

Campaigners who challenge powerful logging, mining and fruit growing interests have long faced deadly violence in the Philippines, but the recent increase marked a "disturbing" jump.

"Since President Duterte came to power, there's been a huge increase in the killings of land and environmental defenders including indigenous activists," senior Global Witness campaigner Ben Leather told AFP.

"The President's aggressive rhetoric against defenders, coupled with the climate of violence and impunity fostered by his drug war, has only made things worse," Leather added.

In July, the group said 30 killings in the Philippines last year made it the deadliest country in the world for land defenders—a first since the group began reporting such deaths in 2012.

The report cited a series of killings carried out since Duterte won a landslide election victory on his promise to fight crime and corruption.

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Killings of land activists spike

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■ SPIKE FROM A1

Killings of land

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"The President's aggressive rhetoric against defenders, coupled with the climate of violence and

impunity fostered by his drugs war, has only made things worse," Leather added.

"The President's brutal 'war on drugs' has fostered a culture of impunity and fear, emboldening the politically and economically powerful to use violence," the report added.

Palace spokesman Salvador Panelo rejected the allegations that the President's words had played a role in the murders, saying they were investigated to see whether they were linked to the activists' cause or a personal matter.

The report cited a series of killings carried out since Duterte won a landslide election victory on his promise to fight crime and corruption.

In 2017, a member of an envi-

ronmental watchdog group was shot dead while attempting to confiscate illegally cut timber destined for boutique hotels being built amid a tourist boom on Palawan Island, known as the country's last ecological frontier, the report said.

The victim was the 12th member of the group to be killed since 2004, it added.

A community leader in southern Mindanao was shot dead in a 2016 ambush after speaking out against a mining project run by a company headed by a businessman, who was an election campaign donor for Duterte, Global Witness said.

Global Witness said it also investigated cases of ranchers growing pineapples and bananas for fruit multinationals on land claimed by tribesmen, one of whom was killed — allegedly by security guards of a Del Monte Philippines contract grower in 2017.

In 2016, security guards of another rancher who grows bananas for Dole Philippines destroyed the houses of tribesmen claiming the land, uprooted their crops and chased them off the property with gunshots, the report said.

Del Monte Philippines, in a statement, denied the report's allegations, adding that it "vigorously promotes the welfare of stakeholders across its global supply chain."

Dole Philippines, controlled by Japan's Itochu Corp., did not immediately provide comment.

Malacañang earlier attributed the reported rise in the number of killings of land rights activists in the country to the "viciousness" of the rivalry between the claimants.

"If there are conflicts among claimants of a particular land, killings occur because of the viciousness of the rivalry between the claimants," Panelo said.

AFP AND CATHERINE VALENTE



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CIMATU HINILING SA MAMBABATAS NA MAGKAROON NG ENFORCEMENT BUREAU ANG DENR

HINILING ni Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu sa Philippine National Police (PNP) na kilalanin at tugisin ang nasa likod ng pagpatay sa impormante ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa Rizal, Nueva Ecija kamakailan.

"I hope the PNP will look deeply into this case and bring those perpetrators to justice, so that we can say that the death of yet another environmental defender has not been in vain," sabi ni Cimatu kasabay ng pagkondena sa ginawang pagpatay kay Gaudencio Arana na matagal nang DENR informant na nakatalaga sa Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) sa Muñoz, Nueva Ecija.

Si Arana na 56-taong gulang ay binari at napatay ng motorcycle-riding assailants noong gabi ng Setyembre 11, 2019.

Ayon kay CENRO Florencio Lala, si Arana ang responsable sa pagbibigay ng impormasyon ukol sa mga ilegal na gawain sa Pantaba-

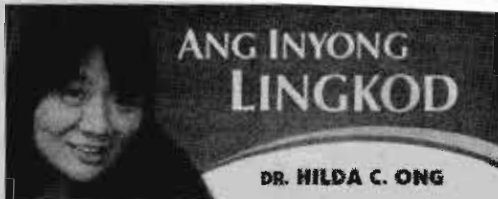
ngan at Rizal sa Nueva Ecija na humantong sa pagkumpiska sa wood products, chainsaw at iba pang gamit sa ilegal na gawain.

"This could have earned the ire of unscrupulous individuals conducting illegal activities within these municipalities," sabi pa ni Lala.

Si Arana ang ikalawang environmental worker na pinatay sa loob lamang ng isang linggo ngayong buwan.

Setyembre 4 nang tagain ng mga pinaghihinalaang illegal loggers ang forest ranger na si Bienvenido Veguilla, Jr. na naging dahilan ng pagkamatay nito sa El Nido, Palawan. Sinampahan naman ng kasong murder at paglabag sa Presidential Decree No. 705 o Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines ang limang naarestong suspek na sina Dexter Sumalague, Welmer Juancho, Felman Flores, Ricardo Fulgencio at Ruel Fulgencio.

Nangako si Cimatu na gagawin nito ang lahat upang mabigyan ng proteksyon ang DENR workers laban sa walang takot at ganid na indibid-



wal na sumisira sa kalikasan para sa kanilang pansariling interes.

Sa pagdalo ni Cimatu sa budget hearing sa House of Representatives, hiniling ng kalihim sa mga mambabatas na magpasa ng batas upang magkaroon ng Enforcement Bureau ang DENR upang tuluyang mapigilan ng ahensiya ang paglaganap ng environmental crimes tulad ng illegal logging at smuggling ng wildlife species.

Aniya, dapat lamang na makabuo ng batas ang kongreso na magbibigay ng kapangyarihan sa forest rangers

na makapagdala ng baril upang maging proteksyon ng mga ito sa illegal logging syndicates at iba pang environmental criminals.

Sa ilalim ng panukalang pagbuo ng Environmental Protection and Enforcement Bureau, papayagan ang forest rangers na magdala ng kanilang baril kapag nagsasagawa ang mga ito ng daily patrol.

Sinabi pa ni Cimatu na sa kasalukuyan ay sinasamahan ng police security ang mga forest rangers sa tuwing magpapatrolya ang mga ito sa kanilang nasasakupang lugar.





REGIONS

Starfish poses harm to Leyte corals

TACLOBAN CITY—A surge in the population of a poisonous species of starfish has been noted in Southern Leyte waters, threatening to destroy coral beds in at least five towns. An environment official describes the infestation of crown-of-thorns as “massive” and “very alarming” because the starfish destroys the breeding ground of fish. Divers have started removing the harmful starfish from corals. —STORY BY JOEY GABIETA

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CROWN-OF-THORNS PROBLEM

CORALS AT RISK AS POISONOUS STARFISH SPREADS IN S. LEYTE WATERS

By Joey Gabieta
@joeygabietaINQ

TACLOBAN CITY—An outbreak of the poisonous crown-of-thorns starfish has been reported in the waters off at least five towns in Southern Leyte, endangering the province’s coral beds.

Armando Gaviola of the provincial environment and natural resources management office described the “massive infestation” of the crown-of-thorns as “very alarming” as these destroyed corals.

“Supposedly, in a hectare of a coral reef, we can see [only] four to five crown-of-thorns. But now, there are even crown-of-thorns of close to a hundred per hectare seen in some coral reefs,” Gaviola said.

A class of starfish that become pests if their reproduction is not controlled, crown-of-thorns destroys the habitat of fish and other marine animals.

It has venomous sharp spines that look like a crown. Crown-of-



SAVING CORALS Members of the Ormoc Scuba Divers Club extract crown-of-thorns from coral beds in coastal villages in Malitbog, Southern Leyte. —CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

thorns is one of the largest kinds of starfish and can reach up to 20 inches in diameter. It preys on hard or branching corals.

Humans at risk

Crown-of-thorns is also dangerous to humans as its

prick causes stinging pain, bleeding, nausea and swelling, which may last a week.

Gaviola could not say as to how many hectares of coral reefs had been affected by crown-of-thorns but noted that the number might be “overwhelming.”

Its presence, he said, was first noticed in the sea off the towns of Malitbog, Padre Burgos, Libangon, Liloan and Limasawa as early as May.

Gaviola said his team extracted and collected these starfish species to save local corals. The team used a specialized “gun” injected with a lime solution to kill the starfish, he said.

“We have no idea yet as to the reason why there is a surge of crown-of-thorns affecting our coral reefs. Perhaps, it could be due to climatic condition, or they were brought by the current here,” he said.

“We are alarmed by the presence of these crown-of-thorns in our seas because they are killing our corals, even the hard ones, which serve as breeding ground of our fish,” he said.

The destruction of coral reefs would hurt the tourism industry of Southern Leyte, which is popular for its diving sites, local officials said. INQ



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VOICE OF A GENERATION BETRAYED

THUNBERG, FACE OF DISMAY OVER CLIMATE INACTION, TO LEADERS: HOW DARE YOU

UNITED NATIONS, UNITED STATES—An emotional Greta Thunberg tore into world leaders at a UN climate summit on Monday, accusing them of betraying her generation by failing to tackle greenhouse gas emissions, as announcements by major economies fell far short of expectations.

The Swedish teen's impassioned speech, in which she repeated the words "How dare you" four times, was the defining moment of the meeting, called by UN chief Antonio Guterres to reinvigorate the faltering Paris climate agreement.

Ahead of the conference, the United Nations issued a release saying 66 countries vowed to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, along with 10 regions, 102 cities and scores of businesses.

But presummit predictions of new, headline-grabbing commitments, particularly by the likes of China and India, failed to match reality, angering environmental groups.

All-time high emissions

The world's top scientists believe long-term temperature rise must be limited to 1.5 degrees Celsius over preindustrial levels to prevent runaway warming with catastrophic effects.

But rather than peaking, the

level of emissions being released into the atmosphere are at an all-time high, triggering global weather hazards from heat waves to intense hurricanes and raging wildfires.

New data released on Monday showed the 2019 Arctic sea ice minimum is ranked at second-lowest in the 41-year satellite record, effectively tied with 2007 and 2016.

Growing youth movement

"I shouldn't be up here. I should be back at school on the other side of the ocean," said Thunberg, 16, who has become the global face of a growing youth movement against climate inaction that mobilized millions in a worldwide strike on Friday.

"You come to us young people for hope. How dare you?" she thundered, her voice at times breaking with emotion.

Matters did not improve much as a succession of national leaders took to the podium, saying they understood the gravity of the situation but then failing to announce concrete plans.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not say explicitly whether his country would enhance its commitments made under the Paris agreement though he did say it was working on more than doubling its renew-



TEEN AT UN CLIMATE SUMMIT Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg accuses world leaders at a UN climate summit of betraying her generation by failing to tackle greenhouse gas emissions. US President Donald Trump made a brief unscheduled appearance. —REUTERS

able energy capacity.

There was also no new announcement by China, the world's biggest emitter. Senior foreign policy official Wang Yi spoke instead about the need for multilateralism, taking a veiled swipe at US President Donald Trump for pulling out of the Paris accord on taking office.

"The withdrawal of certain parties will not shake the collective will of the international community," he said.

Environmental and campaign

groups reacted with almost unanimous disappointment.

"I think Greta's impassioned cry for sanity and for actually listening and acting based on the science was ignored," Greenpeace International chief Jennifer Morgan told Agence France-Presse (AFP).

Trump surprise

Fewer than half of the 136 heads of government or state in New York this week to attend the UN General Assembly



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attended on Monday.

Trump, who announced his intent to withdraw the United States from the Paris agreement and has heaped scorn on climate science, had been expected to skip the event but made a brief unscheduled appearance, spending a few minutes in the hall, where he applauded Modi's speech and then left.

Among those absent were President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil, under whose leadership the Amazon rainforest is continuing to burn at record rates, and Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, whose government has pursued an aggressively procoal agenda.

Increased urgency

Laurence Tubiana, one of the architects of the Paris agreement, told AFP the summit that Chinese lack of action was linked to its internal politics as it prepares its next five-year-plan.

But she said that she saw progress too.

"The big win is these group of countries who are for net zero by 2050," Tubiana said. "The next step is to have them explain how they do that and what they do immediately."

Earlier, opening the summit, Guterres said: "The climate emergency is a race we are los-

ing, but it is a race we can win."

French President Emmanuel Macron invited his counterparts from Chile, Colombia and Bolivia to a meeting where \$500 million in extra funds were pledged by major donors.

Macron also lauded Russia, which ratified the Paris agreement on Monday, and said Europe must do more, repeating a vow to close coal-fired plants by 2022.

New innovation, technology

Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel, repeated recently announced pledges, including \$55 billion for a new innovation and technology package and net zero emissions by 2050.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced the United Kingdom would double its climate change funding through an overseas development program to \$14.4 billion over five years.

In his closing comments, Guterres emphasized the positives, highlighting the growing action from the corporate sector, commitments from countries to plant more than 11 billion trees.

But he added: "We need more concrete plans, more ambition from more countries and more businesses, saying the next critical landmark would come at a conference in Santiago in December. —AFP



Teen blasts world leaders over climate crisis

She noted that it would be the youth who would live the consequences of climate change if no significant action is done to prevent global warming.

"You are failing us. But young people are starting to understand your betrayal. The eyes of all future generations are upon you," she said.

"And if you choose to fail us, I say we will never forgive you. We will not let you get away with this. Right here, right now, is where we draw the line. The world is waking up. And change is coming whether you like it or not," added Thunberg.

Over the past years, Thunberg has rallied a massive youth movement against climate change after getting worldwide attention for starting a school strike outside the Swedish Parliament in 2018.

She also joined 15 other young climate activists from around the world in filing a landmark children's rights complaint against Argentina, Brazil, France, Germany and Turkey for "knowingly causing and perpetuating the climate crisis."

"You have stolen my dream, my childhood, with your empty words. And yet, I'm one of the lucky ones. People are suffering, people are dying. Entire ecosystems are collapsing. We are in the beginning of a mass extinction, and all you can talk about is money and fairy tales of economic growth?" she added.

Landmark complaint

Following her speech, Thunberg joined other young activists in filing a communication to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child against the five countries for their contribution to the climate crisis.

Joining her were youth activists from Argentina, Brazil, France, Germany, India, Marshall Islands, Palau, Nigeria, South Africa, Sweden, Tunisia

and the United States.

"Each respondent – Argentina, Brazil, France, Germany and Turkey – has known about the harmful effects of its internal and cross-border contributions to climate change for decades," read the 97-page communication, which alleged violations of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

"Despite their decades-long knowledge, each respondent has breached its human rights duties by causing and perpetuating the climate crisis and undermining international cooperation," it added.

While the five countries are not among those with the highest emissions that contribute to global warming, the petitioners said their ability to influence international cooperation makes their impact on climate change greater than their actual share of emissions.

The petitioners could not include the four highest emitters – China, United States, European Union and India – as they have yet to ratify the optional protocol of the convention that provides for mechanisms in filing communications.

In its communication, the young activists said the respondents failed to reduce emissions at the greatest possible rate and consistent with a scale that is scientifically established to protect life.

They also accused them of failing to use all available legal, diplomatic and economic tools to ensure that the major emitters are also decarbonizing at a rate and scale necessary to achieve the collective goals.

"Each respondent has failed to prevent foreseeable human rights harms caused by climate change by reducing its emissions at the 'highest possible ambition.' Each respondent is delaying the steep cuts in carbon emissions needed to protect the lives and welfare of children at home and abroad," read the petition.

The petition urged the committee to recognize that climate

change is a children's rights crisis and that the respondent countries, along with other states, "have caused and are perpetuating the climate crisis by knowingly acting in disregard of the available scientific evidence."

Climate summit

The communication was filed even as UN Secretary-General António Guterres pushed world leaders to commit to significant action plans to address the climate crisis.

"Young are here providing solutions, insisting on accountability, demanding urgent action. They are right. My generation has failed in its responsibility to protect our planet. That must change," he said in the opening of the Climate Action Summit he convened.

"The climate emergency is a race we are losing, but it is a race we can win. The climate crisis is caused by us – and the solutions must come from us. We have the tools: technology is on our side," he added.

Dozens of world leaders from governments, civil society and private sector attended the summit to present commitments to cut emissions and strengthen climate resilience.

Even United States President Donald Trump, who denies climate change and pushed for the withdrawal of the US from the Paris climate agreement, briefly dropped by the summit.

Luis Alfonso de Alba, the UN Special Envoy for the Climate Change Summit, described Trump's presence as a "positive signal," saying leaders are always welcome to join in the discussions to address the climate crisis.

"We have been repeating that climate change is not an environmental issue only. It is an issue that requires the transformation of the economy and the way we produce and consume," he said. "Without the involvement of the head of state, we will not achieve that purpose." – With AP



By JANVIC MATEO

NEW YORK CITY – A sixteen-year-old Swedish climate activist delivered an impassioned message before world leaders during the Climate Action Summit here at the United Nations headquarters

on Monday.

"How dare you?" Greta Thunberg told world leaders as she accused them of continuous inaction on the global climate crisis despite scientific evidence of its threat to the future and the youth.

"This is all wrong. I shouldn't be

up here. I should be back in school on the other side of the ocean. Yet you all come to us young people for hope. How dare you?" Thunberg, one of the leading faces of the youth climate movement, told a hushed crowd.



Pg. 2 Teen blasts world leaders over climate crisis



HOW DARE YOU: Photo taken on Sept. 3, 2019 shows a soldier putting out fires at the Nova Fronteira region in Novo Progresso, Brazil. The fires that swept parts of the Amazon this year added to global worries about a warming climate, as well as the sense of urgency at the Climate Action Summit. Inset shows youth activist Greta Thunberg addressing the summit at the United Nations in New York yesterday. Related story on Page 16.

AP, AFP



How dare you?

Can ube – a tuber synonymous with the color purple – be white? If only because the makers of the famous ube jam at the Good Shepherd in Baguio City are also respected nuns, people are willing to believe that their purple yams have turned white.

The white ube jam may even become a popular souvenir item – and a sad reminder of unusual changes in the environment. The Good Shepherd congregation, which provides for the education of underprivileged youth in the Cordilleras, said climate change had ruined the harvest of purple yam from the usual sources in Benguet, La Union and the Ilocos provinces. So the congregation had to buy 2,000 kilos of white yam instead.

Meanwhile, at the United Nations headquarters in New York during the UN Climate Action Summit on Monday, 16-year-old Swedish student Greta Thunberg scolded world leaders and joined 15 other youths in filing a landmark children's complaint against five countries, for "knowingly causing and perpetuating the climate crisis."

The respondents – Argentina, Brazil, France, Germany and Turkey

EDITORIAL

– aren't the worst offenders in the world. But the complaint brings home the message that the future is at stake – and the lives of today's younger generations – if decisive action isn't taken now against climate change.

Experts have pointed out that the Philippines is among the countries most vulnerable to climate change. In recent years, the country has been hit by powerful storm surges even in unexpected places such as Manila Bay. Cataclysmic flooding and mudslides on denuded mountains have killed and displaced thousands while severe droughts have destroyed livelihoods and threatened food security. Along the western seaboard, certain communities are sinking below water level at an alarming rate. Warming ocean temperatures are destroying coral reefs where sea creatures spawn.

So many disasters attributed to climate change have been recorded. And yet, as Greta Thunberg told the UN meeting, global action to fight climate change remains disappointing. "How dare you?" she told world leaders. Every person on the planet has a part to play in confronting climate change; it is not yet too late for decisive action.



Climate activist Greta berates world leaders

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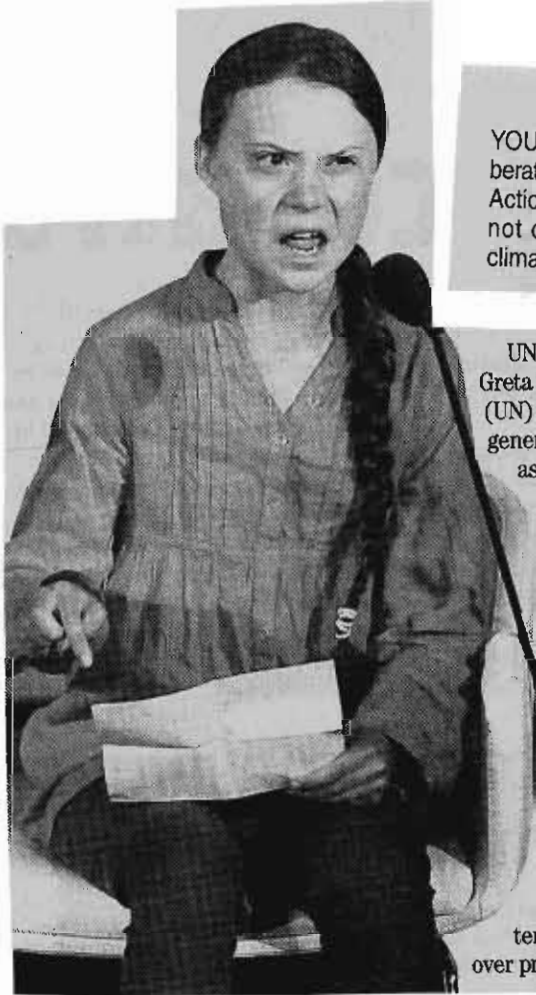
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There was also no new announcement by China, the world's biggest emitter. Senior foreign policy official Wang Yi spoke instead about the need for multilateralism, taking a veiled swipe at US President Donald Trump for pulling out of the Paris accord on taking office.

"The withdrawal of certain parties will not shake the collective will of the international community," he said.

Trump, who announced his intent to withdraw the US from the Paris agreement and has heaped scorn on climate science, had been expected to skip the event but made a brief unscheduled appearance, spending a few minutes in the hall, where he applauded Modi's speech and then left. **AFP**

THUNBERG SCOLDS WORLD LEADERS 'How dare you!'



YOUTH activist Greta Thunberg berates world leaders at UN Climate Action Summit, accusing them of not doing enough action about climate change.

AFP

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Chinese FM urges joint effort vs climate change

UNITED NATIONS (Xinhua) — Working together to address climate change concerns the future of mankind, Chinese President Xi Jinping's special representative, State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on Monday when attending the Climate Action Summit at the United Nations (UN) headquarters in New York.

Climate change is a common challenge facing all countries, Wang said, noting that "we must have the confidence to win, the perseverance to act and the sincerity to cooperate."

"We should abide by our commitments, implement the Paris Agreement and its implementation rules, and promote the

positive outcomes of this summit and the 25th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change," he said.

China is committed to green, low-carbon and sustainable development through the implementation of the new concept for development.

The international community should try to achieve the organic combination of tackling climate change and promoting economic and social development, and realize the green low-carbon transition in

the process of accelerating development.

Multilateralism, especially the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, should be upheld so as to help developing countries enhance their capacity to cope with the issue, he said.

The top Chinese diplomat said that as a responsible member of the international community, China will honor its promise and be resolute in its action and will continue to take new steps in the course of tackling climate change.

"China is committed to green, low-carbon and sustainable development through the implementation of the new concept for development," he said.



This is Earth not Mars: Blood red skies unsettle Indonesians

JAKARTA (Reuters) — While smoke from forest fires in Indonesia often simply obscures visibility with a choking haze, parts of Sumatra island recently witnessed blood red skies due to the interaction of sunlight on particles from smoke in the air.

The Southeast Asian country has spent months battling fires, often caused by slash-and-burn farming practices, as an El Niño weather pattern exacerbates the annual dry season and helps create a haze across the region.

Yunita, a resident who filmed the crimson sky on Saturday, said there had been "strong winds, and the smog was thick. The event lasted from noon until evening, breathing was quite hard on that day."

The event quickly went viral on social media, with one video notching up over 600,000 views on Instagram in three days.

In order for a red sky to occur aerosols must be present in the air, A. R. Ravishankara, a US-based scientist was cited in an article posted on the website

of *Scientific American*.

Aerosols are solid or liquid particles suspended in air that can originate from both natural processes and human activity.

The natural form can come from forest fires, dust kicked up by sandstorms, sea spray or volcanic eruptions, among other things. Indonesia's meteorology agency said the sky had turned red in

parts of Sumatra due to the "scattering of sunlight by particles floating in the air, also known as Mie scattering."

The agency said that there had been very thick smoke in the Muaro Jambi area of Sumatra last weekend with satellite analysis revealing many hot spots.

"The smoke from the forest fire was different than other areas experiencing forest fires," the agency said.



A glowing red sky is seen in Kumpoh District in Muaro Jambi Regency, Indonesia in this still image obtained from a social media video on Saturday. REUTERS



'HOW DARE YOU'

Greta Thunberg berates leaders as UN climate summit falls short

By Issam Ahmed

UNITED NATIONS, United States—An emotional Greta Thunberg tore into world leaders at a UN climate summit Monday, accusing them of betraying her generation by failing to tackle greenhouse gas emissions, as announcements fell far short of expectations.

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Environmental and campaign groups reacted with almost unanimous disappointment. "I think Greta's impassioned cry for sanity and for actually listening and acting based on the science was ignored," Greenpeace International chief Jennifer Morgan told AFP.

Trump surprise Fewer than half of the 136 heads of government or state in New York this week to attend the UN General Assembly attended on Monday. Trump, who announced his intent to withdraw the US from the Paris agreement and has heaped scorn on climate science, had been expected to skip the event but made a brief unscheduled appearance, spending a few minutes in the hall, where he applauded Modi's speech and then left.

Among those absent were President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil, under whose leadership the Amazon rainforest is continuing to burn at record rates, and Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, whose government has pursued an aggressively pro-coal agenda. Laurence Tubiana, one of the architects of the Paris agreement, told AFP the summit that Chinese lack of action was linked to its internal politics as it prepares its next five-year plan. But she said that she saw progress too.

"The big win is these group of countries who are for net zero by 2050," she said. "The next step is

to have them explain how they do that and what they do immediately."

Earlier, opening the summit, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said:

"The climate emergency is a race we are losing, but it is a race we can win." French President Emmanuel Macron invited his counterparts from Chile, Colombia and Bolivia to a meeting where \$500 million in extra funds were pledged by major donors.

Macron also lauded Russia, which ratified the Paris agreement on Monday, and said Europe must do more, repeating a vow to close coal-fired plants by 2022.

Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel, repeated recently announced pledges including \$55 billion for a new innovation and technology package and net zero emissions by 2050.

And British Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced the UK would double its climate change funding through an overseas development program to \$14.4 billion over five years.

In his closing comments, Guterres emphasized the positives, highlighting the growing action from the corporate sector, commitments from countries to plant more than 11 billion trees. But he added: "We need more concrete plans, more ambition from more countries and more businesses, saying the next critical landmark would come at a conference in Santiago in December."



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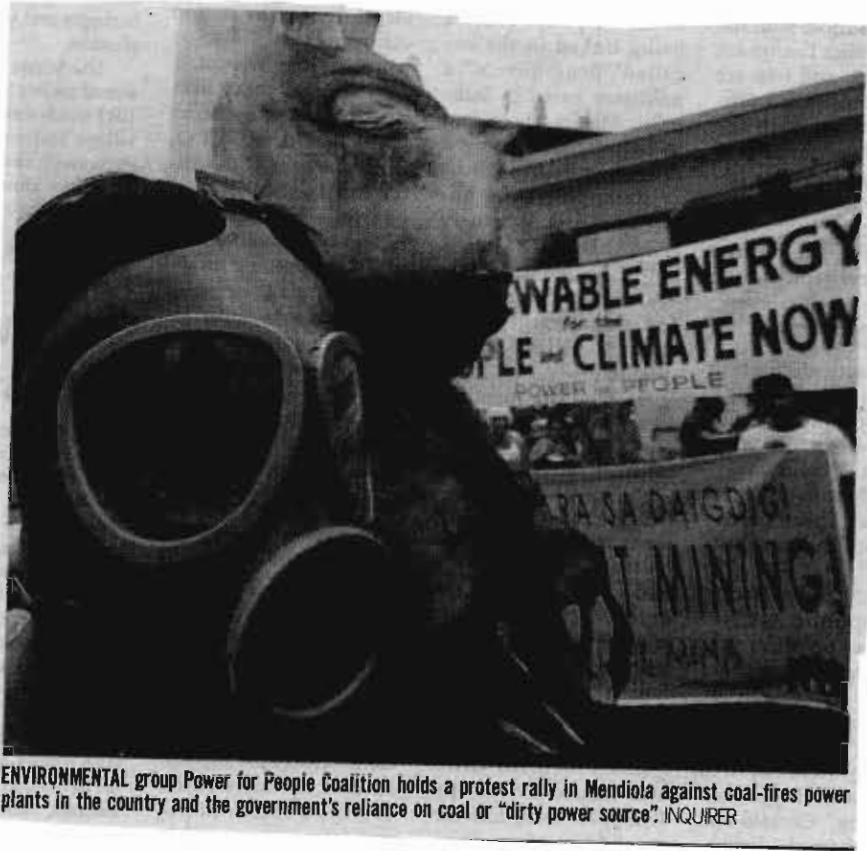
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ENVIRONMENTAL group Power for People Coalition holds a protest rally in Mendiola against coal-fires power plants in the country and the government's reliance on coal or "dirty power source". INQUIRER

MOST POTENT MOBILIZATION CHANNEL

WITH 2 BILLION PLAYERS, VIDEO GAME INDUSTRY VOWS TO GO GREEN

UNITED NATIONS—Gaming is going green and some of the biggest game companies hope players will, too.

The companies behind PlayStation, Xbox, Angry Birds, Minecraft, Twitch and other video games and platforms pledged on Monday at the United Nations to level up efforts to fight climate change and get their throngs of users involved.

The promises range from planting trees to reducing plastic packaging, from making game devices more energy efficient to incorporating environmental themes into the games themselves.

"I believe games and gamers can be a force for social change and would love to see our global community unite to help our planet survive and thrive," Sony

Interactive Entertainment CEO Jim Ryan said on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly gathering of world leaders.

Ryan said Sony's plans include outfitting the next-generation PlayStation system with a low-power, suspend-play mode. He said if one million players use it, they could save enough electricity to power 1,000 average US homes.

Playing for the planet

Some games already are set in drowning coastal cities, educate children about wildlife, or otherwise address environmental issues. Former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon anointed the Angry Birds character Red as an "honorary ambassador for green" in 2016.

But the idea of gaming green

got new visibility with Monday's commitments from 21 companies, facilitated by the UN Environment Program and showcased against the backdrop of the UN climate summit. With an estimate of more than two billion video game players globally, "this is the most powerful mobilization channel in the world," David Paul, the Marshall Islands' environment minister, told the gaming CEOs. His low-lying Pacific island homeland faces an existential threat from rising seas as the planet warms.

The "Playing for the Planet" pledges come from an industry that isn't always seen as nurturing societal good.

Parents and psychologists have fretted for years about games and other digital diversions sucking young people into

staring at screens. The United Nations World Health Organization this year recommended no more than an hour of screen time a day for children under 5, and none at all for those under 1.

Gaming company leaders say that not all screen time is of equal value. They believe their products can engage players on such serious issues as climate change.

"We try to provide entertainment with substance," Clark Stacey, CEO of WildWorks, said in an interview.

Sustainability messages

Among the initiatives:

WildWorks intends to incorporate new materials about habitat restoration and reforestation into its children's game Animal Jam, and to plant a tree for every new Animal Jam player.

Microsoft plans to make 825,000 Xbox consoles that are carbon neutral or don't cause any net increases in heat-trapping carbon dioxide and to promote real-life sustainability activities through its massive-selling game Minecraft.

Angry Birds maker Rovio Entertainment is offsetting carbon emissions generated by players charging electronic devices.

Game streaming giant Twitch, owned by Amazon, intends to spread sustainability messages through its platform.

Google's upcoming Stadia streaming service is financing research on how people can be inspired to change their behavior through games.

Strange Loop Games already has ecological issues at the

heart of its simulation game Eco. Players collaborate to build a civilization and confront its impacts on the environment. If they cut down too many trees, for example, they might kill off a species.

"They're participatory. They require the player to take action. It's not just absorbing a message from the outside," said Erin Hoffman-John, Stadia's lead designer for research and development.

"For us, it's less about telling the player about being green or avoiding climate change than letting them have that experience, letting them face that challenge themselves in a world that they care about," CEO John Krajewski said in an interview. "And then they can bring that to the real world." —AP



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MORE CALAMITIES AND ECOLOGICAL DISASTERS IF WE DON'T WAKE UP, DO MORE

AS I write this, the Bahamas is reeling from the aftereffects of Hurricane "Dorian"—similar to Tacloban when Super typhoon "Yolanda" hit and devastated the city. On the other side of the planet, the Amazon forest in South America, the lungs of the earth and the last and biggest rainforest on the planet, is burning. The debate on climate change goes on, and carbon is still being traded.

Carbon dioxide emissions have increased and everyone doesn't seem to care about the devastation. They just take the suffering and the consequences and rebuild. But how do you rebuild lives that are lost? Sure, you can rebuild the Bahamas and Tacloban, but you cannot rebuild the dead

and the Amazon forest. It will never be the same. In fact, the forests will burn and burn until there is nothing left.

Perhaps it is time to cancel all climate conferences and save on the pollution of using airplanes altogether. Perhaps it is time to just change the entire system and start walking. Get out of fossil fuel and go for solar, wind and other alternatives. But, lo and behold, Saudi Arabia's Aramco was planning the biggest IPO ever (before its refineries were attacked). Who says we are getting out of oil and coal? We never will, at least not this generation.

Did we try? Yes, a few of us did, but the big leaders just led us on and on. Build, build and

go on building; they are even building in the South China Sea, attacking the last frontier of our global commons—the oceans.

And who cares? No one. Not even China, the Philippines or America. All they want is power to navigate and move their oil and goods. Freedom of navigation, they say. Fine with me, but why don't they just save our coral colonies and our seas? After all, they replenish the Pacific Ocean day in and out. Why kill the golden goose? And for what?

Build a marine peace park and secure the future. It will absorb more than 50 percent of all global carbon dioxide and supply us with more than half of the oxygen we need. But go

on, build and live your lives in crisis after crisis, and expect more calamities to come.

At least the students in the little island of Hong Kong are fighting for liberty and freedom. Going against giant China, these young Davids may just show us the way. In a way, they have slowed down the economy and abated climate change. These kids have shown the world that they can voice their minds and, yes, that the tide is rising. How much more must be lost? How many more people must die?

Sadly, even the United Nations has lost the little teeth it has left. The G-7 and the wealthy don't give a hoot. They don't care. The most impacted will be the poor. But the rich cannot hide in their high castles. Face it; we are dying of shortage of food, water and clean air like most big cities. What is to happen to those who live in the forest? Or the species who rule the oceans? The polar bears? They will all perish, like the 10,000 who died in Tacloban.

Brace for more calamities and ecological disasters, for shortages, famine and calamities arising from the old development model.

Yes, I am mad—very mad and sad. And I will go on planting, advocating and doing what little I can do.

ANTONIO M. CLAPAROLS,
president and CEO,
JRS Business Corporation



PUSONG PANALO

ni Atty. Jose Ferdinand M. Rojas III

(Pugpapatuloy)

SA KASALUKUYAN, ang mga tirahang hindi pormal o mga squatters' area ay tahanan sa nasa isang bilyong tao sa buong mundo. At sa isang banda, ang pag-sulong kung minsan ay hindi maganda sa kalusugan. 90% ng mga taong nakatira sa mga siyudad ay lumalanghap ng hanging hindi ligtas para sa katawan.

Ang pag-unlad ng

ekonomiya at industriyalisasyon ay nakaaapekto sa ating kailangan at marami pa ang kailangang gawin upang magkaroon ng pagbabago sa kasalukuyang kalakaran. Ang tinatawag na 'global material footprint', o ang mga materyales na kinakailangan upang matugunan ang ating mga materyal na pangangailangan, ay dumoble sa dami simula

noong taong 1980. Itong henerasyon ng pagsasayang o pagtatapon ay nagpapatuloy; nasa 33% ang pagkaing nasasayang bawat taon, at ang karamihan ay sa mga mayayamang bansa.

Ang layunin para sa taong 2030 ay ang malimitahan ang global warming sa 1.5°C, maiwasan ang matitinding epekto ng climate change, at mabawasan ang global carbon emissions ng 45% kumpara sa antas noong taong 2010. Ang mga pamaha-

ANG KALAGAYAN NG MUNDO AYON SA UN

laan ng iba't ibang bansa ay kumikilos patungo sa layuning ito: Noong Mayo 2019, nasa 182 bansa at ang European Union ang nagtalaga ng kanilang pambansang kontribusyon at nagdagdag ng badyet tungo sa gawaing ito.

Mas marami rin ang mga aksiyon patungo sa pangangalaga ng ating mga dagat. Pinabubuti ang kalidad ng coastal waters, pinararami ang mga isda, at pinalalawak ang proteksiyong pangdagat simula pa noong

taong 2010.

Ayon sa Red List Index, mas marami ngayon ang mga species na nanganganib na maging extinct, sa pagdaraan ng 25 taon. Ang Red List Index ay sumusubaybay sa iba't ibang species na matatagpuan sa ating mundo. Kaugnay ito ng hindi mabuting pamamaraan sa agrikultura, climate change, at pagkasira ng mga kagubatan. Patuloy ang pagliit ng mga lugar na nasasakupan ng mga kagubatan. (ITUTULUY)



Boracay New Coast opens second homegrown hotel

By Jun Aguirre

BORACAY ISLAND – Since the controversial six-month closure in this resort island last year, the national government has been strict on the opening of hotels as it imposes environmental conservation to the highest standard.

Fortunately for the Boracay New Coast, it has been able to open second of its three homegrown hotel brands in its sprawling 150-hectare property here, the Belmont Hotel.

“Our second hotel under the Belmont Brand offers an exclusive nature experience, as it allows guests to see the island’s panoramic natural scenery from one building to another – from the vast sea to the lush mountains and hills of the island and other nearby islands,” said Raymundo Melendrez, managing director of Luxury Global Hotels and Leisure Inc. which operates Belmont Hotel under the Megaworld Hotels Corporation.

The first hotel, Savoy, was opened in 2017, while the Chancellor Hotel is currently still being constructed. Boracay New Coast’s investment in Belmont Hotel reportedly reached P2.1 billion.

Belmont Hotel Boracay has a 442 rooms that features a wide array of amenities and services that include a swimming pool and in-pool lounge, aqua spa, courtyard, two food and beverage outlets, landscaped gardens, a fitness center with shower and changing rooms, business center, function halls, meeting rooms, a full time concierge, 24-hour in-room service, dining service and complimentary shuttle services.

“Our continuing thrust to help boost tourism in the country is even gaining more momentum as we open more hotels across our tourism township, GERI (Global Estate Resources Incorporated) as the Developer of Boracay Newcoast, remains committed to help build our country through tourism developments,” said Monica Solomon, GERI president.

The first hotel, Savoy, was opened in 2017, while the Chancellor Hotel is currently still being constructed.

Belmont Hotel is the second homegrown hotel brand introduced under Megaworld opened in Newport City in 2015. Another Belmont Hotel is set to open in Iloilo Business Park by 2023.

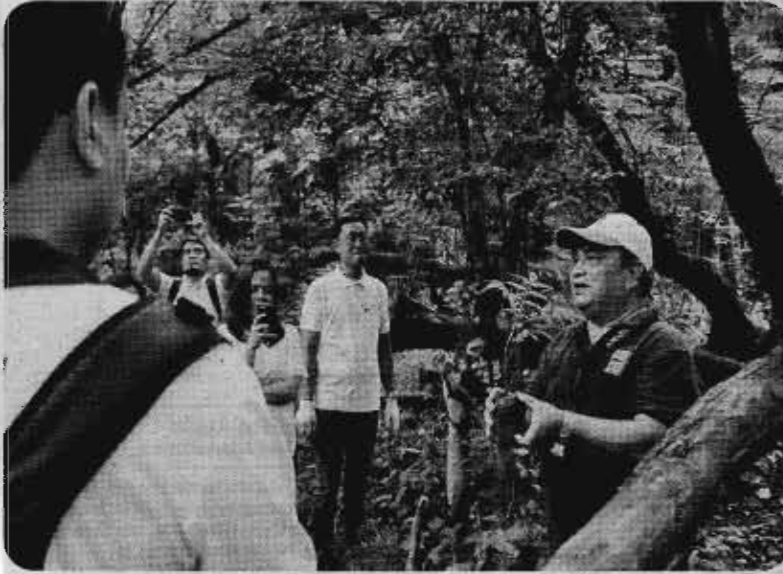
Currently, Megaworld has already opened five homegrown hotel brands – Richmond Hotels, Belmont Hotels, Savoy Hotels, Twin Lakes Hotels and Hotel Lucky Chinatown with around 3,000 hotel rooms.

In the next five years, the company will also open new homegrown hotel brands in Parañaque, Bacolod, Iloilo, Boracay and Laguna.

During the first quarter this year, Megaworld’s hotel business became the fastest growing segment of the quarter, soaring 56 percent to P574 million compared to last year’s P369 million.



TANIM NG PAG-ASA PARA SA FORTUNE LIFE



MATAGUMPAY na nakapagtanim ng 400 seedlings ang mga empleyado at ahente ng Fortune Life Insurance Company sa isang ektaryang La Mesa Nature Reserve.

Ang tree-planting activity ay isa lamang sa mga serye ng aktibidad na nakalinya para sa ika-35 anibersaryo ng kompanya na tinawag nilang Journey to 35 years.

Ang tree planting ay bilang pagpaparangal din sa ika-85 kaarawan noong Agosto 30 ni Ambassador Antonio L. Cabangon Chua, ang founder ng Fortune Life

Insurance Company na itinatag noong Disyembre 8, 1984.

Naglakad ng isang kilometro ang Fortune Life team sa bako-bako at maputik na daanan ng Nature Reserve area kung saan nila itinanim ang mga binhi. Inasistahan sila ng La Mesa foresters.

Ayon sa pamunuan ng Fortune Life, pinili nila ang La Mesa Nature Reserve bilang pagkilala at pagsuporta sa mga proyekto ni dating Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Gina Lopez, na sumakabilang buhay nitong Agosto 19.



MARAMI na ang namatay o nabalida o nasiraan ng kinabukasan dahil sa hazing o pagpapahirap bilang pintuan papasok sa isang organisasyon gaya ng fraternity, sorority, kasama na ang Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police at iba pa.

Dahil nga sa hindi magandang bunga ng hazing, biglang dumami ang nagsusulong ng karagdagang amyenda sa batas ng heinous crime o Republic Act No. 7659.

Dapat umanong isama sa listahan ng heinous crimes ang hazing upang ang mga gawa nito ay maparusahan ng pagkabilanggong 21 taon at isang araw hanggang 40 taon.

HAZING SA PMA, PNPA

Tatlo ang pinakahulug biktima ng hazing na ating natutunghayan at sa Philippine Military Academy pa sila nabiktima.

Namatay si Cadet Darwin Dormitorio habang naospital naman ang dalawang iba pang kadete.

Ang totoo, namatay rin sa hazing sa PMA sina Ace Bernabe Ekid noong 2000; Edward Domingo at Monico de Guzman noong 2001.

Nagkaroon din mismo ng hazing sa Philippine National Police Academy ngunit sa anyo namang ng pagpaparoral sex sa mga may paglabag umano sa patakaran ng PNPA at naganap ito nitong 2018.

Noong 2017 naman, nagkaroon ng mga hazing na palo ang gamit sa mga kamay at talampakan habang sagwan o paddle ang gamit sa mga hita at tuhod.

Patakaran dito ang walang sumbangan at kung magsumbong ka, patay kang future militar o pulis ka.

Subalit, marami ang hindi nakatitiis kaya ibinubuking nila ito sa publiko.

Kapag may namatay, hindi na nila pupwedeng pagtakpan at papasok na ang mga kasong kriminal dito at paglabag sa Anti-Hazing law.

42 PATAY SA KOLEHIYO, UNIBERSIDAD

Batay sa rekord ng mga napapatay sa hazing na estudyante sa mga kolehiyo at uniber-



ULTIMATUM

NI BENNY ANTIPORDA

HAZING BILANG HEINOUS CRIME

sidad, may 42 nang biktima simula nang namatay si Gonzalo Mariano Albert sa University of the Philippines, noong 1954.

Sa pribadong kolehiyo o unibersidad, pinakahuli si Horacio 'Atio' Castillo ng University of the Philippines noong 2017.

Isa sa hindi malilimutan ang pagkamatay ni Leonardo Villa sa hazing ng Aquila Legiz Fraternity ng Ateneo de Manila noong 1991 dahil nagugat dito ang pagkakabuo ng anti-hazing law.

Lumitaw rin na may 6 na namatay sa UP Dili-man; 3 sa San Beda College; 1 sa De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde; at 1 sa iba pang mga eskwela gaya ng Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila at Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Muntinlupa.

Lumalabas ding 21 o kalahati ng bilang ng mga biktima ang estudyante mula sa mga eskwelahan ng gobyerno samantalang naikalat ang ibang mga biktima sa mga pribadong eskwelahan.

Kabilang sa mga biktima si Mel Honasan, kapatid ni ex-Senator at ngayoy Information and Technology Secretary Gregorio Honasan na pinatay sa San Sebastian College - Recoletos.

May mga nakarating naman sa korte ngunit tatlo lang ang may conviction; kaso ni Raw Camaligan, ng San Beda College noong 1991; kaso ni Domingo sa Baguio Regional Trial Court; at kaso ni Marlon Villanueva noong 2006 sa UP-Los Baños at unang conviction sa Anti-Hazing law.

"Yung iba, walang kaso habang yung iba, dinirinig pa ang kaso sa mga hukuman.

NABUNTIS, NASIRA

Anak ng pitong putakte, alam ba ninyong sandamukal ang mga organisasyong naghe-hazing at rape sa mga kababaihan ang isang paboritong anyo nito?

"Mamili ka, hirap o sarap?"

Ito ang karaniwang katanungan sa mga biktima ng kababaihan.

Dahil marami ang ino-

sente, pinipili ng mga ito ang sarap.

At kasunod na nito ang pangre-rape ng pinuno at kasunod na ito ang pila-balde ng mga miyembrong kalalakihan.

Kasundo na rin ito ng pagkakabuntis o pagkasira ng kinabukasan ng mga sexual victim sa hazing.

Tumitigil sila sa pag-aaral, ang iba'y naging adik sa sex at ang iba, bumagsak sa prostitusyon at pagdodroga at pagtutulak nito.

Maraming sampol dito ang kilala ng ating UZI ngunit mas mabuting hindi na lang niya kilalanin ang mga ito para maprotektahan ang dangal ng mga biktima.

PUMIYOK PARA SA HEINOUS CRIME

Ang ina ni Atio Castillo na si Carmina Castillo ang isa sa pinakanang nagsulong ng panukafang isama sa heinous crime ang hazing at sinundan na ito ng ibang mga magulang.

Sumunod na rito ang maraming iba pa at nakisakay na rin ang mga politiko na gusto ilang sumikat.

Mayroon namang mga nambabatas na seryoso nang hindi nangangailangan ng atensyon ng publiko at tinanggap ang panukala ni Carmina Castillo upang isulong sa Kamara at Senado.

Panahon na nga talaga na ituring na ikarumad-dumal na krimen ang hazing.

At maparusahan ng 20-40 taong pagkabilanggo ang akusado.

Kung sakaling magiging batas ang panukalang pagbabalik ng parusang bitay, maaaring mabitay ang ilang gumagawa ng hazing na may kamatayan, pagbalda, pag-rape at iba pa.

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