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Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

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18 JAN 2013

DATE

MANILA BAY REHAB

DENR TO FIRMS: PUT UP SEWERAGE TREATMENT PLANTS

By **Jhesset O. Enano**
@JhessetEnanoINQ

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is giving establishments near Manila Bay and its estuaries three months to put up their own sewerage treatment plants.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said on Thursday that his agency would strictly implement the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004 to address the issues of water quality and other environmental concerns affecting the bay.

Less than two weeks before the official kickoff of the "Manila Bay Action Plan," the DENR has started checking hotels, restaurants and other commercial establishments located near the body of water for their compliance with environmental laws.

On Jan. 27, it will announce the first of several violators found to be dumping wastewater either into the bay or its waterways.

"We plan to clean up Manila Bay, including all the estero and rivers connected, the Pasig River and Laguna Lake," Cimatu said in a statement, noting that DENR offices in Metro Manila, Calabarzon region and the provinces of Pampanga and Bataan would be involved in the interagency effort.

First phase of rehab plan

The cleanup and improvement of the bay's water quality is part of the first phase of the government's proposed P42-billion rehabilitation plan.

It also includes the cleanup of estero and waterways, as well as the reduction of the level of fecal coliform and toxic discharges from establishments.

The latest water test showed that the bay's coliform level was at 330 million most probable number (MPN) per 100 milliliters. The DENR plans to reduce this to 270 MPN by yearend, closer to the acceptable level of 100 MPN.

Cimatu said the first phase of the rehabilitation would also involve the relocation of some 220,000 informal settler families who live beside waterways connected to the bay. INQ

Integrated effort needed for Manila Bay cleanup - Cimatu

The rehabilitation of Manila Bay requires an integrated effort to clean *esteros* and rivers draining into the bay, department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu said yesterday.

"All of these efforts for the cleanup are integrated. We plan to clean the Manila Bay, including all the *esteros* and rivers connected - the Pasig River and the Laguna Lake," he said.

In line with this, Cimatu said all DENR offices in Metro Manila and the Calabarzon region, as well as its provincial offices

in Pampanga and Bataan, will be involved in the rehabilitation efforts.

He also underscored the need to "clean the water source, so as to put an end to pollution."

"We need to find out where the outfalls come from individually, because in just one *estero* we can find lots of outfalls," Cimatu said, adding that "we have seen the problem closely this time, and we have already laid out a detailed solution."

He said the DENR's target is to bring down the coliform level

in all *esteros* or waterways to 100 most probable number (MPN) per 100 milliliters (ml).

He earlier said coliform levels in Manila Bay's waters have reached 350 million MPN fecal coliform bacteria per 100 ml. He compared this to Boracay's waters where coliform levels reached about one million MPN per 100 ml at most, when President Duterte dubbed the island as a "cesspool."

Cimatu also said that water concessionaires Maynilad and Manila Water, which cater to commercial and residential

establishments in Metro Manila, will also undergo inspection.

"Reforestation of mangrove areas in the Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area or LPPCHEA is also included in the rehabilitation plan," he said.

The DENR will unveil the new Manila Bay rehabilitation plan on Jan. 27 as well as the list of establishments initially found to be non-compliant with effluent standards under the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004.

- Catherine Talavera



Manila Water pushes for proper waste management

Manila Water has intensified its campaign toward proper wastewater management as it rolled out its Used Water Master Plan.

Under the program, the East Zone concessionaire targets to provide full sewer and sanitation coverage of its entire concession area in terms of used water by 2037.

"As of Nov. 31, 2018, Manila Water has installed an aggregate of 140,245 sewer connections within the East Zone since the start of its concession period, serving a total of 191,784 households," the company said.

It added that from January to November, 5,135 new sewer connections were installed, benefiting 5,849 households, while a total of 855 kilometers of sewer pipes were cleaned within the same period.

As part of proper wastewater management efforts, Manila Water said its Taguig North and Marikina North Sewage Treatment Plants

(STPs), its latest waste water facilities, are currently two of its largest sewage treatment plants.

The Taguig North STP has a capacity to treat up to 75 million liters per day (MLD) of used water from communities in Taguig and the Makati CBD, while the Marikina North STP has the capacity of cleaning up to 100 MLD of used water and was constructed to specifically withstand flooding as it sits right at the banks of Marikina River.

"Both STPs employ Sequence Batch Reactor (SBR) biological treatment process, an innovation which enables facilities built on limited land areas to more effectively treat larger volumes of used water," Manila Water said.

Manila Water currently operates and maintains 38 STPs and two septage treatment plants (SpTP), to ensure that used water collected from its customers is treated and cleaned before being discharged back into Metro Ma-

nila's waterways.

"The discharge from these treatment plants has consistently passed the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) effluent quality standards, averaging 99.8 percent compliance over that past five years as against the required 95 percent compliance set by the department," Manila Water said.

It added that more treatment plants are being constructed and more sewer networks are being laid to further increase sewer coverage within its concession.

Among these projects under construction is the Ilugin Sewage Treatment Plant in Barangay Pinagbuhatan, Pasig City, the centerpiece of the North and South Pasig Sewer System Project.

"All three STPs have a combined capacity of treating up to 275 MLD of used water, which is targeted to benefit a total of 1.6 million population," it added.

Moreover, Manila Water

said it also continuously promotes its desludging services to its customers, offering scheduled cleaning of septic tanks with no additional charges.

From January to December 2018, Manila Water was able to empty 107,338 septic tanks, benefiting around 875,000 population in the entire East Zone.

Manila Water earlier reported a nine-month net income of P4.9 billion in 2018, the same level as the year before.

Revenues went up seven percent to P14.4 billion while earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization inched up three percent to P9.4 billion amid higher billed volume and additional service connections.

Total billed volume rose four percent to 619.8 million cubic meters, driven by the strong top-line of the Manila concession and expansion of its international operating subsidiaries.

- Catherine Talavera



Manila Water's wastewater management consistent with 'Used Water Master Plan'

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA
@jonlmayuga

MANILA Water, the private water contractor and agent of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) for the East Zone, said it is constructing more treatment plants and more sewer networks to further increase sewer coverage within its concession area.

Manila Water said construction is ongoing in the Ilugin sewage treatment plant (STP) in Barangay Pinagbuhatan, Pasig City, the centerpiece of the North and South Pasig Sewer System Project.

All three STPs have a combined capacity of treating up to 275 million liters per day (MLD) of used water, targeted to benefit a total of 1.6 million people.

The company's statement was released a day after the Department of Environment and Natu-

ral Resources (DENR) held its first-ever stakeholders' meeting in preparation for the massive rehabilitation of Manila Bay.

As part of the rehabilitation, the DENR targets to make the waters of Manila Bay, particularly fronting the Bay Walk along Roxas Boulevard in Manila, between the Manila Yacht Club and US Embassy, safe for bathing by preventing the direct discharge of untreated wastewater in three *esteros* (waterways) leading out to that particular portion of Manila Bay.

This means reducing the coliform level to conform with an "SB" water-quality standard, which requires that the water supply must not have more than 100 most probable number per 100 milliliters. The highest coliform level recorded by the DENR in Manila Bay is 333 million MPN/100 ml.

MWSS Administrator Reynaldo Velasco, during a press conference

after the stakeholders' meeting, said he will ask the two private water contractors and agents of MWSS to step up measures in compliance with a decade-old Supreme Court continuing mandamus ordering various government agencies to restore Manila Bay's water to its pristine state.

Manila Water said it continues to implement proper wastewater management with its service area consistent with its Used Water Master Plan.

The company targets full sewer and sanitation coverage of its entire concession area by 2037 as far as its used water service is concerned.

In a statement, Manila Water said as of November 30, 2018, it has installed an aggregate of 140,245 sewer connections within the East Zone since the start of its concession period, serving a total of 191,784 households.

"From January to November 2018, 5,135 new sewer connections were installed, benefitting 5,849 households, while a total of 855 kilometers of sewer pipes were cleaned within the same period," Manila Water said.

The latest additions to the company's numerous wastewater facilities are two of its largest sewage treatment plants namely the Taguig North and Marikina North Sewage Treatment Plants.

The Taguig North STP has a capacity to treat up to 75 MLD of used water from communities in Taguig and the Makati Central Business District. It was constructed underneath the Liwasan ng Kagitingan at Kalikasan, a public nature park that showcases milestones in Philippine History with seven mural installations created by artist Jose Giroy.

The Marikina North STP has the capacity of cleaning up to

100 MLD of used water and was constructed to specifically withstand flooding as it sits right at the banks of the Marikina River. Both STPs employ Sequence Batch Reactor biological treatment process, an innovation that enables facilities built on limited land areas to more effectively treat larger volumes of used water.

Manila Water currently operates and maintains 38 STPs and two septage treatment plants, to ensure that used water collected from its customers is treated and cleaned before being discharged back into Metro Manila's waterways.

The company said the discharged water from these treatment plants has consistently passed DENR effluent-quality standards, averaging 99.8-percent compliance over the past five years as against the required 95-percent compliance set by the agency.

Meanwhile, Manila Water also

continuously promotes its desludging services to its customers, offering scheduled cleaning of septic tanks with no additional charges.

In helping rehabilitate Metro Manila's major three-river system—Marikina, San Juan and Pasig Rivers—Manila Water said the help and cooperation of all concerned sectors are necessary.

Designed to promote proper used-water management, the company launched its advocacy program in 2012 dubbed "Toka Toka" to encourage each individual to accomplish four simple tasks, or "toka" to help revive the city's waterways, namely proper solid-waste management and segregation; active desludging of household septic tank every five years; connecting to existing sewer lines; and educating the community on proper wastewater management and on the environment.



All hands in Manila Bay clean-up



The Environment chief underscored the need to clean the water source so as to put an end to pollution

By Kuhlín Ceslie Gacula

The Manila Bay rehabilitation project requires a coordinated and integrated effort to clean up all bodies of water draining into the bay and deal with the sources of pollution, Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu said on Thursday. "All of these efforts for the clean-up are integrated. We plan to clean the Manila Bay, including all the esteros and rivers connected—the Pasig River and the Laguna Lake," Cimatu said.

According to Cimatu, the regional offices of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Metro Manila and the Calabarzon region, as well as its provincial offices in Pampanga and Bataan, will be involved in the rehabilitation efforts.

The Environment chief underscored the need to "clean the water source so

as to put an end to pollution."

"We need to find out where the outfalls come from individually, because in just one estero we can find lots of outfalls," Cimatu pointed out.

"We have seen the problem closely this time, and we have already laid out a detailed solution," he added.

The DENR's goal, he said, is to bring down the coliform level in all esteros to 100 most probable number (MPN) per 100 milliliters (mL).

Based on the recent test conducted by the DENR, the fecal and coliform level in Manila Bay has reached 1.9 billion MPN.

Of all 11 rivers flowing to Manila Bay, two tested positive for over two billion fecal coliform level. These are the Balut area in Tondo and the Estero de San Antonio de Abad.

DENR also disclosed that other rivers also contain about 15 to 700 million MPN.

At the same time, Cimatu said water concessionaires Maynilad and Manila Water, which are catering to commercial and residential establishments in Metro Manila, will also undergo inspection.

Reforestation of mangrove areas in the Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area or LPPCHEA is also included in the rehabilitation plan, he said.

The new Manila Bay rehabilitation plan will be unveiled on 27 January, in which the DENR will also reveal the establishments initially found to be non-compliant with effluent standards under the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004.

To recall, Cimatu earlier had said the strict implementation of Republic Act 9275 or the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004 is the "key to addressing water quality issues and other environmental problems in the historic bay."

Thereupon, the DENR will strictly implement the country's clean water law to ensure the success of the effort to revive the heavily polluted Manila Bay.



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DENR seeks integrated efforts in Bay rehab

By Rio N. Araja

ENVIRONMENT Secretary Roy Cimatu on Thursday called for an integrated effort to rehabilitate Manila Bay and its tributaries.

He said the rehabilitation project would need a coordinated and integrated effort to clean-up all water bodies draining into the bay and deal with the sources of pollution.

"All of these efforts for the cleanup are integrated. We plan to clean the Manila Bay including all the *esteros* and rivers connected—the Pasig River and the Laguna Lake," Cimatu said.

He said that the regional offices of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in the National Capital Region; Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon region; provincial offices in Pampanga and Bataan shall be involved in the rehabilitation efforts.

Cimatu underscored the need to "clean the water source so as to put an end to pollution."

"We need to find out where the outfalls come from individually, because in just one *estero* we can find lots of outfalls," he raised.



How to rehab Manila Bay GOTCHA — earth lawyer Oposa JARIUS BONDOC



Twenty years ago this month a band of law students and conscientious citizens filed an ambitious lawsuit to make the government clean up Manila Bay. At the time, Jan. 1999, people already were complaining about the stench, litter, and color of the water.

For water to be swimmable, bacteria level must be no more than 100 units per cubic meter, says environment lawyer Tony Oposa. Yet Manila Bay bacteria back then was already an alarming one million units per cubic meter.

Ten years and many case twists later, the Supreme Court granted their prayer. Not only were the authorities ordered to clean up the bay but also to report quarterly their progress. Covered by that continuing mandamus of Dec. 2008 were the Depts. of Environment and Natural Resources, Interior and Local Government, Health, Budget and Management, Public Works and Highways, Education, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, PNP-Maritime Command, Coast Guard, Ports Authority, Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, Local Water Utilities Administration, Laguna Lake Development Authority, Metro Manila Development Authority, and the mayors, governors, and chairmen of cities, towns, provinces, and barangays fronting the bay. Included too were officials of locales through which rivers and streams flow and empty into it.

(Oposa led that victorious petition. Ironically it had to take a Visayan like him to work for Manila Bay's revitalization.)

Given the breadth and depth of the Supreme Court ruling, one would expect a turnaround. At last the Solid Waste Management Act, Clean Water Act, and other environment and sanitation laws would be enforced. But in the Philippines, Oposa laments, the law is only a suggestion. Successive agency heads ignored the Supreme Court order. Not one has been punished for it.

Today, after another ten years of no cleanup, Manila Bay's bacterial level is 330 million units per cubic meter. Oposa calls it an unflushed toilet bowl.

Rehabilitating the bay seems a formidable task. In complying with President Rodrigo Duterte's cleanup order, the DENR is starting with a handful of hotels in Manila and Pasay cities fronting the bay. The LLDA adds 204 establishments along the Pasig River. Housing authorities are looking into relocating squatters along the Estero de San Antonio Abad, where coliform is at 1.3 billion parts per liter.

Those are good enough starts. But for the authorities to announce that

Manila Bay would be swimmable by Christmas 2019 makes one wonder if the work would be thorough. Tens of thousands of sewage treatment plants need to be set up by subdivisions and buildings, millions of septic tanks need to be dug up in homes, and generations of bad garbage habits need to be changed. For one, the 60-year-old Manila Zoo, with no sewage treatment plant, spews human and animal waste onto the Estero de San Antonio Abad. What more the older government facilities in Mega Manila? Even the poshest new subdivisions straddling Laguna and Cavite eject raw household septage onto Laguna de Bay, part of Manila Bay's ecosystem.

Oposa suggests three focuses of the rehab: (1) garbage, the most visible dirt, (2) sewage and septage, and (3) squatter relocation.

Heroes of garbage disposal must be recognized, he says. That means residents and subdivisions that practice segregation, composting, and recycling. As well, enforcers of separation of wet and dry wastes, and operators of materials recovery facilities.

The objective is obvious: emulation and education. The authorities can then pick out the stubborn for punishment.

Sewage and septage are basically the duty of the MWSS, Oposa says. It regulates the two water concessionaires, Manila Water Co. and Maynilad Water Resources. Since 1997 both have been collecting sewerage fee along with customers' monthly bills. Those fees are supposed to be used to set up sewage treatment plants, so that only clean water flows into the Manila Bay. Oposa says they should be asked why the bacteria levels still rose from one million to 330 million units. Not one to just complain, Oposa also designed an inexpensive septage system — mini-wetlands, he calls them — applicable for homes and subdivisions.

Relocation is the duty of housing and local government officials. Thousands of hectares of government lands remain idle. Those can be used for in-city tenement housing with proper parks and sewerage.

The authorities would do well to consult Oposa on the Manila Bay rehab. He conceived the idea two decades ago, won the historic court ruling, and has expert contacts worldwide to help in the various aspects of the endeavor. Oposa is a national treasure.

Catch *Sapol* radio show, Saturdays, 8-10 a.m., DWIZ (882-AM).

Gotcha archives on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Jarius-Bondoc/1376602159218459>, or The STAR website <https://beta.philstar.com/columns/134276/gotcha>





MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

18 JAN 2010

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Loni Soriano
MANILA BULLETIN
JANUARY 18, 2010



It will take years to clean up Manila Bay

IT took six months to clean up Boracay's waters. It will take seven years to clean up Manila Bay until it becomes as clean as in Boracay today, Secretary of Agriculture Emmanuel Piñol said in a radio interview this week.

Even this estimate is an optimistic one, considering the fact that Boracay is a small island measuring about 10 square kilometers with many establishments along its shores polluting perhaps 10 square kilometers of open sea around it. Manila Bay is nearly 2,000 square kilometer of enclosed water. The pollution that flows into it via the Pasig river alone comes from over 600 square kilometers of congested neighborhoods that make up Metro Manila.

Boracay is a relatively new development, becoming the nation's top tourist attraction only recently. Manila has been the country's capital for at least 100 years and Metro Manila has been growing around it. The Pasig river flows through it, carrying all the untreated sewage from the area into the bay.

Former Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, also a former secretary of the DENR, has long called for the cleanup of the bay which, he said in radio program early this week, is now a giant "pozo negro" - a septic tank, much like President Duterte's description of Boracay last May as a "cesspool."

He said two companies have a concession from the government to clean up the sewage in their respective areas before it is released to the Pasig

river. For this, he said, they have been collecting environmental fees from the public in the last 30 years.

There are other sources of pollution around the bay - the towns and cities on its shores in Bataan, Pampanga, Bulacan, and Cavite, and along the many rivers draining into the bay. But it is Metro Manila that is the principal source of the bacterial coliform level of over 300 million Most Probable Number (MPN) per 100 milliliters of water.

DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu conducted an initial tour along the Metro Manila shore of Manila Bay and found that most of some 200 business establishments and 38 hotels did not have proper sewage treatment facilities. He found several pipes and other outlets from which dirty water flowed directly into the bay. He said Estero de San Antonio Abad in Malate, Manila, appeared to be "ground zero" of the bay pollution. He estimated that the bay must now have some 1.3 million coliform organisms from human wastes.

As in Boracay, the polluting establishments will be required to install treatment facilities before disposing of their wastes. The national government is prepared to spend around P47 billion for the cleanup. But much more may have to be spent by the polluting establishments around the bay. And the two companies supposed to have set up treatment plants with their regular collections from their customers will have to make good on their contracts to finally set them up.



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The Manila Times

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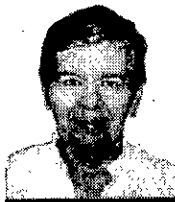
Manila Bay is an opportunity

I AM very impressed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources as well as the Department of the Interior and Local Government and the Department of Tourism joining hands to tackle the rehabilitation of Manila Bay. Right now, the beautiful bay, which is the foreground of our spectacular sunsets and the sea entrance to Manila, where galleons used to sail, people used to swim and fish, and where important historical events began, is an open sewer. Years of neglect, poor governance, ignorance and the vicissitudes of inequality have brought this about. Decades of the former have resulted in the shameful condition that Manila Bay is in today.

Not too long ago in a well-publicized decision, the Supreme Court mandated the rehabilitation of Manila Bay, a decision that was paid lip service to but nothing more. It seems political will is now present in the three departments cited above that orients them toward the target of cleaning up the bay so as to turn it into what a body of water should be — a clean, healthy, leisure water and commercial asset as well as a scenic feature of Manila.

But it will not be just a case of cleaning up per se but will involve the work of planning that must be carried out properly and humanely for it to be effective and permanent.

As everyone knows, private and commercial enterprises have been wantonly emptying untreated waste into the bay via the *esteros* and creeks that flow



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into it. This has to stop and it will if the three departments, working as one as they did in Boracay, start implementing the rules of sanitation and imposing the penalties on those who do not follow them.

But the crux of the problem will also lie in how to manage the informal settlers that are a major part of the pollution of Manila Bay. Squatting on public land, or required easements along creeks, rivers and *esteros* with substandard sanitation facilities, if any, is responsible for a large part of the pollution.

From public announcements, the departments have said something about "persuading" informal settlers to leave or be relocated. Easier said than done as it happens everywhere else in situations like that.

Here is where proper and humane planning will be needed to cut pollution. Social workers, local government officials and urban planners will be needed for expertise and an orderly master plan.

If possible, informal settlers should be relocated where they can find viable work and a viable way of life. Often, relocation sites are too desolate and too far to be acceptable. For those who are willing to be there, there should be adequate housing with the basic

services available, from transport and communication to education and medical services and a feasible way to get to their jobs and back.

Another way is to relocate the informal settlers in the urban areas that they are already settled in but away from creeks and *esteros* and not in slum-like conditions. There needs to be a serious budget and planned effort for both out-of-city and in-city relocations.

One thing that seems not to have been done enough of is for the government to buy land or use public land (but not open spaces that are needed for urban living) for low-cost housing that would accommodate former informal settlers in viable and humane housing where the sanitary standards are applied and there is no cause for pollution.

I think this suggestion may be too out-of-the-box for some who think that informal settlers must be eradicated from their midst. This attitude sometimes pervades the government circles that have to deal with this problem. The idea of using government funds to buy land to accommodate informal settlers in urban areas is thought to be extravagant and indulgent. But be that as it may, if these obsolete ideas are superseded by the acceptance that low-income people can manage to live in the city well with government investment in housing, the result will be dignified homes that will be safeguarded by those who live

in them. No one wants to live in a slum. Innovative thinking can find a way to take them out of the slums. If it costs money, it will be money well spent.

And there is money in this country to do so when one notes the waste of public funds that we see everyday — taxpayers' money diverted from public infrastructure projects to private interests with no redeeming social value, wasteful spending of public funds in ill-thought projects, the unconscionable allowances for legislators or worse, the keeping of funds without spending them for public projects, a cause for temptation from those in the know to divert them to themselves through fake projects or corruption.

The thrust of changing things that are the status quo and which are unsatisfactory and unproductive should be more innovative. Doing things better even if it shakes the status quo ideas is visionary thinking. It brings on plans and methods that deal with social conditions as they are and which can be solved by new ways of looking at them for solutions. New ideas and finding the means to implement them, be it by raising funds and putting in the long and hard work, can be a boon to the whole of society. Indeed, it is a matter of political will.

It is time that we think in more encompassing and even radical ways to solve our present environmental problems and deficiencies in basic services. We can thus improve ourselves.



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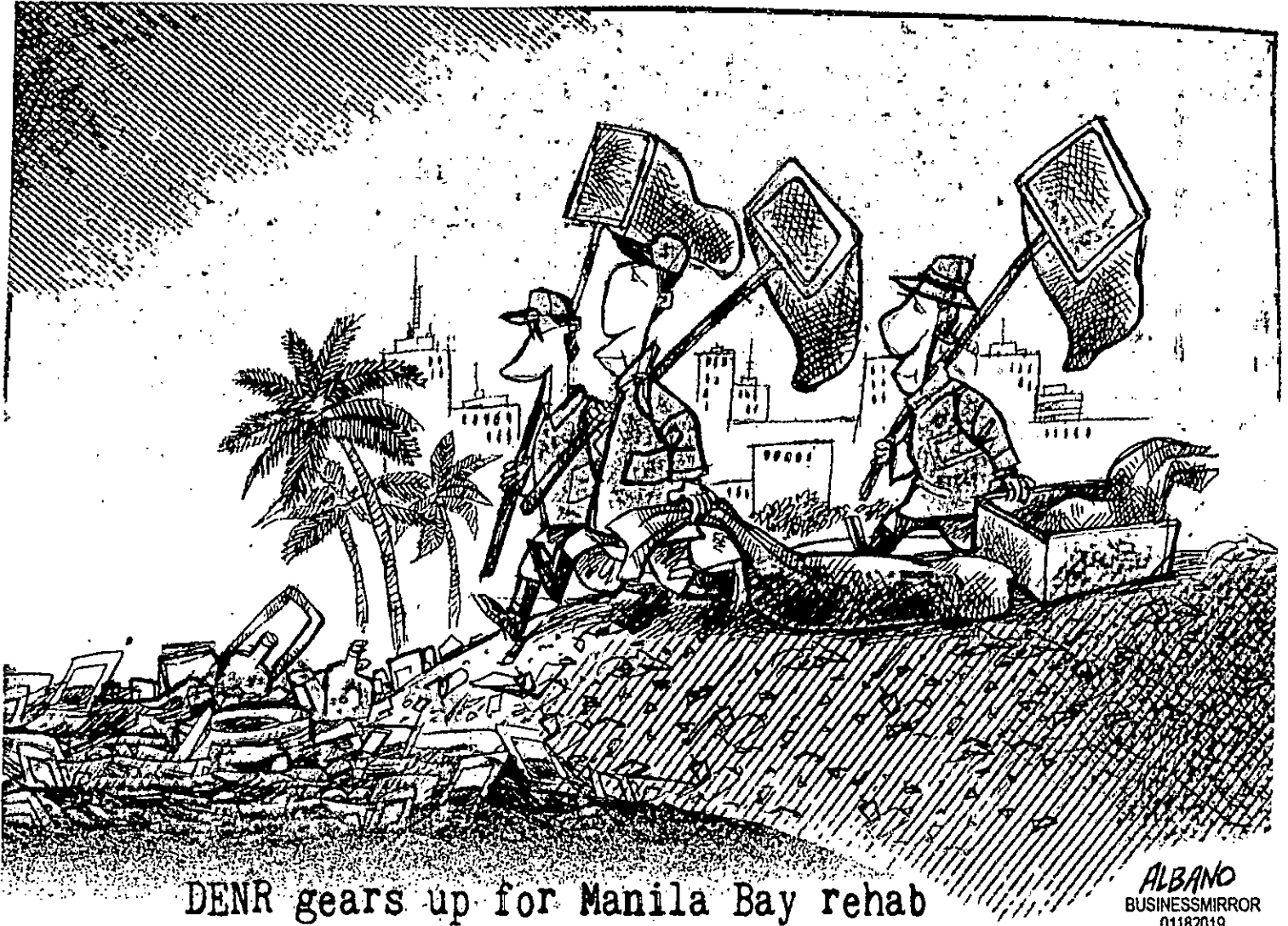
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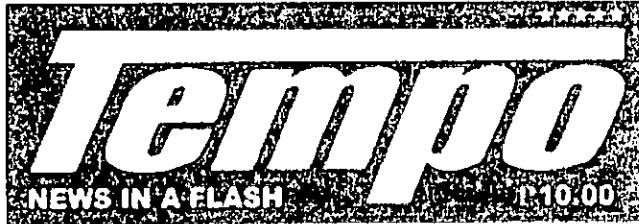
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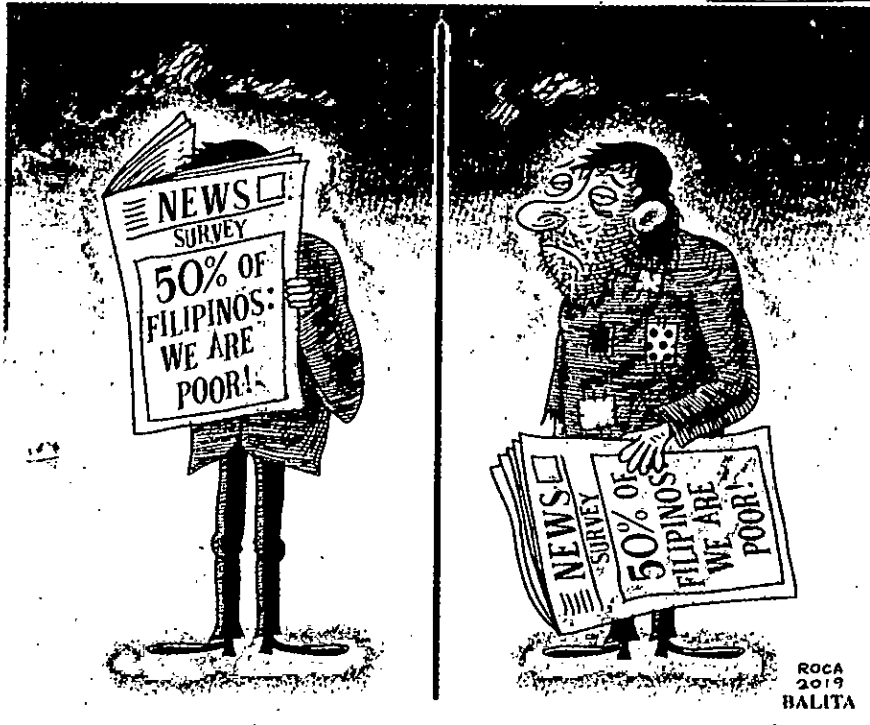
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As in Boracay, the polluting establishments will be required to install treatment facilities before disposing of their wastes. The national government is prepared to spend around P47 billion for the cleanup. But much more may have to be spent by the polluting establishments around the bay. And the two companies supposed to have set up treatment plants with their regular collections from their customers will have to make good on their contracts to finally set them up.



EDITORIAL

Taon ang bibilangan sa paglilinis ng Manila Bay

ANIM na buwan ang ginugol ng pamahalaan para malinis ang tubig sa isla ng Boracay. Aabutin ng pitong taon bago malinis ang Manila Bay hanggang sa maging kasing linis ito ng Boracay, pahayag ni Secretary of Agriculture Emmanuel Piñol sa isang panayam sa radyo ngayong linggo.

Maging ang pagtatayang ito ay isang optimistikong palagay lamang, sa pagkonsidera sa katotohanan na ang Boracay ay maliit lamang na isla na may sukat na 10 kilometro kuwadrado at natatayuan ng maraming establisyemento sa baybayin nito na nagdudulot ng polusyon sa tinatayang 10 kilometrong bahagi ng dagat sa paligid nito. Ang Manila Bay ay may humigit kumulang 2,000 kilometro kuwadrado ng tubig na nakapalibot. Habang ang polusyon na dumadaloy dito mula sa Ilog Pasig pa lamang ay nagmumula sa mahigit 600 kilometro kuwadrado ng siksikang kabahayan na bumubuo sa Metro Manila.

Umunlad ang Boracay, na kamakailan lamang ay naging pangunahing atraksiyon ng bansa. Habang ang Manila ay mahigit isang daang taon nang kabisera ng bansa at patuloy na lumalago ang Metro Manila sa paligid nito. Dumadaloy dito ang Ilog Pasig, dala ang lahat ng mga dumi mula sa mga imburnal ng mga bahay patungo sa look.

Matagal nang ipinanawagan ni dating Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, na dati ring kalihim ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), ang paglilinis ng look, na tinawag niyang malawak na pozo negro, sa isang programa sa radyo ngayong linggo – isang septic tank, katulad ng paglalarawan ni Pangulong Duterte sa Boracay nitong Mayo bilang isang “cesspool.”

Aniya, dalawang kumpanya ang binigyan ng permiso ng pamahalaan para linisin ang mga imburnal sa kanilang mga nasasakupang lugar bago ito itapon sa Ilog Pasig. Para dito umano nangongolekta ang mga ito ng environmental fees mula sa publiko sa nakalipas na 30 taon.

May iba pang pinanggagalingan ang polusyon sa paligid ng look – ang mga bayan at siyudad sa baybayin nito sa Bataan, Pampanga, Bulacan, at Cavite, kasama ng maraming mga ilog na dumadaloy patungong Manila Bay. Ngunit ang Metro Manila ang pangunahing pinanggagalingan ng bacterial coliform level na umaabot ng mahigit 300 milyong Most Probable Number (MPN) kada 100 milliliter ng tubig.

Pinasyalan na ni DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu ang baybayin ng Metro Manila at natuklasan niya na karamihan ng nasa 200 establisyemento at 38 hotel ay walang tamang sewage treatment facilities. Nakita niya ang ilang tubo at iba pang daluyan kung saan direktang dumadaloy ang maruming tubig papunta sa look. Sinabi din niya, na ang Estero de San Antonio Abad sa Malate, Maynila, ang lumalabas na “ground zero” ng polusyon sa look. Sa kanyang pagtataya mayroon na ngayong 1.3 milyong coliform organisms sa look na mula sa dumi ng tao.

Katulad sa Boracay, ipinag-utos sa mga establisyementong nagdudulot ng polusyon na magtayo ng mga treatment facilities bago itapon ang kanilang mga dumi. Handa ang pamahalaan na gumugol ng mahigit P47 bilyon para sa paglilinis. Ngunit baka higit pa rito ang kakailangang halaga ng mga establisyementong nagdudulot ng polusyon sa paligid ng Manila Bay. At ang dalawang kumpanya na dapat na nagtayo ng treatment plants mula sa kanilang regular na pangongolekta sa mga customer ay dapat na tumupad sa kanilang kontrata at maitayo ang mga ito.



BASURA SA MANILA BAY

BUKOD sa kabigha-bighaning makulay na paglubog ng araw at pagturing na isa sa pinakamagaling na harbor sa mundo, ang Manila Bay ay kilala sa kasaysayan na lugar na pinaglabanan ng Spanish-American War noong Mayo 1898.

Gayunman, ang natural nitong kagandahan at kahalagahan sa kasaysayan ay nasira sa mga taong nakalipas dahil sa plastik at lahat ng basura na nakakalat dito, at hindi kanais-nais na halimuyak ng dumi sa paligid.

Nagbanta si President Duterte na ipasasara ang mga establisimiyento sa paligid ng Manila Bay kung hindi sila kikilos upang wakasan ang mistulang walang katapusang polusyon. Batid ng lahat na nagawa na ito ng Pangulo sa pasyalan ng turista na Boracay na tinawag niyang palikuran at isinara nang anim na buwan noong isang taon habang isinasailalim sa paglilinis.

Para sa mahihirap, ang Manila Bay ang kanilang bersyon ng Boracay kung saan nila pwedeng gugulin ang maghapon at magdamag na lumalangoy tulad ng mayayaman at sikat, na walang inaalala sa panganib sa kalusugan na pwede nilang makuha sa marumi nitong tubig.

Kung gusto talaga ni Duterte na mapagbuti ang kalidad ng tubig ng Manila Bay, hindi lang establisimiyento ang dapat pagtuunan ng gobyerno ng pansin kundi ang relokasyon ng nasa 40,000 pamilya ng informal settlers na nakatira sa baybayin.

Ayon sa report ng Senado, ang lebel ng fecal coliform ay tumaas mula one million MPN/100 ml (most probable number/100 milliliters) hanggang 5 MPN/100 ml mula 1999. Nalaman din na 90



porsyento ng polusyon ay nagmula sa domestic waste na hindi lang galing sa malapit na lugar kundi sa 16 na ilog na dumidiretso sa nasabing lawa.

Nais ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na mapaliit ang coliform level nang mas mababa sa 270 MPN sa Disyembre 2019. Nagpahayag si Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu na binibigyan nila ang mga establisimiyento ng tatlong buwan para magtayo ng kanilang sewage treatment plants (STPs) at huwag itapon ang wastewater sa mga estero.

Nadismaya si Cimatu nang matuklasang ang sampol ng tubig mula Estero de San Antonio, isa sa pinakamaruming estero na konektado sa Manila Bay, ay nagtataglay ng 1.3 bilyon MPN/100 milliliter. Nalaman din nila na ang Manila Zoo na may mahigit 600 hayup ay nagtatapon ng basurang tubig sa naturang estero.

Mahirap asahan na ang mga tao na itinuring na pribado nilang palikuran ang Manila Bay buong buhay nila ay magbabago sa isang iglap. Ilipat muna sila ng tirahan at turuan ng disiplina pagkatapos. Sa kabilang banda, ang mga establisimiyento ay madaling susunod sa sasabihin ng gobyerno kung nais nilang magpatuloy ang kanilang operasyon.



Pagbabalik ng ISFs, nabisto ng PRRC sa Estero de Magdalena

MASUSING iimbestigahan ng Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) kung sino ang nasa likod ng pagbabalik ng mga informal settlers sa Estero de Magdalena ilang buwan makaraang marekober ito ng ahensiya.

Isa sa mga pangunahing daluyang-tubig ang Estero de Magdalena sanhi ng mga basurang bumabaraon na nagdidiretso sa Pasig River at Manila Bay.

Noong nakaraang Hulyo 2018, mahigit 100 informal settler families (ISFs) ang ini-relocate ng PRRC sa pabahay ng National Housing Authority (NHA) sa Trece Martires, Cavite para masimulan ang konstruksiyon ng P17 milyong linear park kasabay ng serye ng clearing relocation at clean-up operations at public awareness campaigns sa inter-agency partners nito.

Nitong Enero 7, 2019, nagsagawa ang River Pa-

trols ng PRRC ng clean-up operation sa Estero de Magdalena kung saan daang sako ng basura ang nakolekta. Pagkaraan ng tatlong araw, nakita ng mga tauhan ng PRRC ang tambak ng basura at may mga bagong istruktura na itinayo ng ISFs sa Estero de Magdalena.

Iniutos na ni PRRC Executive Director Jose Antonio 'Ka Pepeton' Goitia na alamin kung sino ang nasa likod ng pagtayo ng istruktura sa estero sabay diing mananagot ang mga opisyal ng barangay na nagpabaya sa kanilang tungkulin.

Nakipag-ugnayan na rin si PRRC Operations Director Anshari Lomodag, Jr., local inter-agency committee (LIAC) ng Maynila para gibain ang mga istrukturang itinayo ng nagsibalik na ISFs na nakapag-delay sa development project ng PRRC sa Estero de Magdalena.



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

ISFs NAGSIPAGBALIKAN SA ESTERO DE MAGDALENA

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"Mahalaga ang malinis na Estero de Magdalena na makapag-aambag nang malaki sa rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay na iniutos ng ating mahal na Pangulong Rodrigo Roa sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)," sabi ni Goitia na pinangunahan ang PRRC sa inter-agency clean-up operation sa Estero de Magdalena kahapon, kung saan sinita niya ang isang lalaking nahuli sa aktong nagtatapon ng basura sa estero.

"Pasintabi sa may mga kasamang bata ngunit galit po talaga kami sa mga estororistang katulad nito. Magsilbing leksiyon sana ito sa mga makakapat ang mukhang lumabag sa batas at magtapon sa estero at ilog, kahit pa nakikita na nilang ang mga ito ay pinagtutulungan na nating limisin at mai-saayos," dagdag ni Goitia.



PAGBABALIK NG ISFs, NABISTO NG PRRC SA ESTERO DE MAGDALENA

MASUSING iimbestigahan ng Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) kung sino ang nasa likod ng pagbabalik ng mga informal settlers sa Estero de Magdalena ilang buwan makaraang marekober ito ng ahensiya.

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"Pasintabi sa may mga kasamang bata ngunit galit po talaga kami sa mga estero-teristang katulad nito. Magsilbing leksiyon sana ito sa mga makakapal ang mukhang lumabag sa batas at magtapon sa estero at ilog kahit pa nakikita na nilang ang mga ito ay pinagtutulungan na nating linisin at maisaayos," dagdag ni Goitia. "Magiging posibleng maiayos ang Pasig River, Manila Bay at lahat ng mga estero basta magtulungan tayo. Huwag pasaway at sinungaling!"



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

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18 JAN 2010

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BOC'S NEXT STEP

PEOPLE BEHIND IMPORTATION OF KOREAN TRASH TO BE CHARGED

By Jigger J. Jerusalem
@inqmindanao

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—A customs official here said charges would be filed against those behind the importation of at least 6,500 tons of plastic trash following the controversial cargo's return to Pyeongtaek City in South Korea.

"Charges will definitely be filed," said John Simon, Mindanao Container Terminal (MCT) customs collector.

Simon said it was now up to the National Bureau of Investigation to gather evidence and establish the identity of the perpetrators.

Raw material

He said whoever would be found to have violated the law would face charges.

Simon said the regional Bureau of Customs (BOC) office would extend all assistance that the regional office of the NBI would need so that its report would be thorough and complete.

The plastic garbage arrived at the MCT in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, from Pyeongtaek City, South Korea, in two batches last year to be used supposedly as raw material for a recycling facility owned and operated by Verde Soko Philippines Industrial Corp.

But the shipment was put on hold by authorities after the company failed to comply with requirements for permits from both the BOC and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Environmental Management Bureau (EMB).

EMB permit

Simon said the second shipment that arrived in October was declared as "plastic synthetic flakes" but contained all sorts of discarded plastic materials.

Lawyer Abbas Lao, EMB regional legal officer, said the EMB had not issued any import permit to Verde Soko as the firm has yet to comply with all the requirements.

The import permit must be issued by EMB to Verde Soko before the company was allowed to bring the plastic trash to the Philippines.

Verde Soko's recycling plant is located inside Phividec Industrial Estate, a government-managed economic zone, in the village of Sta. Cruz, Tagoloan town.

On Sunday, Jan. 13, the 51 containers, or 1,500 metric tons, of trash that were stored inside Phividec Industrial Estate facility in Tagoloan were shipped back to South Korea.

Simon said MV Kalliroe V8525 that carried the garbage left the MCT port late on Sunday night and was expected to reach its country of origin after 10 days.

The reshipment, he said, was realized through an agreement between the South Korean and Philippine governments last month.

South Korea promised to shoulder all the expenses for the cargo's return.

The remaining garbage being stored at Verde Soko compound will be shipped back to South Korea by the end of January or early in February, according to Simon.



TRASH TALK Members of the environmental group EcoWaste Coalition protest the entry of garbage from South Korea at the Mindanao Container Terminal port in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, in a rally on Jan. 13. —JIGGER J. JERUSALEM

Documents forged

At a committee hearing by the Misamis Oriental provincial board on Nov. 15, Neil Alburo, Verde Soko president, gave assurance that his company would ship the plastic trash back to South Korea.

In a statement posted on its website, the South Korean Embassy in Manila quoted its Ministry of Environment and the Korean Customs Services as confirming that the trash that was exported to the Philippines "had not gone through proper recycling process and were different from its export declaration."

The statement said "documents required for export was forged. They have taken measures against related violations of law." INQ



Gov't starts fuel marking next month

By MARY GRACE PADIN

The government is set to launch next month the fuel marking system, which is expected to help plug tax leakages caused by the smuggling of oil into the country, according to the Department of Finance (DOF).

In an interview, Finance Undersecretary Antonette Tionko said the pilot implementation of the fuel marking scheme is expected to commence in early February after the government has finished testing the fuel markers.

The program will run first in Metro Manila before being rolled out nationwide in March.

"Hopefully by next month, first week of February, we will launch it already. We will test first, (then) eventually (imple-

ment) nationwide. We will do it first here, the first marking," Tionko told reporters.

Currently, Tionko said the joint venture of SICPA-SA and SGS Philippines, the winning bidder for the fuel marking program, is already going around oil refineries to assess the fuel marker.

This is done in cooperation with the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to secure

the necessary clearances for the use of the fuel marker.

"Right now, they are testing the marker itself, the acceptability of the marker. So that's in discussion with the DOE, the DENR. Once it's accepted, we will do our first marking," Tionko said.

The DOF official expressed confidence that the test would be done quickly, as the marker does not affect the composition of fuel.

Turn to B10

Gov't starts... From B9

"It should be fast. I don't see any problem because it's not an additive. It doesn't have an effect on the fuel," she said.

Finance Undersecretary Karl Kendrick Chua, meanwhile, assured that the cost of the fuel marker would not

yet be passed on to importers and manufacturers in the first year of implementation, as the government has allotted P2 billion for the program.

"The first year, it's subsidized. There's a P2 billion allocation. In the succeeding

years, it will be passed on to the industry and they may pass it on to the consumers," Chua said.

The markers cost P0.06 centavos per liter of fuel.

Fuel marking will be required on all petroleum products that are refined, manufactured, or imported into the

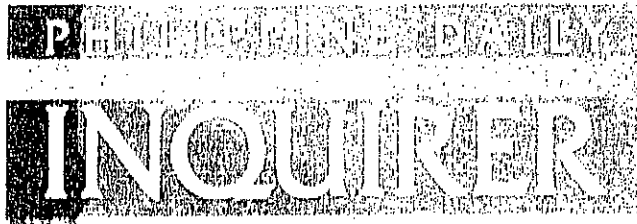
Philippines that are subject to the payment of duties and taxes – such as, but not limited to gasoline, denatured alcohol used for motive power, kerosene, and diesel fuel oil – after the taxes and duties have been paid.

The system will also monitor all locally-refined finished oil

products to ensure correct payment of corresponding excise taxes and value-added tax.

Earlier, the Department of

Finance said fuel marking is expected to plug as much as P44 billion in revenues lost annually due to oil smuggling.



18 JAN 2013

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'MINAHANG BAYAN' CYANIDE BARRED IN SMALL-SCALE MINE IN ITOGON

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—Small-scale miners are now tasked with seeking clean technologies for extracting gold from ore once they are cleared to operate the 64-hectare "Minahang Bayan" (people's mine) that was approved by the provincial mining and regulatory board (PMRB) in Itogon town, Benguet province.

The PMRB guidelines for mining contract applications, which were expected to be approved next week, ban the use of toxic chemicals such as cyanide.

On Jan. 15, the PMRB opened the first (not second as earlier reported) Minahang Bayan at Barangay Loacan in Itogon, following the clearance issued last month by Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu.

The opening paved the way for small-scale miners to apply for mining contracts, amid a national crackdown on unlicensed pocket miners.

Ore processing

Cimatu earlier said the shutdown of illegal mine tunnels, which he started in Baguio City in February last year, addressed pollution attributed to the unregulated processing of ore.

Cyanide, which can be easily obtained, is mixed with finely crushed ore in leaching tanks and vats to bind fine gold particles.

This process doubles the recovery rate compared to traditional sluicing (gold extraction).

Most processing plants, however, do not have tailings ponds to treat or collect mine waste.

There has been evidence that some miners dump toxic waste into creeks or rivers, based on an inspection report of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Miners' role

The 30,000-member Benguet Federation of Small-Scale Miners has taken part in the campaign to ban cyanide and mercury use in mines.

The group manages the P25-million integrated gold-copper mineral processing plant at Sitio Basil in Barangay Gumatdang, also in Itogon.

The plant was developed by the University of the Philippines and the Department of Science and Technology in 2017.

—KARLSTON LAPNITEN INQ



THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900



MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

18 JAN 2010
DATE

Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

Company that dumped medical waste into sea faces suspension

By MINERVA BC NEWMAN

CEBU CITY - The Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Central Visayas recommended to EMB-Manila the suspension of the operation of the Davao City Environmental Care, Inc. (DCECI) for allegedly dumping medical waste into the Mactan Channel last Jan. 5.

DCECI is a treatment storage and disposal (TSD) facility and health care waste service provider that was contracted by Chong Hua hospital, UC-Medical Center and St. Vincent Hospital.

EMB Regional Director Willian Cunado said Wednesday that after evaluating of the medical waste samples and inspecting

DCECI's facility, DENR and EMB reached the decision to recommend for the firm's suspension.

"The existing wastes at the DCECI TSD must be treated at its facility and could no longer be disposed while it is under suspension. All valid permits to transport (PTT) issued to DCECI are also suspended pending the resolution of this case," Cunado said.

According to DENR Regional Executive Director Gilbert Gonzales, the Hazardous Waste Management Act (Republic Act 6969), the responsibility of managing hazardous wastes falls on the generator of the wastes, in this case the hospitals.

Gonzales said that during conference with DCECI, Chong Hua and other hospitals in Cebu, he advised them to find another accredited TSD service provider.

He recommended the Aquilini Mactan

Renewable Energy, Inc. (AMREI); Pollution Abatement Systems Specialist, Inc. (PASSI) and the Medclean Management Solutions, Inc. (MMSI).

Cunado said there are TSD establishments that can handle the volume of medical waste generated by all the hospitals in Cebu, which is only at 15 tons per day.

"Medclean alone can accommodate 75 tons of hazardous wastes per day," he said.

Gonzales expected the suspension to be approved and all issues settled within the month.



Climate commission to certify 'green job' creating firms

THE Climate Change Commission (CCC) is drafting guidelines for assessing and certifying employers taking part in green job initiatives, a program which it hopes to pilot-test within the year.

During the Barangay Walang Iwanan (BWI) 2019 Summit on Thursday, CCC Division Chief for Policy Research and Development Jerome E. Ilagan said that CCC, "is now developing a standards and certification system in line with the incentives for businesses and enterprises promoting green jobs."

These guidelines are in line with Republic Act 10771 or Philip-

pine Green Jobs Act of 2016. The Philippine Green Jobs Act aims to incentivize businesses who generate and sustain green jobs as certified by the CCC.

"As of this moment, we are gearing up to have the draft assessment and certification standards to be pilot-tested to further substantiate the draft guidelines to ensure that everyone is consulted in the process of finalizing and adapting the guidelines," he said.

Mr. Ilagan said the certification process takes in input from various government agencies including the Department of Environment and National

Resources (DENR), the Department of Agriculture (DA), the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the Department of Labor and Employment (DoLE), and the Department of Science and Technology (DoST) among others.

International Labor Organization (ILO) Manila Consultant Gwyneth Anne Palmos said that the organization is also helping the CCC regarding polishing the guidelines.

"The plan is to pilot-test the guidelines so we can see if we can further tweak it so we fully operationalize it," she told *BusinessWorld* on Thursday.

Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) Board Member and Federation of Free Workers (FFW) Vice president Antonio Isidro C. Asper said green jobs should be part of a company's corporate vision as opposed to only creating a few projects dedicated to it.

"When companies get involved in environmentally-friendly actions, they should not get involved only once or twice but they should make it part of their corporate operations and objectives," he said during the BWI summit on Thursday. — **Gillian M. Cortez**



See you in court, citizens tell governments on climate change

BY MEGAN ROWLING

BARCELONA. — Environmentalists in France and Ireland are pushing forward with legal cases aimed at forcing their governments to step up action on climate change, motivated by a 2018 flagship ruling that the Netherlands must cut emissions faster to keep its people safe.

In October, a Dutch appeals court said the government had “done too little to prevent the dangers of climate change and is doing too little to catch up,” ordering it to ensure planet-warming emissions are at least 25 percent below 1990 levels by the end of 2020.

Tessa Khan, a lawyer with the Urgenda Foundation which brought the Dutch case on behalf of nearly 900 citizens, said this and other ongoing climate legal actions are based on the principle that governments must meet their obligations under human rights law and the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change.

“(These cases) all spring from the same sort of inspiration and the broad notion that our governments have the duty to protect us from threats of this scale that they have contributed to knowingly,” said Khan, who is co-director of the Climate Litigation Network.

In France, four non-governmental groups, including Greenpeace and Oxfam, fired the starting gun on Dec. 17.

They sent a “preliminary request for compensation” in a 41-page letter to the French prime minister and a dozen government ministers, denouncing the state for failing to take concrete and effective measures to combat climate change.

The government has two

months to respond, and if it fails to give a satisfactory answer, the groups are preparing to file a full legal action with the Paris Administrative Court in March.

Armelle Le Comte, climate and energy advocacy manager at Oxfam France, said the ripple of lawsuits on climate action around the world - from Europe and North America to Pakistan and Colombia - reflected growing urgency as the impacts of extreme weather and rising seas become more visible.

Governments, including France, have talked a lot about tackling climate change, but have not done enough in practice, she noted.

“So I think it is not surprising that more citizens, charities and NGOs ... decide that legal action is maybe the answer,” she said.

CELEBS ON CAM

In the meantime, the NGOs have been raising awareness about the case and the need for stronger climate action in France through a YouTube video featuring celebrities such as actress Juliette Binoche, and writer and film director Cyril Dion.

They also launched an online petition in support of what they are calling the “Case of the Century” that has garnered nearly 2.1 million signatures in about a month.

Le Comte said wide public support for the legal action was important in providing a sense of legitimacy to the approach.

The case is particularly poignant in France, which has been rocked in recent months by “yellow vest” protests over social inequality and the high cost of living that were initially sparked by planned hikes in fuel tax.

French President Emmanuel

Macron launched a national policy debate this week that includes how the country could shift to using more clean energy.

Urgenda’s Khan said the court cases were aimed at ensuring emissions targets are met, not telling states how to do it.

“Then it’s up to the governments and the public to make sure the policies that are put in place are ones that ensure a just (energy) transition and ... the poorest aren’t the ones who bear the burden of that transition,” she said.

Oxfam’s Le Comte said the “Case of the Century” social media campaign was meant to provide more information, especially to young people, on the measures that could be taken.

IRISH EMISSIONS RISE

In Ireland, backers of the climate change case, scheduled to begin in the High Court on Jan. 22, are organizing a children’s rally in Dublin on Saturday to urge leaders that “2019 must be the year of ambitious climate action.”

About 12,600 members of the public have backed “Climate Case Ireland” with online messages of support. Spokeswoman Sadhbh O Neill said awareness was growing in the country which has among the highest emissions per capita in the European Union.

“That helps us show the court that we have standing, that we’re not doing it in a self-interested way and that we are trying to be representative of concerned citizens,” she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Friends of the Irish Environment, a company set up by environmental activists, will argue in

the case that the government’s approval of the National Mitigation Plan in 2017 violated national legislation on climate action, as well as its constitution and human rights obligations.

It will also claim the plan falls far short of the steps required by the Paris Agreement.

O Neill noted that Ireland’s emissions have risen since 2014, as its economy recovered from the 2008 financial crisis, and its dairy industry expanded.

A spokesman for Ireland’s Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment said by email that the government would defend the case, but noted the National Mitigation Plan recognized a detailed roadmap would be required to decarbonize the economy.

That is now being put in place, he added, and includes a government-wide climate action plan “intended to make Ireland a leader in responding to climate disruption.”

The verdict in the Irish case, a judicial review, is expected to be issued in a few months, while the French legal process could last two to three years, Le Comte said.

In the Netherlands, it took three years for an initial ruling to be confirmed by the appeals court, and the government said in November it would request a review of the judgment.

Khan said one key advantage of pursuing states in court was judicial scrutiny of the evidence on climate change.

“Just by putting the facts on the record - that in itself is a really important communication tool, and helps to mobilize the public around climate change,” she said. — Reuters



Wider access to green bonds pushed

THE government plans to mainstream access to green financing or the funding of investments that encourage sustainable development and expand the coverage to cover sectors like transportation, infrastructure, and commercial banking.

Carlos Dominguez, Department of Finance secretary, was referring to Asean Green Bonds or bonds and sukuk (Islamic bonds) that comply with the Asean Green Bond Standards developed through consultations with the International Capital Market Associations, capital regulators and industry players

in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Proceeds from the issuance of Asean Green Bonds are exclusively applied to finance or refinance eligible green projects.

Dominguez said during the forum on Green Finance Towards a Sustainable Philippines held yesterday the government wants to mainstream access to green financing through the banks and microfinance institutions.

He said government is also exploring possible funding of various public-private partnerships or PPPs through green financing.

Dominguez said green financ-

ing has turned into an effective weapon for countries, especially the highly vulnerable ones like the Philippines, to mobilize investments for both the government and private sector to carry out a broad list of initiatives, ranging from the wider use of renewable energy to improving the resilience of local communities to erratic weather patterns that lead to devastating natural calamities.

Benjamin Diokno, Department of Budget and Management secretary, in the same forum said making funding available for green investments is a key component in achieving international commit-

ments and pushing for sustainable development.

Diokno said climate change expenditures have reached six to seven percent of the total national budget under the Duterte administration.

"Most of these funds are allocated in the Department of Agriculture for climate (resilient) crops and food security programs, in the Department of Natural Resources for research and implementation of climate change laws and policies, and in the Department of Public Works and Highways for flood control and seawall projects," he said.



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Coalition alarmed by tarp use

By Joel E. Zurbano

ENVIRONMENTALIST group Ecowaste Coalition on Thursday expressed alarm over the countless use of tarpaulins sprouted all over the metropolis ahead of the official campaign period for the upcoming midterm polls.

"Tarpaulins promoting the names of politicians eyeing elective positions have replaced Christmas decorations that used to adorn our streets. You can see the ubiquitous tarps hanging on electric posts, phone and TV cables, and on trees," said Ecowaste zero waste campaigner Daniel Alejandro.

"The 'battle of the tarpaulins' is more obvious in communities that are set to observe the feast of Sto. Niño this coming Sunday. The whole stretch of Jesus Street in Pandacan, Manila, for example, is dotted with tarpaulins of mostly local candidates that are competing for voters' attention and support," said Alejandro.

"Politicians and their supporters have without doubt exploited the loopholes in the election law as regards premature campaigning. The lax regulation has emboldened political wannabes and their supporters to mass produce tarpaulins and to put them up anywhere even in restricted and unsafe places," he added.

The group also underscored the waste and toxicity issues resulting from the wild use of propaganda tarpaulins.

"Time will come when a tarpaulin has to be removed and disposed of. Even if reused for other purposes, it will still be thrown away after it has worn out or is no longer needed. These tarps, sooner or later, will get buried or burned somewhere," said Thony Dizon, the group's chemical safety campaigner.

"Sad to say, tarpaulins are not harmless materials. Mostly made of polyvinyl chloride plastic, tarpaulins may contain toxic chemicals such as cadmium, lead and phthalates that can leach and contaminate the surroundings," he explained.



Barangay execs hit for return of estero settlers

By ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ

The Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) is conducting a thorough investigation of the alleged construction of informal settlements along the Estero de Magdalena in Tondo, Manila, months after it has been recovered by authorities.

Estero de Magdalena is one of the priority waterways of the PRRC due to the huge volume of solid waste clogging and polluting Pasig River.

In July 2018, PRRC relocated more than a hundred informal settler families (ISFs) to Trece Martires, Cavite in order to start the construction of the park. The project also involves clearing, relocation, and clean-up operations, as well as public awareness campaigns with

its inter-agency partners.

Last Jan. 7, PRRC's river patrols conducted an intensive clean-up in Estero de Magdalena and were able to collect hundreds of sacks of garbage.

However, in Jan. 10, during a site inspection, the PRRC personnel saw huge volumes of wastes and new structures allegedly constructed by the ISFs on the easements.

With this, PRRC Executive Director Jose Antonio Goitia ordered the immediate investigation to track down the persons allegedly accountable for allowing the construction of the informal settlements along the waterways.

He also emphasized the duties and responsibilities of respective barangay officials toward solid waste management, as well as the sanctions awaiting them for neglect of duty.

PRRC Operations Director Anshari Lomodag Jr. has coordinated with the Manila City's local inter-agency committee to conduct dismantling operations and possible summary eviction of the alleged ISF returnees whose presence delays the Estero de Magdalena development project.



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Tourist arrival sa Boracay, humina

ILOILO CITY - Bumagsak ng 50 porsiyento ang dumagsang turista sa Boracay Island kasunod na rin ng paghihigpit at rehabilitasyon ng pamahalaan sa lugar.

Sa datos ng Department of Tourism (DOT), natukoy na aabot lamang ng 930,363 na turista ang bumisita sa isla

nitong nakaraang taon.

Paliwanag ng DOT, mas mababa ito kumpara sa mahigit sa dalawang milyong turistang dumayo sa nasabing isla noong 2017.

"That's a difference of more than 1 million tourists," ayon kay DOT regional director for Western Visayas

Helen Catalbas,

Bukod dito, bumaba rin ng kahalating porsiyento ang nakolektang buwis ng pamahalaan nang maitala ang P28 bilyong koleksyon noong 2018 na mas mababa kumpara noong 2017 sa nakolektang P56.4 bilyon.

Tara Yap



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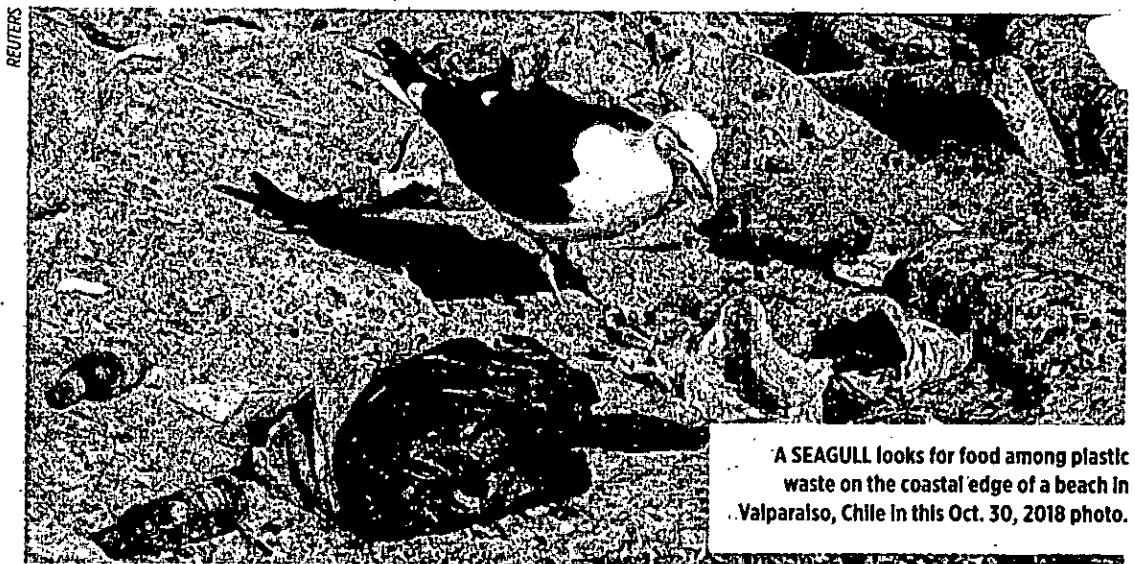
Plastics, consumer goods makers in \$1.5-B pledge to rein in waste

FRANKFURT — Global companies including BASF, DowDuPont, Procter & Gamble and SABIC have formed an alliance to fight plastic waste, pledging to spend \$1.5 billion over the next five years.

The Alliance to End Plastic Waste (AEPW), unveiled by its 28 founding companies on Wednesday, convened amid reports of a worsening environmental crisis from about 8 million tons of plastic waste that end up in oceans every year, which has triggered bans on some single-use plastic products.

Current alliance members have committed more than \$1 billion to the project over the next five years, while money that additional members will pledge should take the five-year budget to about \$1.5 billion, a spokesman said. The funds will be spent on waste collection infrastructure mainly in Africa and Asia, on technology for recycling and re-use of waste, on educating governments as well as local communities, and on cleaning up highly polluted areas.

The alliance (<https://endplasticwaste.org/answers>), currently



A SEAGULL looks for food among plastic waste on the coastal edge of a beach in Valparaiso, Chile in this Oct. 30, 2018 photo.

made up of plastics makers for the most part, said about 90% of global marine litter comes from just 10 rivers and over half of the land-based plastic litter leaking into oceans originates from five Asian countries: China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

AEPW counts none of China's major plastics and chemical groups — Sinochem, ChemChina and Sinopec — among its mem-

bers but the spokesman said discussions to enlist Chinese players were continuing.

IHS Markit said in an October report that 59% of global plastic waste comes from packaging.

Amid rising consumer concern over plastic waste, consumer goods heavyweights such as Kraft Heinz, Nestlé, Unilever and Henkel have individually pledged to make their packaging recyclable, reusable or com-

postable by 2025 over the last two years.

Procter & Gamble and Henkel are currently the only branded consumer goods makers among AEPW members but the alliance's spokesman said more would likely join over the next few weeks.

The location of the alliance's headquarters had not yet been decided and the search for a chief executive was ongoing, the spokesman added. — *Reuters*