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IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



STRATEGIC
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Collect rain water to help lessen demand

By **ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ**

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has urged Metro Manila residents to take advantage of the rain showers occurring in the afternoon or evening, by collecting and recycling water for non-essential uses, such as car washing, watering of plants, and toilet flushing.

"Angat Dam can still benefit from the rains falling outside its watershed if these are collected for non-essential uses such as for carwashing and flushing of toilets," DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu said.

DENR made the call amid insufficient rain over the 62,300-hectare Angat Watershed Reservation

in Bulacan.

Cimatu said that simple water conservation measures could help lessen the demand for Angat Dam's water in the millions of liters.



DENR urges: Conserve water *Even during rainy season*

The rainy season does not assure ample water supply

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Thursday urged Metro Manila residents to still conserve water even on the onset of the rainy season in the country.

In a statement, the DENR said metro residents should continue observing water conservation measures and recycle rain showers to help prevent further decline of the water level in Angat Dam.

"Angat Dam can still benefit from the rains falling outside its watershed if these are collected for non-essential uses such as for carwashing and flushing of toilets," said Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu.

This follows after insufficient rain over the 62,300-hectare Angat Watershed Reservation put it in danger of going into critical levels

even as heavy rainfall have been observed in many parts of Metro Manila.

The Environment Secretary said simple water conservation measures could help lessen the demand for Angat Dam's water in the millions of liters as the dam supplies 96 percent of Metro Manila's tap water needs for its 12.8 million residents.

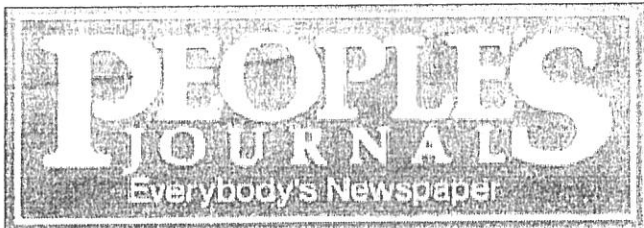
Water from the dam comes from the watershed's river basin that straddles the towns of Doña Remedios Trinidad, Norzagaray and San Jose Del Monte in Bulacan.

"We can reduce water wastage by using only what is required. We can also collect and reuse rainwater," Cimatu said, noting that the insufficient rainfall over Angat watershed is compounded by the "monsoon breaks" which weather

bureau Pagasa explained is a shift between weather systems that result in short breaks to no rainfall for several days or weeks.

Cimatu also called on local government units (LGU) in Metro Manila to prioritize the passing of an ordinance directing their constituents to observe water conservation practices.

"It is high time that the LGU pass ordinances geared at water conservation to prevent the water problem from worsening," Cimatu said, adding that these ordinances can have "immediate positive effect" to the water and food security being pushed at the national level by agencies like the DENR, the Department of Agriculture, the National Water Resources Board and the National Irrigation Authority.



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Conserve water, stop water wastage – Cimatu

ENVIRONMENT Secretary Roy Cimatu yesterday urged Metro Manila residents to continue taking water conservation measures by using only what is needed.

Cimatu said this will help prevent further decline of the water level in Angat Dam though it's already rainy season.

The environment head likewise called on local government units in Metro Manila to prioritize the passing of an ordinance directing their constituents to observe water conservation practices.

"It is high time that the LGUs pass ordinances geared at water conservation to prevent the water problem from worsening," he added.

Cimatu said the LGUs have proven themselves how pivotal they are to the success of national environmental programs like the Boracay and Manila Bay rehabilitation.

The DENR chief said that simple water conser-

vation measures could help lessen the demand for Angat Dam's water in the millions of liters.

"Angat Dam can still benefit from the rains falling outside its watershed if these are collected for non-essential uses such as for carwashing and flushing of toilets," Cimatu said.

The call was made amid insufficient rain over the 62,300-hectare Angat Watershed Reservation as heavy rainfall has been observed in many parts of Metro Manila.

Water in Angat Dam, which supplies 96 percent of Metro Manila's tap water needs for its 12.8 million residents, comes from the watershed's river basin that straddles the

towns of Dona Remedios Trinidad, Norzagaray and San Jose Del Monte in Bulacan.

"We can reduce water wastage by using only what is required. We can also collect and reuse rainwater," Cimatu said.

Cimatu noted that the insufficient rainfall over Angat watershed is compounded by the "monsoon breaks" which PAGASA explained is a shift between weather systems that result in short breaks to no rainfall for several days or weeks.

As of Tuesday, the water level of Angat Dam has further declined to 161.76 meters, which is just 1.76 meters short of its 160-meter critical level for domestic water supply. **Joel dela Torre**



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
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MAGTIPID SA TUBIG

Apela ng DENR sa publiko

HINIKAYAT ni Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu ang mga residente ng Metro Manila na magtipid sa tubig kahit panahon na ng tag-ulan.

Mula sa pahina 16

Ayon kay Cimatu, sa kabila ng pagsisimula ng tag-ulan, dapat patuloy na mag-ipon at magtipid sa tubig sa pamamagitan ng pag-recycle ng tubig ulan upang maiwasan ang karagdagang pagbaba ng antas ng tubig sa Angat dam.

Sinabi pa nito na makikinabang pa rin ang Angat dam sa ulan na bumabagsak sa tubig saluran kung ang mga ito ay nakolekta para sa mga 'di mahahalagang gamit tulad ng paglilinis ng sasakyan at flushing ng mga banyo.

Ang panawagan ay ginawa sa kalagitnaan ng kakulangan ng ulan sa mahigit 62,300 hectares na Angat Watershed Reservation.

Ipinahayag pa ni Cimatu na ang simpleng mga panukala sa pagtipid ay makatutulong para mabawasan ang demand na milyon-milyong litro ng tubig sa Angat dam.

Ang tubig sa Angat dam na nagbibigay ng 96 porsiyento ng mga pangangailangan ng tubig sa Metro Manila para sa 12.8 milyong residente nito, ay nagmula sa wa-

tershed's basin na sumasaklaw sa mga bayan ng Doña Remedios Trinidad, Norzagaray at San Jose Del Monte sa Bulacan.

Nanawagan din si Cimatu sa mga lokal na pamahalaan sa Metro Manila upang unahin ang pagpasa ng isang ordnansa na nagtuturo sa kanilang mga nasasakupan ng tamang pagtipid sa tubig.

Nitong Martes ay nakitang nasa kritikal na antas ang tubig sa dam para sa domestic water supply.

**BENEDICT
ABAYGAR, JR.**



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Balita

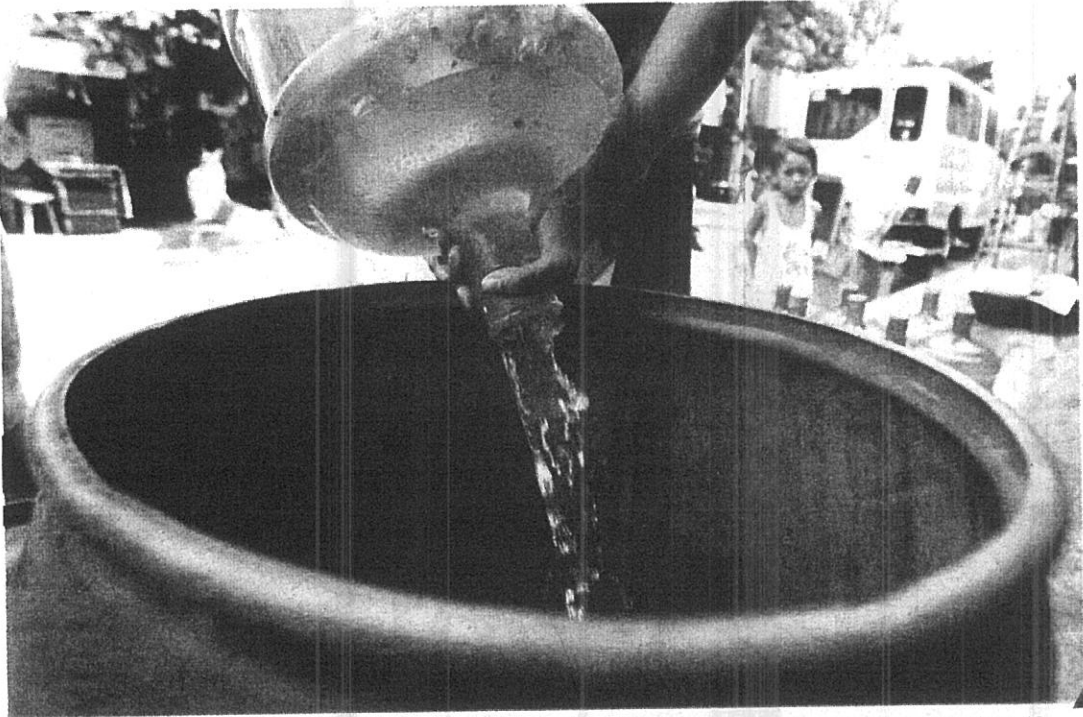
ANG NANGUNDRANG PAMAYAGANG TAGALOG SA BANGSA

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Maging responsable sa paggamit ng tubig HANDA KA BA SA WATER CRISIS?



TUBIIG! Isinasalin ng residente sa drum ang naigib niyang tubig sa Bgy. South Triangle sa Quezon City. Nasa 12 milyong customer ng Maynilad at Manila Water ang nakakaranas ng kakaunti hanggang walang supply sa loob ng anim hanggang 18 oras simula nitong Miyerkules, dahil sa patuloy na pagkaunti ng tubig sa Angat Dam.

MARK BALMORES



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Malawakang water crisis, pinaghahandaan

NI DHEL NAZARIO

Tinalakay ng Metro Manila Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (MMDRRMC), mga kinauukulang ahensiya ng gobyerno, at mga water concessionaire ang mahahalagang hakbangin kaugnay ng nakaambang malawakang krisis sa tubig dahil sa patuloy na nababawasang tubig sa Angat Dam.

Upang matiyak ang delivery ng supply ng tubig na maaaring maapektuhan, sinabi ni Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) at concurrent MMDRRMC Chairman Danilo Lim na exempted sa number coding scheme ang mga trucks ng Maynilad Water Services, Inc. at Manila Water Company, Inc.

Binigyang-diin din ni Lim ang kahalagahan na mapaghandaan ang krisis, lalo na ngayong nagpapatupad na ng water interruptions sa malaking bahagi ng Metro Manila.

Dumalo sa meeting kahapon mga opisyal ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, Maynilad, Manila Water, Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), at iba pang kinauukulang ahensiya ng pamahalaan.

ULAN, HINDI SAPAT

Sa nasabing meeting, nilinaw ng PAGASA na bagamat tag-ulan na, hindi sapat ang naibubuhos para madagdagan ang tubig sa Angat Dam, na nasa Hagonoy sa Bulacan.

Bumaba na sa critical low level na 160 metro ang tubig sa Angat Dam.

Kaugnay nito, nanawagan sa publiko si MMDA General Manager Jojo Garcia na ugaliin ang responsableng paggamit ng tubig, sa halip na ang matipid na paggamit dito.

ULAN, IPUNIN

Hinikayat din ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang mga taga-Metro Manila na samantalain at ipunin ang ulan na nararanasan tuwing hapon o gabi, para makolekta at ma-recycle ito sa paglilinis ng sasakyan, pagdidilig ng halaman, at pambuhos sa inidoro.

RED CROSS, SASAKLOLO

Tiniyak din kahapon ng Philippine Red Cross (PRC) na handa itong mag-supply ng tubig sa mga establisimyento, partikular na ang mga ospital.

Matatandaang noong Marso, sa kasagsagan ng krisis sa tubig sa east zone ng Metro Manila at Rizal, at kaagad na nakapag-supply ng

tubig ang PRC sa mga ospital at iba pang komunidad.

Kaugnay ng nasabing water shortage noong Marso, sinabi kahapon ni Bayan Muna Party-List Rep. Carlos Zarate na magsasampa sila ng karagdagan kaso laban sa Manila Water.

DAGDAG KASO SA MANILA WATER

"We will definitely file another complaint against Manila Water for more rebates for their costumers," sinabi ng lawyer-solon, na kabilang sa Makabayan Bloc.

Ito ay matapos na makarating sa Bayan Muna na ilang barangay sa Mandaluyong City ang walang supply ng tubig sa loob ng anim na araw.

Sinabi ni Bayan Muna Chairman Neri Colmenares na base sa Manila Water advisory na inisyu nitong Miyerkules ng gabi, dapat ay may tubig na ang Barangka Drive at Barangka Ibaba pagsapit ng 5:00 ng madaling araw at 2:00 ng hapon.

"But residents say that their water has not returned since it was cut at 3:00 p.m. last Thursday," diin ni Colmenares.

**May ulat nina
Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz,
Mary Ann Santiago, at
Ellson A. Quismorio**



DENR: Tubig tipirin kahit tag-ulan

UMAPELA ang Department of Environment and Natural Resource sa mga residente ng Metro Manila na patuloy na magtipid ng tubig kahit simula na ng tag-ulan at ugaling mag-recycle ng tubig-ulan upang maiwasan ang patuloy na pagbaba ng tubig sa Angat Dam.

"Angat Dam can still benefit from the rains falling outside its watershed if these are collected for non-essential uses such as carwashing and flushing of toilets," ayon kay DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu.

Ginawa ng DENR ang panawagan sa kabila ng 'di pa sapat ang tubig-ulan para mapunu-

an ang imbak na tubig ng 62,300-hectare ng Angat Watershed Reservation kahit patuloy ang pagbuhos ng ulan sa ilang bahagi ng Metro Manila.

Ayon kay Cimatu, ang simpleng pagtitipid ng tubig ay makatutulong para mabawasan ang pangangailangan sa Angat Dam.

Sinabi sa ulat na ang tubig sa Angat Dam na nagsusuplay ng 96% sa Metro Manila ay kailangan ng 12.8 milyong residente na nagmumula sa watershed river basin na dumadaloy at sinusuplayan ang Dona Remedios Trinidad, Norzagaray at San Jose Del Monte Bulacan.

Nilinaw pa ni Cimatu na ang hindi sapat na tubig ulan sa An-

gat watershed bunga ng tambalan ng "monsoon breaks" gaya ng paliwanag ng PAGASA ay pagpapalit ng weather system resulta ng walang ulan nitong nakalipas na araw at linggo.

Nanawagan pa ang kalihim sa local government units sa Metro Manila na unahin ang pagpasa ng ordinansa na nag-uutos sa kanilang mga constituent na magtipid ng tubig at ugaling ito. Aniya, ang naturang ordinansa ang magdadala ng positibong resulta para sa tubig at food security na isinusulong ng national agencies gaya ng DENR, Department of Agriculture, National Water Resources Board at National Irrigation Authority. **SC**



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Water rationing looms as Angat nears critical low

By Carmela Reyes-Estropo and Ronnel W. Domingo
@Team_Inquirer

The National Water Resources Board (NWRB) on Thursday urged Metro Manilans to save water, warning that it might impose rationing if the stock in Angat Dam dropped below the critical level.

Angat Dam, in Bulacan province, supplies 90 percent of Metro Manila's water needs.

The Angat stock has been dipping since the peak of summer, causing a knock-on effect on the reserve at La Mesa Dam in Quezon City.

In March, the water elevation at La Mesa Dam breached the critical low level of 69 meters above sea level (masl), setting off a water crisis in the east zone that the private distributor Manila Water Co. Inc.

failed to anticipate.

Cloud-seeding

The government has been trying since early June to replenish the Angat stock through cloud-seeding, but the summer heat, which lingers despite the onset of the rainy season, has prevailed.

On Thursday morning, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) reported that the water elevation in the dam had dipped further to 160.50 masl, nearly breaching the critical level of 160 masl.

The dam's minimum operating level is 180 masl. The reserve was 161.20 masl on Monday and was going down at about 0.4 meter daily, Pagasa said.

To conserve the stock, the NWRB reduced the raw water allocation for Metro Manila, forc-

ing the two private distributors to announce earlier this week rotating service interruptions.

But taps ran dry even before the schedules of service interruption could start, causing a public uproar that compelled the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) to warn the distributors on Thursday that it would fine them if they failed to follow their own timetables.

Maynilad Water Services Inc. on Thursday began implementing throughout its west zone concession rotational, daily service interruptions lasting seven to 14 hours.

Manila Water also began implementing a revised schedule for the east zone "for about eight to 12 hours during nighttime."

Manila Water's customers have been enduring

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low pressure to no water since March, when the La Mesa Dam stock dipped to lower than the critical level.

It seems to be an unending problem that has become worse in recent days because of erratic service.

"The MWSS regulatory office has determined that the two concessionaires have failed to observe the water service interruption schedules that they announced," the agency's chief regulator Patrick Ty said in a statement on Thursday.

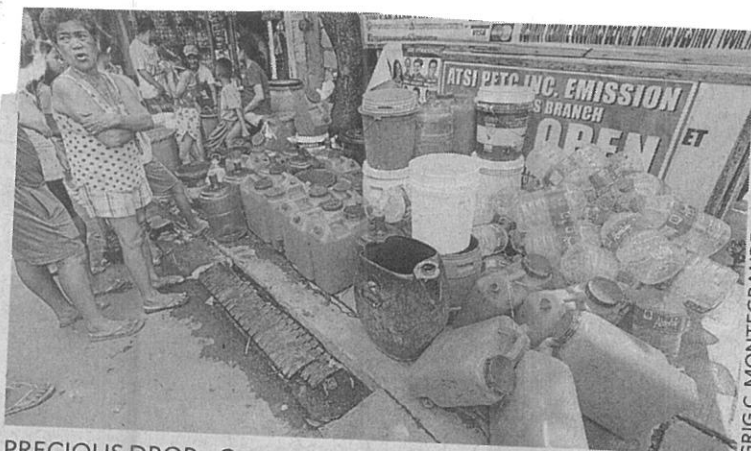
"While the two [companies] may not be blamed for the current water supply situation . . . the schedules are well within their control, and for which they may be held accountable," Ty added.

He said regulators would consider any period of actual service interruption occurring outside the schedule as "not having been the subject of proper notice to the customers."

"Should such nonadherence continue, this may constitute a violation of the concession

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Water rationing looms as Angat wears critical low



GRIG C. MONTEGRANDE

PRECIOUS DROP Consumers are again struggling to get water as concessionaires fail to observe the water interruption schedules that they had earlier announced due to low supply.

agreement, and the MWSS [regulatory office will] recommend the imposition of appropriate penalties," Ty said.

Bayan Muna warning

The MWSS meted out a P534-million fine to Manila Water for its failure to provide 24-hour service to its customers for 15 days in March.

The fine comes in the form of a rebate to customers, which is reflected on their bills for June.

Militant party list group

Bayan Muna on Thursday warned Manila Water that it would file another complaint against the distributor for more rebates if it could not end the water problem in the east zone.

Mary Joy David, project development officer at the Bureau of Soil and Water Management (BSWM), on Thursday said the agency would extend cloud-seeding hours to help generate rainfall over Angat Dam.

The BSWM has been sending up two to three cloud-seeding

flights whenever experts spot clouds over the dam, David said.

Each flight runs an hour and carries 25 sacks of iodized salt, each weighing 25 kilograms, to be thrown into the clouds to induce a chemical reaction that causes rain.

David said the bureau had already conducted 50 hours of cloud-seeding operations since June 7.

Water elevation at Angat has not reached precarious levels since 2010, when a strong El Niño caused very dry conditions in the Philippines.

The consumer group Laban Konyumer on Thursday called on the NWRB to lift the ban on deep well drilling in Metro Manila to ease the water problem in the metropolis.

In a statement, Victorio Dimagiba, the group's president, said the ban could be lifted until the stock in the dams had been replenished.

Since the water shortage in the east zone in March, the NWRB had allowed Manila Water to reactivate old wells for it to have additional sources of water.

—WITH A REPORT FROM MELVIN GASCON INQ



Angat to hit

critical level

By RHODINA VILLANUEVA

If the water level in Angat Dam in Bulacan drops below 160 meters, there will be further reduction in the allocation for potable water supply to Metro Manila residents serviced by concessionaires of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) said yesterday.

Data from the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration showed that as of 6 a.m. yesterday, Angat

Dam's water level was at 160.73 meters. That is 0.57 meters less than Wednesday's level of 161.30 meters.

The NWRB said that since Wednesday, allocation for Metro Manila's water concessionaires was already reduced from the original 46 cubic meters per second to 40 CMS.

NWRB executive director Sevillo David said that if there will be a further drop in Angat's water level to below 160 meters, they will be forced to implement a 36 CMS allocation to MWSS, which might take effect on Saturday.

The water in Angat Dam, which supplies 96 percent of Metro Manila's tap water needs for its 12.8 million residents, comes from the watershed's river basin that straddles the towns of Doña Remedios Trinidad, Norzagaray and San Jose del Monte in Bulacan.

The NWRB also said that apart from reduction of water allocation, several measures will be undertaken to manage the remaining water, including the

operationalization of the Angat Dam Low Level Outlet (LLO), the bottom channel capable of releasing water below 160 meters.

"We have started to rehabilitate and subject the LLO to tests since March. It showed that water quality there is manageable," David said.

This will reportedly be undertaken while cloud-seeding operations and reactivation of the MWSS deep wells

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are continuously implemented.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu yesterday urged local government units (LGUs) in Metro Manila to prioritize the passing of an ordinance directing their constituents to observe water conservation practices.

"It is high time that the LGUs pass ordinances geared at water conservation to prevent the water problem from worsening," Ci-

matu said.

He explained that these ordinances would have "immediate positive effect" on the water and food security being pushed at the national level by agencies like the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Agriculture, NWRB and National Irrigation Authority.

The DENR made the call after the NWRB said it will reduce water allocation to the MWSS once water level



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Angat to hit critical level

in Angat Dam dips below 160 meters. This will affect the regular delivery of water service provided by Metro Manila concessionaires Maynilad and Manila Water.

At the same time, the DENR chief advised Metro Manila residents to continue observing water conservation measures and recycle rain water to help prevent further decline of the water level in Angat Dam.

"Simple water conservation measures could help lessen the demand for Angat Dam's water in the millions of liters,"

he said.

Warning to water firms

The MWSS has warned the two concessionaires Maynilad Water Services Inc. and Manila Water Co. Inc. that they could be held liable for the schedule of water supply interruption especially now that allocation has been further reduced as Angat Dam nears the critical threshold.

The MWSS-Regulatory Office warned Maynilad and Manila Water to follow their published schedule of water

interruptions or face possible penalties.

"Should non-adherence continue, this may constitute a violation of the concession agreement and the MWSS-RO shall recommend the imposition of appropriate penalties," MWSS chief regulator Patrick Ty said.

Both concessionaires are required to notify their customers of any planned service interruptions under their concession agreement.

NWRB continues to fine-tune the preparation of the LLO as a back-up water dis-

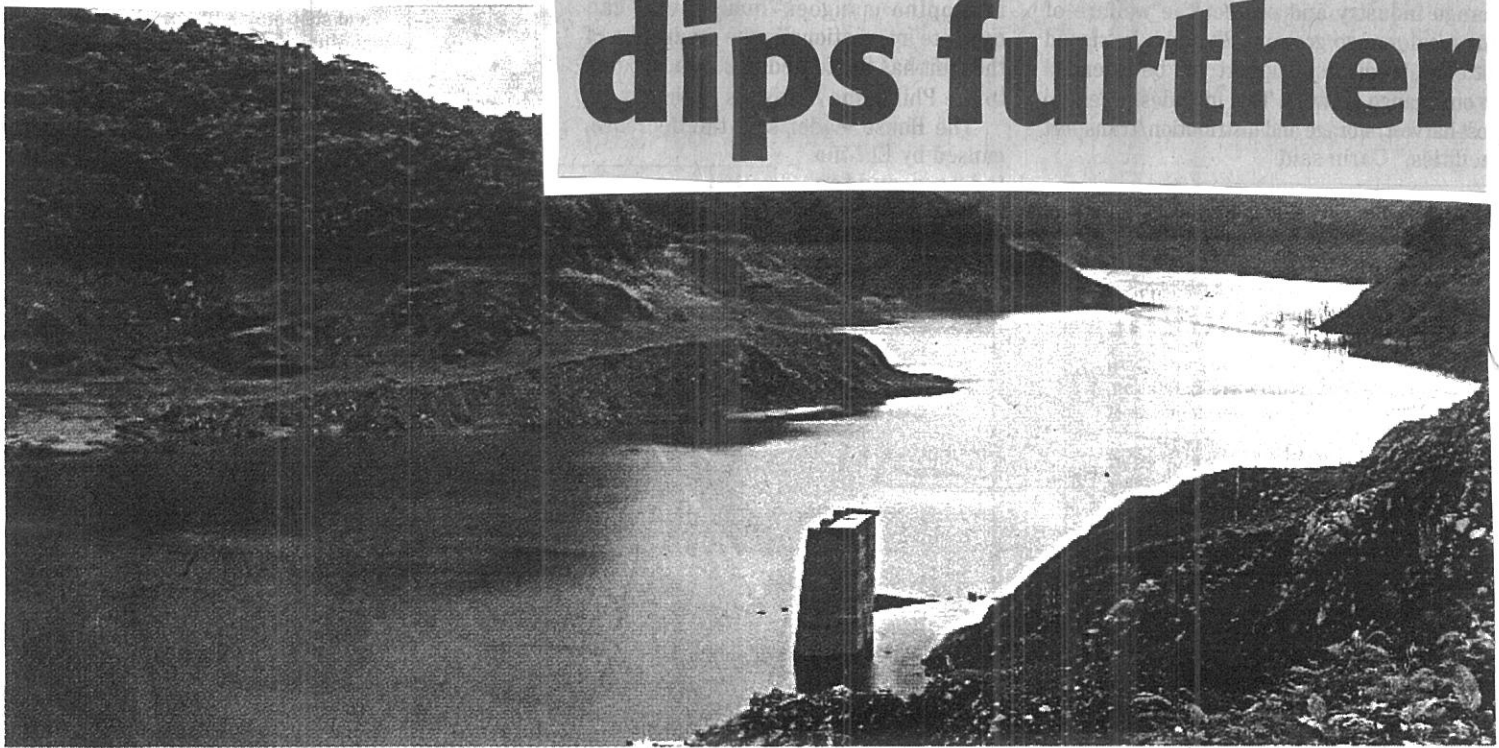
charge before the Angat Dam water level reaches 160 meters and lessen the significant effect of limited water supply in the coming days.

With the cut in allocation, 75 percent of the customer base of west zone concessionaire Maynilad will be affected while more than 80 percent of east zone Manila Water will be hit.

NWRB is urging the public to conserve water to reduce the water demand from Angat to prevent the rapid decline of water level and contribute to its recovery. - **With Louise Maureen Simeon**



Angat Dam level dips further



WATER SHORTAGE Angat Dam is just less than one meter away from its critical level as of Thursday morning, raising fears of more disruptions in water supply in Metro Manila.

With no rains expected until this weekend, Angat Dam's level may reach the critical mark of 160 meters in just one or two days. Two days ago, the level was pegged at 161.78 meters

**By Eimer N. Manuel
and Raymart T. Lolo**

State weather bureau Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (*Pagasa*) on Thursday warned that Angat Dam — which supplies water to Metro Manila and Central Luzon

areas — may hit critical level in one or two days.

According to *Pagasa* weather forecaster Benison Estareja, Angat Dam has dipped to 160.73-meter mark as of 6 a.m. Thursday.

With no rains expected until this weekend, Estareja said that the dam's level may reach the

critical mark of 160 meters in just one or two days. Two days ago, the level was pegged at 161.78 meters.

The National Water Resources Board (NWRB) last month already slashed water allocation for agriculture, saying this would not affect food supply because farmers were already in the middle of the planting season.

Regulators also said the allocation for Metro Manila's water supply may be reduced if the dam hits the 160-meter critical level. In fact, there are already scheduled water disruptions in

some parts of the capital region.

The dam's declining water level, lack of rains due to El Niño and high demand were blamed for a water supply shortage that brought misery to more than a million households in Metro Manila last March.

Angat Dam supplies 90 percent of Metro Manila's water requirement.

Pagasa on Friday declared the start of the rainy season, but weak El Niño conditions which were felt in the tropical Pacific since the last quarter of 2018 is "likely to continue" until August.

Relatedly, the Ecology Ministry of the Archdiocese of Manila has proposed the rehabilitation of Wawa Dam in Rizal to address the water supply shortage.

"We are saying that, why not restore and rehabilitate Wawa Dam? It is the original water source of Metro Manila since the time of the Americans," said Lou Arsenio of the Ecology Ministry of the Archdiocese of Manila.

An abandoned dam built during the American era in the early 1900s, Wawa Dam has long been seen as a better option for the water supply

in the metropolis, as it does not require an expensive treatment technology like reverse osmosis. Specifically, the Wawa Dam catchment area traverses the municipality of Rodriguez and Antipolo, both in Rizal province.

According to Arsenio, it can be reconstructed instead of building a new dam. He also reminded the public about responsible use of water.

"The water demand is just too big and residents do not really save. Second is wastage of water and excessive use of the washing machine," Arsenio said.



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Water concessionaires face possible penalties

BY JED MACAPAGAL

THE Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System-Regulatory Office (MWSS-RO) warned Manila Water Co. and Maynilad Water Services Inc. of possible penalties if they fail to properly notify their customers of the water service interruptions.

"The MWSS-RO has determined that the two concessionaires have failed to observe the water service interruption schedules that they announced. Under the concession agreement, Manila Water and Maynilad are required to notify their customers of any planned water service interruptions," said Patrick Ty, MWSS chief regulator.

Ty did not specify the penalties. He said the concessionaires may not be blamed for the current water shortage since the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) reduced their allocation from the Angat Dam, their water service interruption schedules are "within

their control, and for which they may be held accountable."

Ty said MWSS will consider any period of actual water service interruption that takes place outside the announced schedules as not having been the subject of proper notice to the customers.

"Should such non-adherence continue, this may constitute as a violation of the concession agreement and the MWSS-RO shall recommend the imposition of appropriate penalties," he warned.

According to the National Power Corp., as of 6 a.m. yesterday (June 20), Angat Dam's elevation is already at 160.71 meters which is approaching near the 160 meters critical level.

NWRB earlier said that the 160 meter level is projected to be breached on June 22 and will trigger another allocation adjustments to the concessionaires as there will be a need for the auxiliary unit to be shut down and will further affect the available supply.



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Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

Maynilad, Manila Water warned

BY JORDEENE B. LAGARE

THE Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System-Regulatory Office (MWSS-RO) warned water concessionaires Manila Water Co. Inc. and Maynilad Water Services Inc. that they may be sanctioned for their failure to follow the scheduled water service interruptions.

"The MWSS-RO has determined that the two concessionaires have failed to observe the water service interruption schedules that they announced. Under the Concession

Agreement, Manila Water and Maynilad are required to notify their customers of any planned water service interruptions," MWSS chief regulator Patrick Lester Ty said.

Ty said the agency shall recommend the imposition of "appropriate penalties."

The MWSS-RO will take into consideration any period of actual water service interruption that occurred outside the schedule announced by Manila Water and Maynilad since customers were not properly informed.

"While the two concessionaires may not be blamed for the current water supply situation since the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) reduced their allocation from Angat Dam, the water service interruption sched-

ules are well within their control, and for which they may be held accountable," Ty said.

Manila Water, which has yet to fully restore its services following supply lack in March, was slapped with a P1.13-billion fine in April for its failure to meet its service obligation of round-the-clock supply to all its customers.

The NWRB reduced water allocation from Angat Dam, which supplies the water needs of Metro Manila, from 46 cubic meters per second (cms) to 40 cms.

Ty said the agency

issued a "stern warning" to the two water firms in relation to the schedule of water service interruptions posted by both companies.

The two firms have started implementing service disruptions in Metro Manila as well as parts of Rizal and Cavite provinces after regulators reduced water supply from Angat Dam.

Service disruptions in the metropolis and nearby provinces lasting for 7 to 14 hours were implemented during nighttime or off-peak hours.

Both

Maynilad and Manila Water had said their customers would continue to experience little to no water supply until their allocation from Angat Dam is increased.

As of Thursday, Angat's water level was 160.73 meters, a mere 0.57-meter away from its critical level of 160 meters.

Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration hydrologist Richard Orendain expects the dam to reach its critical level mark in two days.



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Angat Dam nasa kritikal na

NAABOT na ng Angat dam sa Bulacan ang 160-meter level matapos muling mabawasan ang antas ng tubig nito sa nakalipas na 24 na oras.

Sa datos ng PAGASA Hydrology Division, 6:00 ng umaga kahapon na nasa 160.73 meters ang water level ng dam.

Malaki-laki ang nabawas mula sa 161.30 meters na water level nito, Miyerkules ng umaga.

Una nang sinabi ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) na kapag umabot na sa 160 meters ang Angat dam ay maituturing na itong nasa critical level at babawasan pa lalo ang alokasyon ng tubig para sa domestic use.

DANNY GRAVADOR



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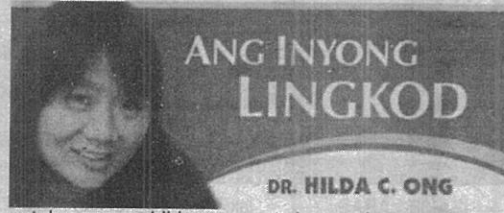
PAGBABAWAS NG ALOKASYON NG NWRB SA MGA KONSESYUNARYO

INANUNSYO na ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) na nagbawas na ang ahensya ng alokasyon sa MWSS para sa dalawang konsesyunaryo, ang Manila Water Company at ang Maynilad Water mula sa 46 cubic meters per second, ibinaba sa 40 CMS upang bigyang-daan ang pagha-handa ng 'low-level outlet' (LLO) habang nalalapit na ang antas ng Angat Dam sa kritikal na lebel na 160-meters.

Ayon kay Executive Director NWRB, Dr. Sevilla David, Jr., matindi ang nararanasan nating init ng panahon at may pag-ulan nitong nakaraang araw, ngunit hindi sapat pa rin. Ang lebel ng tubig ay nasa 160.70 na kahapon, malamang nasa 160 kritikal lebel na ngayong umaga. Ang dalawang konsesyunaryo ng tubig kinakailangan na rin bawasan ang kani-kanilang alokasyon sa kanilang customer.

"Kung ang lebel ng tubig sa angat dam ay mas bumaba sa 160 metro, ang NWRB ay magkakaroon ng karagdagang pagbabawas sa alokasyon sa MWSS, mula sa 40 metro kubiko bawat segundo, ibaba namin hanggang 36 cms", pahayag ni Executive Director David.

Ayon sa Manila Water Company, "Dahil dito ay maaapektuhan ang supply ng tubig patungo sa aming mga treatment plants na kailangan upang mapunan ang aming mga reservoir. Bunsod nito, kinakailangan nating magpatupad ng mga 'rotational water service interruptions' sa buong East Zone, kung saan nagsimula noong ika-18 ng Hunyo, mula 8 hanggang 12 oras tuwing gabi. Amin pong ilalagay ang schedule ng water interruptions sa aming mga social media platforms. Kami po ay



patuloy na magbibigay ng mga update hinggil sa kalagayan ng supply ng tubig".

Para sa detalye, maaaring tawagan ang Manila Water's Customer Care Hotline 1627 o bisitahin ang aming Facebook (www.facebook.com/manilawater) at Twitter (www.twitter.com/ManilaWaterPH) accounts.

Ayon naman sa Maynilad Water, "Ang anunsyo ng NWRB ukol sa pagbabawas ng paglalaan ng tubig mula sa Angat Dam mula sa 46 naging 40 metro kubiko bawat segundo (CMS), mapipilitan kami na ipatupad ang 'rotational water service interruptions' sa buong lugar ng aming sinasakupan kung saan maaapektuhan ang 70% ng customer base namin".

Ang 'rotational water service interruptions' ng Maynilad Water ay nagsimula nitong linggo upang mapakinabangan ng lahat ang limi-

DR. HILDA C. ONG

tadong suplay at matiyak na magkakaroon ng suplay ng tubig, kahit na sa loob ng ilang oras araw-araw.

Sa ngayon, may mga hakbang ang Maynilad kung papaano mapigilan ang epekto ng pagbabawas ng alokasyon ng tubig, kabilang ang pagpapalawig ng mga oras ng pagpapatakbo ng aming mga istasyon ng pumping at pag-activate muli ng aming deep wells o malalim na balon. Kung kinakailangan, ang Maynilad ay magpapadala ng mga mobile water tankers at mag-install ng static water tank para sa malubhang apektadong lugar.

Mangyaring patuloy na subaybayan ang Maynilad Water Facebook page at Twitter account (@manyilad), upang malaman ninyo kung kailan kayo mawawalan ng tubig o iskedyl ng rotational water service interruptions sa inyong lugar.



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Angat dam nasa critical level na

NAABOT na ng Angat nasa 160.73 meters ang Board (NWRB) kapag dam sa Bulacan ang 160- antas ng tubig ng dam. umabot sa 160 meters ang meter level matapos muling Malaki-laki na ang Angat dam ay maitu- mabawasan ang sukat ng nabawas mula sa 161.30 turing na itong nasa tubig nito sa nakalipas na meters na water level nito critical level at babawasan 24 oras. noong Miyerkoles ng pa lalo ang alokasyon ng tubig para sa domestic use.

Sa datos ng Pagasa umaga. Una nang sinabi ng Hydrology Division, 6:00 am kahapon, 20 Hunyo, National Water Resources

(MICKA BAUTISTA)



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THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
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MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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RELOCATION - Informal settlers residing along Estero Magdalena in Binondo, Manila gather their belongings as the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) started their relocation yesterday. Two hundred seventy informal settler families along the estero will be relocated to Trece Martires, Cavite to declog the flow of Pasig River. The estero is one of the 47 tributaries of the river that suffers from waste pollution problems. (All Vicoy)



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SHANTIES NO MORE. Workers from the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission demolish shanties along Estero Magdalena on Claro M. Recto Avenue in Manila's Binondo district Thursday. About 270 families will be relocated to Trece Martirez, Cavite. The clearing operation is in preparation for the coming rainy season to declog the flow of the Pasig River. **Norman Cruz**



Estero de Magdalena families relocated

Families will get a new
lease in life following their
relocation

By Pat Santos

At least 270 families living in makeshift shanties along the Estero de Magdalena in Recto, Manila were relocated by the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) in line with the government's goal of rehabilitating the metro's longest river and the Manila Bay.

In a statement, the PRRC — together with the National Housing Authority and local inter-agency committee — will be relocating the informal settlers from the *estero* to Summer Homes in Barangay Cabuco, Trece Martires in Cavite.

The families were living along both banks of the Magdalena from La Torre to Recto Avenue that is covered by four barangays in the city.



Trash money Wading through the murky *estero*, a man looks for anything that can be converted to cash.

BOB DUNGO JR.



Led by Padilla, NV hits miner's license renewal

BAYOMBONG—Hundreds of citizens of Nueva Vizcaya province gathered at the Provincial Capitol on Thursday to protest and call on President Rodrigo Duterte to deny an Australian-Canadian large-scale miner's petition for a renewed license to operate.

The protesters were reacting to news that the application for renewal of the Financial or Technical Assistance Agreement license of the OceanaGold mining firm has already been endorsed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to the Office of the President.

Led by Nueva Vizcaya Governor Carlos Padilla, the anti-mining protesters presented Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu with a list of "lapses, human rights abuses, non-compliances to memoranda of agreements, and others like violations," the group said in a statement.

Padilla met with Cimatu Wednesday night with Bishop Elmer Mangalino of the Archdiocese of Bayombong, Liga ng mga Barangay Federation Chair Vic Gines and other anti-mining advocates.

OceanaGold's supposed violations, the group said, are in open-pit mining, Provincial Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Provincial Physical Framework and Development Plan that prioritizes Nueva Vizcaya as the watershed haven that supports the irrigation for neighboring provinces like Quirino, Isabela, Cagayan and Nueva Ecija.

The governor even lamented that the Mines and Geosciences Bureau in Region 2 were the ones giving support to OceanaGold, who could not be contacted for a statement at press time.

Brenda Jocson



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
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ANG NANGUNDIRANG PAMAHALANG TAGALOG SA BAYSA

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IMBESTIGADaVe

Dave M. Veridiano, E.E.

Indigenous People', palabigasan ng NCIP, DAR, at DENR

"UNG sa ibang bansa ang mga "indigenous people" o IP ay iniingatan at minamahal ang pangalagaan ang kanilang kultura, dito atin ay palabigasan at gatasan sila ng mga isyal ng ahensiya ng pamahalaan na dapat tumutulong sa mga ito.

Kadalasan pa nga, ang sobrang paghihirap mga IP dito sa atin ay sinasamantala ng mga teroristang grupo upang isulong ang nilang makasariling adhikain, ang ibagsak ng pamahalaan gamit ang puwersa ng paghihirap na IP. Mga natibo nanaitaboy na malayong kabundukan mula sa kanilang

"ancestral home" na pinagpapasasaan naman ng mga corrupt na opisyal ng pamahalaan at ganid na negosyante.

Ito ang aking naging pananaw nang makaharap ko si Datu Hilario Abbatuan, ng B'Laan Tribe ng Polomoloc, South Cotabato, na humingi ng tulong sa mga mamamahayag upang ipaabot kay Pangulong Duterte ang kurapsiyong nagaganap sa dapat sana'y naipamahagi na sa kanilang 18,000 ektaryang 'ancestral domain' ng B'Laan Tribe.

Sa News Forum na Balitaan sa Maynila, na ginanap sa Bean Belt Coffee sa Dapitan Street, Sampaloc, Maynila noong Linggo, isiniwalat ni Datu Abbatuan, ang 'Attorney-In-Fact' ng B'Laan Tribe, na sa halip na ang mga IP ng B'Laan Tribe ang makinabang sa kanilang lupain - na kumpleto naman sa lahat ng dokumento na magpapatunay na pag-aari ito ng kanilang tribu - ang kumpanyang DOLE Philippines ang nakikinabang dito matapos na gawing taniman ng pinya.

Ayon kay Datu Abbatuan, ang DOLE Philippines ay isang multi-billion company na dating pinapatkbo ng mga negosyanteng Pilipino na sa ngayon ay hawak na ng mga negosyanteng Hapones.

Walang kaalam-alam ang mga Hapones na

ang renta sa lupain na kanilang ibinabayad ay hindi sa kamay ng mga B'Laan Tribe napupunta, bagkus sa mga miyembro lamang ng isang kooperatiba na pinamamahalaan umano ng mga ganid na opisyal ng pamahalaan.

Ang taunang renta sa isang ektarya ay P35,000- kaya tumataginting na P6.3 bilyon kada taon - para sa 18,000 ektaryang lupain na pag-aari ng B'Laan Tribe. Kanino kayang malalalim na balsa napupunta ang bilyones na ito?

Malamang ang sinasabi ni Datu Abbatuan na mga opisyal ay galing sa tanggapan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR); National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP); Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR); at lokal na pamahalaan ng SOUTH COTABATO. Makailang ulit na umano nilang nilapitan ang mga ito, bitbit ang mga dokumento na patunay na dapat nang mapasakamay ng mga IP na B'Laan Tribe ang kanilang "ancestral domain," subalit pinaikut-ikot lamang umano sila ng mga ito.

Libo ang naghahirap na mga kabilang sa B'Laan Tribe samantalang ang mga pinalad (malakas sa mga opisyal kahit na mga hindi natibu B'Laan) ay 42 pamilya lamang na pinagkalooban ng Certificate of Land Ownership (CLOA) sa isang pekeng seremonya. Sa naturang seremonya umano

ay pinagsuot native 'yung mga tumanggap ng CLOA samantalang 'yung mga natibu B'Laan ay binira ng water canon ng mga bumbero!

"Kami po ay nagbabayad na ng amilyar sa mga loteng inuokupahan namin dahil nilagyan na rin kami ng mga muhon, na pinagkontribusunay pa po naming mga katutubo para lang sa legalidad pero sa sitwasyon ngayon ay iilan lamang sa mga B'laan ang sinuwerte na nagkaroon ng CLOA gayong dapat e lahat ng mga pami-pamilyang B'laan ang dapat na makaukupa sa lugar namin. Ang kaso, dahil sa manipulasyon ng mga maiimpluwensiya sa probinsiya namin, eh mayory sa mga katutubo ay pinagkaitan ng kanilang mga karapatan," himutok Datu Abbatuan.

Banta pa ni Datu Abbatuan: "Baka parang bulkan na sumabog ang nagpupuyos na damdami ng mga natibong B'Laan na nakararami sa amin, lalawigan. 'Wag na sanang hintayin pa ng atin, pamahalaan na maganap ito bago bigyan ng pansin ang kanilang problema, na kung tutuusin ay hindi naman problema dahil ang hinihingi nil ay matagal ng rin naman naibigay na sa kanila na pamahalaan - 'yung pamamahagi na lang nama ang dapat nilang gawin!"

Mag-text at tumawag sa Globe: 0936-9953459
mag-email sa: daveridiano@yahoo.com



Asean may tackle sea disputes; garbage dumping not on agenda

BANGKOK – Bitter disputes over competing claims in the South China Sea are likely to surface at the two-day Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

Some officials in Manila initially blamed Chinese sailors for deliberately ramming the boat and leaving Filipino fishermen stranded at sea. But President Duterte

Rody leaves for Asean summit in Bangkok today. See Page 4.

meeting starting Saturday in this Thai capital after the sinking of a Filipino fishing boat in the resource-rich waterway.

this week downplayed the incident, saying it was "just a collision."

The flashpoint highlights

Turn to Page 4



the urgent need for toughened-up terms in a Code of Conduct for clashes between fishermen at sea, said Manila-based security analyst Richard Heydarian.

"If the Chinese don't rein in these fishermen... this is just going to get worse," he said.

Dumpsite of the world

Campaigners are also urging ASEAN leaders to tackle the mounting problem of plastic and electronic waste – much of it imported from Western nations and accumulating in Southeast Asia.

Greenpeace this week said the region has become "the world's new dumpsite."

Protesters in Bangkok yesterday dumped plastic waste in front of a government building and called on Southeast Asian leaders to ban imports of trash from developed countries.

A group of about 50 Thai activists, some holding placards reading "No Space for Waste," joined Greenpeace campaigners to call for an end to all trash imports to Southeast Asia.

"The communities are

here today to reclaim... the right to live in a sustainable environment in Thailand," said Tara Buakamsri of Greenpeace Thailand.

They called for ASEAN countries to ban the export of waste "from anywhere in the world into the region," Tara said.

The trash pile-up in Southeast Asia accelerated after China stopped accepting waste in 2018, and Greenpeace says plastic refuse imports have increased by a staggering 171 percent since 2016.

The imported waste is supposed to be recycled, but sometimes arrives mixed with unrecyclable items or is improperly handled and ends up being burnt or leaking into waterways and the sea.

The issue has been in the headlines recently after the Philippines sent a huge shipment of garbage back to Canada, sparking a diplomatic row.

And last week, Indonesia returned five containers of rubbish to the US, saying it refused to be a "dumping ground."

Thailand currently imports waste from scores of countries, much of it ending up in landfills and waste disposal facilities that have prompted pollution complaints from residents.

– AFP



Land-area data gaps impact SC tax ruling

By CAI U. ORDINARIO [@caiordinario](#)

THE National Land Use Committee (NLUC) aims to address discrepancies in the computation of land areas being contested by the majority of local government units (LGUs) nationwide before 2022, according to the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda).

Neda Regional Development Office (RDO) Undersecretary Adoracion M. Navarro told the BUSINESS-MIRROR that 71 percent of cities and municipalities are contesting their land areas, even after a nationwide cadastral survey conducted by

the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Land Management Bureau (LMB).

Navarro said there is a need to resolve these concerns before 2022, given the Supreme Court's final decision granting the petition of

Batangas Gov. Hermilando I. Mandanas to automatically release the internal revenue allotment (IRA) of LGUs.

"The LMB's land measurements are the result of the 2011-2015 nationwide cadastral survey program of the government. Since the LMB is the foremost expert in these matters, the national government must find a way of making the expert's result acceptable to the LGUs. And it must do soon, especially because there will be a bigger pie for LGUs come 2022, given the Supreme Court's final decision on the Mandanas petition," Navarro said.

Navarro explained that a land area impacts LGUs significantly given that it helps determine the level of their IRA and revenue col-

lections, as well as shapes its politics, particularly during elections.

After the LMB's cadastral survey, however, Navarro said 1,163 of the 1,634 cities and municipalities nationwide are contesting the survey results. She said these LGUs are contesting the results at the LMB.

"If an LGU's land measurement is different from the old one and DBM adopts the new measurement, the LGU's IRA share will also be affected. Since the LGUs also have land-based revenue collections, a change in the measurements of their lands, once officially accepted, will also affect their revenue collections. The change will also affect the setting of political boundaries for various purposes, like election,"

Navarro explained.

In April, the Supreme Court maintained its decision which declared that the IRA share of all LGUs must be based on the collections of all national taxes, and not only from national internal revenue taxes collected by the government.

In its July 3, 2018, decision, the Court increased the IRA of LGUs to include the tax collection of other agencies aside from the BIR as basis for the computation.

It included tariff and duties collected by the Bureau of Customs, 50 percent of value-added tax, 30 percent of national taxes collected in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, 60 percent of national taxes collected from the exploitation and development of national

wealth, 85 percent of excise tax from tobacco products, and a portion of franchise tax under Republic Acts 6631 and 6632 (Horse Racing Laws), among others.

The Court's decision stemmed from the petition filed in January 2012 by former Batangas Second District Rep. and now Provincial Gov. Hermilando Mandanas.

The SC voted 10-3 to partially grant the petition of Mandanas, who had questioned the process of allocating IRA funds for the LGUs.

Section 284 of Republic Act 7160, which created LGUs, stated that provincial, city and municipal governments should receive 40 percent of total national internal revenue taxes collected by the national government.



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11 tinimbog ng NBI sa illegal quarrying

Arestado ng mga operatiba ng National Bureau of Investigation Environmental Crime Division (NBI-EnCD) ang siyam na Pilipino at dalawang Chinese na sangkot umano sa illegal quarrying kamakalawa sa Floridablanca, Pampanga.

Iprinisinta ng NBI sa mga mamamahayag ang naarestong sina Jiemvo Cadorna, Dranreb Gegante, Joey Espinola, Ruben Garcia, Danilo Carida, Erik Quiambao, Wilfredo Gonzales, Mary Jane Nguid, at Antonio Buyson.

Kasama ang mga Chinese national na sina Geng Ping at Ge Wei Chen.

Nag-ugat ang pag-aresto sa grupo nang magreklamo ang Palakol Quarry and Development Corporation nang madiskubre na nagsasagawa ang mga ito ng illegal quarrying operation ng mahigit tatlong taon na sa Gumain River sa ilalim ng Antonio Buyson Quarry at Riah Yuan Vibro mining company.

Nilinaw ni Czar Eric Nuqui, hepe ng NBI-EnCD na ang mga naaresto ay may mining permit pero nagsasagawa ng quarrying operation sa labas. (Juliet de Loza-Cudia)



11 huli ng NBI sa illegal quarrying

Inaresto ng mga ahente ng National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) ang labing-isang indibidwal kabilang ang dalawang Chinese sa iligal na pagmimina ng buhangin, sa Florida, Pampanga, kamakalawa.

Sa pulong-balitaan kahapon sa NBI headquarters, ipinrisinta sa media nina NBI deputy director and spokesperson Ferdinand Lavin, ang mga nadakip kabilang ang mga dayuhang sina Geng Ping Y Zhu at Ge Wei Chen. Ang mga nadakip ay pawang sumailalim sa inquest proceedings sa Department of Justice (DOJ) sa paglabag sa Section 103 (Theft Minerals) ng Republic Act 7942 o ang Philippine Mining Act of 1995.

Nabatid sa NBI na nagreklamo ang Palakol and

Quarry Development Corporation hinggil sa iligal na operasyon ng Riah Yuan Vibro at Antonio Buyson Quarry sa Gumain River, bahagi ng Floridablanca, Pampanga kaya nakipag-ugnayan sila sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Mines and Geosciences Bureau (DENR-MGB), kung saan nadiskubrenang walang permit na hawak ang dalawang mining company.

Sinamsam ang mga kagamitan at inaresto ang mga sangkot sa iligal na operasyon kabilang ang may-ari ng Antonio Buyson Quarry.

Natuklasan na may permit sa quarrying operations ang Buyson subalit labas naman sa area na pinapayagan sa permit ang pinagminahan. (*Ludy Bermudo*)



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By 2050, what if we can't see the forests or the trees?

By KUNDHAVI KADIRESAN

MOST of us are familiar with the saying that sometimes we “can’t see the forest for the trees.” But what if I told you, at our present rate of exploitation of our forests and depletion of our natural resources in Asia and the Pacific, that we run the risk of not seeing the forests or the trees by the middle of this century?

As a region, Asia and the Pacific has more people than any other part of the world and many areas within have very high population densities. As a result, nearly two-thirds of the forests in this region have been degraded to various degrees. Only 19 percent of primary forests remain (where human intervention has been minimal), compared with the global average of 32 percent. So what will the future of our forests look like? Will we continue down this road or will we work together to improve things?

To get a better understanding of the way forward, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has just published a wide ranging and comprehensive review of the forest sector in the Asia-Pacific region. It examines trends from the last 25 years, the current state of forests and forestry, and provides an outlook for their future to 2030 and beyond up to 2050.

This report is unique because it

looks well beyond the horizon to what our forests could look like by mid-century. I say “could look like” because the mid-century predictions depend largely on the path we take through our forests in the coming years and decades.

The report, *Asia-Pacific Forest Sector Outlook Study III*, outlines some immense challenges ahead.

First, the population of Asia and the Pacific is expected to add another 500 million people by 2030, rising to 650 million more by 2050, when about two-thirds of the region’s populations are predicted to be living in urban areas. Second, the middle class is expanding in most countries. On one hand, this increases demand for forest products and on the other, adds pressure to convert forest areas into agricultural land for a variety of uses such as animal production. These demands will add further pressure on natural resources such as soil and freshwater.



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Already, the report finds, deforestation has, through the years, left the region with huge areas of secondary forests. While replanting is, of course, to be encouraged, the loss of biodiversity from disappearing primary forests is a major concern.

The report warns that business as usual will lead us down a path that no one really wants to travel, a dead end future where natural resources have been squandered and exhausted. It suggests a more aggressive move toward an integrated landscape management plan that systematically deals with improvements in all natural resource areas—landscapes, forests, soils, water—and benefits communities.

Innovations—making use of powerful new technologies—are needed for improved governance and management to cope with future demands on forests and landscapes, including those in urban and peri-urban areas.

Clearly there is a role for all of us to play. There is an urgent need for societies to reduce consumption, increasingly reuse instead of discarding, and sustainably produce biomaterials in forests. In short, we need to find innovative ways to balance competing demands that will benefit us all.

There are, however, reasons to be optimistic and they are worth mentioning. The rate of deforestation

has been slowing in recent years. And, overall, big shifts in the way we interact with forests and landscapes are happening due to demographic changes, economic progress, technological advances, environmental awareness and improvements in governance. The traditional use of wood as a source of domestic energy is declining rapidly, due largely to increasing incomes, urbanization and the substitution of wood with electricity and LPG. The use of printing paper has declined as our society has shifted to online media and paperless workplaces.

To make sure our region maintains some of these good approaches and deals with some of the earlier mentioned challenges will take political will and cross-country cooperation of all stakeholders.

At the end of the day, if carefully managed, forests offer solutions to food insecurity, climate change, water scarcity and energy demands—but we will only take advantage of these if we take corrective action—and do so quickly. To ensure a positive and resilient future for everyone, we need to avoid going beyond the tree line.

The author is assistant director general and regional representative for Asia and the Pacific, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.



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Hot logs, lumber seized in Surigao

BUTUAN CITY – A police patrol intercepted a van loaded with illegally cut logs and lumber products in Sitio Dalit, Barangay San Isidro, Gigaquit, Surigao del Norte, early this week, Lt. Col. Christian L. Rafols II, chief of Regional Public Information Office of Police Regional Office 13 told Manila Bulletin.

“No cutting permit and no transport documents were presented by the driver and helpers during initial investigation,” police reported.

The identities of the driver and helpers were temporarily withheld as the financier or owner of the seized products

was still to be determined as of Thursday.

The van yielded 33 round logs and 9 freshly sawn lauan.

The van and its cargo were taken to the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) Depository compound in Tubod, Surigao del Norte, for final scaling and safekeeping.

CENRO officer Joseph Leo Oconer said the Tubod CENRO office and police is preparing charges against the suspects, the owner of the van and the owner of the seized forest products. (Mike U. Crismundo)



Asean ban on trash imports sought

BANGKOK—Protestors in Bangkok on Thursday dumped plastic waste in front of a government building and called on Southeast Asian leaders to ban imports of trash from developed countries.

The protest comes ahead of a weekend meeting of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations, with many countries struggling to deal with the flood of plastic waste unleashed by China's decision last year to stop importing recyclables from abroad.

Countries in ASEAN now receive more than a quarter of global plastic waste, most of which comes from developed economies like Canada, the US, Australia, and Japan.

A group of about 50 Thai activists,

some holding placards reading "No Space for Waste", joined Greenpeace campaigners to call for an end to all trash imports to Southeast Asia.

"The communities are here today to reclaim... the right to live in a sustainable environment in Thailand," said Tara Buakamsri of Greenpeace Thailand.

They called for ASEAN countries to ban the export of waste "from anywhere in the world into the region," Tara said.

The trash pile-up in Southeast Asia accelerated after China stopped accept-

ing waste in 2018, and Greenpeace says plastic refuse imports have increased by a staggering 171 percent since 2016.

The imported waste is supposed to be recycled, but sometimes arrives mixed with unrecyclable items or is improperly handled and ends up being burnt or leaking into waterways and the sea.

The issue has been in the headlines recently after the Philippines sent a huge shipment of garbage back to Canada, sparking a diplomatic row.

And last week, Indonesia returned five containers of rubbish to the US, saying it refused to be a "dumping ground."

Thailand currently imports waste from scores of countries, much of it ending up in landfills and waste disposal facilities that have prompted pollution complaints from residents.

"There is air, dust, and water pollution... it burdens the Thai people," said Jorn Naowaopas, an activist from Chachoengsao province where several dumpsites are located.

The contaminated groundwater run-off and toxic fumes caused by disposing of plastic and electronic waste can cause serious environmental and health problems if not properly treated.

The ASEAN summit, which kicks off Saturday with a foreign ministers meeting, has not put the waste issue on its agenda.

But discussions will have as a "priority" the issue of marine waste because it affects "the food chain of people worldwide," Thai government spokesman Werachon Sukondhapatipak said Wednesday. **AFP**



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Department of Environment and Natural Resources
ATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

Air pollution ranked as biggest environmental threat to human health

BY EMILY THAMPOE

UNITED NATIONS: In a world that is becoming more and more industrial by the day, air pollution appears to be on the rise.

While there have been efforts in major cities to combat the grave effects that pollution can have on the overall health of its citizens, there is still more progress to be made.

Karen Beck Pooley, a Professor of Practice of Political Science and the Director of Lehigh University's Environmental Policy Design program, told IPS: "One thing that we've always known but we haven't paid as much attention to until fairly recently is the degree to which people's immediate environments affect their health."

The importance of recognizing air pollution as a prevalent problem was emphasized by the theme of the recent 2019 World Environment Day, with official celebrations held in this year's host country, China.

Additionally, reports such as the one released recently in Sarajevo, and titled "Air Pollution and Human Health: The Case of the Western Balkans," highlighted the adverse effects on the public.

Talking on the implications of air pollution, Catriona Brady, head of the World Green Building Council's Better Places for People campaign told IPS that, "air pollution is considered to be the biggest environmental threat to human health today."

"Research shows that over 90 percent of people across the world are exposed to unsafe levels of air pollution, which includes both the population in big cities and small communities. The effect this pollution has on citizen health is quite horrifying — studies suggest that almost every organ of the human body can be affected by toxic airborne particles, and this is resulting in an approximate 7 million premature deaths each year."

Pooley notes that the actual planning of cities can have an impact on the amount of pollution produced, saying that, "The way we build our cities and the way people organize their lives in them, affect how much we need car travel or truck traffic. Or environmentally dirty things that we need like trash facilities and where these things are located and who's living in the midst of the effects of those things."

While there are positive plans, such as Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's decision to phase out coal usage in his country by 2030 or Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta's plan to ban single-use plastics from being used in the country's national parks, there are also efforts being made on both smaller and larger scales worldwide.

Pooley observes that, "At the moment,

most of the environmental conservation work and attempts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and things of that nature are coming from cities."

Brady says that her organization, "has embarked on a global 'Air Quality in Built Environment' campaign, in partnership with the Climate and Clean Air Coalition.

"With this work we've been raising awareness about the role of buildings and cities in generating emissions and air pollution, both inside and outside of buildings, and highlighting strategies that can be valuable to mitigate these. Step one is monitoring — as we can't reduce what we can't measure."

She also said: "We're advocating for the roll out of air quality monitors to provide detailed data on emissions across the world. With this data we're equipped with the necessary information to lobby our policy makers to make changes needed to clean up our energy grid, buildings, and air quality."

Pooley states that citizens can make small changes that will be helpful as well. "Cutting down on car travel can be a big help because so much pollution comes from cars. So, the more places that are walkable and bikeable and the more trips that are made by something other than cars, the less pollution we'll have."

Day to day actions can be quite helpful, but having policies put in place may also help deter the harmful effects that poor air quality is having on the lives of those who inhabit such areas.

Brady suggests something similar, while also maintaining that citizen action is important. Policy initiatives — such as the recent London Ultra Low Emission Zone — can help catalyze action toward clean air.

Policy enforcement around energy generation, building energy efficiency, construction practices, transport, waste and many other factors are vital to preserve citizen health.

"But the role of the citizen is also important; reducing the emissions from our lifestyle in terms of energy consumption and choices, diet, and transport methods are all achievable for the individual," said Brady.

"And if you're worried about being exposed to pollution by cycling or walking to work, then it's worth knowing that you're generally exposed to far higher levels of pollutants in a car in traffic or in an underground system!"

With world leaders proposing plans to help deter ruinous environmental effects and with cities implementing new policies to help out, it is clear that progress is being made in helping to create cleaner environments to live in.

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Environment stewards to guard tourism sites

MALOLOS CITY, Bulacan – To ensure security and environmental protection of the country's tourist destinations, the "Kaligkasan" (Kaligtasan at Kalikasan) program was launched in Bulacan Thursday at the Hiyas ng Bulacan Convention Center here.

Col. Chito G. Bersaluna, Bulacan police director, led the launching of the program.

Bersaluna said Kaligkasan is a project of the Philippine National Police (PNP) which taps local volunteers in protecting the ecology of tourism sites.

Elizabeth Apresto, head of the Bulacan Environment and Natural Resources Office (BENRO), joined force multipliers from municipalities and cities in the province in pledging their commitment as environment stewards.

The launching was attended by Col. Rhoderick C. Armamento, Central Luzon police deputy regional director for Operation (DRDO) with Director Arthur C Salazar, CESO 1V ARD, for Technical Services, DENR regional office for Central Luzon, as guest of honor and speaker.

In his speech, Salazar said environmental conservation is everybody's commitment and shared responsibilities of government agencies tasked to protect and preserve our natural resources.

"Hand and hand, we endeavor to safeguard Mother Nature so that future generations will still be able to experience its beauty and abundance." Salazar added. (Freddie C. Velez)



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200 eco-warrior ng Nueva Ecija nanumpa

NANUMPA kahapon ang mahigit sa 200 eco-warriors sa paglulunsad ng OPLAN: Kaligtasan-Kalikasan (KALIGKASAN) na itinataguyod ng Nueva Ecija Police Provincial Office (NEPPO), katuwang ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Sa launching ceremonies na idinaos sa NEPPO gym ay nilinaw ni Police Colonel Leon Victor Rosete, NE police director, sa pamamagitan ni Police Major Manuel Catacutan, chief ng police community relations, na layunin ng programa na mapagibayo ang "environmental consciousness" ng mamamayan.

Kasama sa programa ang mga taga Provincial Environmental and Natural Resources, Provincial Tourism Office, Kapisanan ng mga Broadcaster ng Pilipinas-NE chapter at mga volunteers mula sa 27 bayan at limang lungsod ng lalawigan.

Ayon kay PENRO Joelito Blanco unang tuturuan ang mga volunteer ukol sa mga batas pangkalikasan; tulad ng mga environmental at forestry laws, bago itatalagang tagapangalaga ng mga tourist destination sites sa Nueva Ecija.

Kabilang umano sa puntirang aalagaan ang Minalungao Heritage Park, Pantabangan dam water reservoir at mga water lakes sa Cuyapo, Rizal at iba pa.

Ikinagalak din ni Blanco na ang paglulunsad ay itinaon sa buwan ng Hunyo na "environment month". (Jojo de Guzman)



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE



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NGO ON ADB:

'Act now on climate crisis in Asia-Pacific'

THE Asian Development Bank's (ADB) is holding its 14th Asia Clean Energy Forum (ACEF) this week from 17 - 21 June 2019. The NGO Forum on ADB along with its member partners demands the ADB to meaningfully act on the urgency of climate crisis in the Asia - Pacific. In 2018, multilateral development banks (MDBs) including the ADB created a joint framework for aligning their activities with the goals of the Paris Agreement.

In ADB's Strategy 2030 it has increased its committed operations supporting climate change mitigation and adaptation to 75% in 11 years time and set to prioritize investments for a low-carbon economy. "However despite this rhetoric, ADB's deafening silence on retiring coal-fired power plants it had earlier funded in the region and banning financing for fossil fuels speaks in stark contrast with this commitment," Annabel Perreras, Advocacy Coordinator, NGO Forum on ADB.

CSOs demand that ADB, as a standard bearer for other MDBs, should adopt stringent measures in accordance with the 1.5-degree pathway. According to Rayyan Hassan, Executive Director of NGO Forum on ADB, "In order for the Bank to demonstrate its commitment in unambiguous terms, it should have a time-

bound phase-out plan for natural gas and intensify investments on renewable energy projects that are neither harmful to the environment nor to the affected communities."

According to Gerry Arances, Executive Director of Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development (CEED), "It is high time for ADB to make use of decentralized renewable energy microgrids like in the case of the Philippines. These have been proven to be an effective alternative in providing clean, affordable and accessible electricity particularly among unelectrified and remote households, small island grids and impoverished communities and even in metropolis like Metro Manila where electricity prices are rising"

Lastly, CSOs demand that the ADB should start pursuing distributed renewable energy systems because it maximizes energy access and advances energy democracy. It is designed on the principle of doing no harm to the environment, supports local economies and contributes to the health and well-being of all people. By investing in distributed renewable energy systems, essentially this also contributes to fulfilling ADB's commitment to improving governance and meet the Bank's stated objective of ensuring energy access for all.



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NGO sa ADB: Climate crisis sa Asia-Pacific, aksyunan!

HINIKAYAT ng isang non-government organizations (NGO), mga miyembro at partners nito sa Asian Development Bank (ADB) na aksyunan ang climate crisis sa Asia Pacific kasabay ng ika-14 Asia Clean Energy Forum (ACEF) na sinimulan nitong June 17 at magtatapos sa June 21, 2019.

Noong 2018, ang multilateral development banks (MDBs) kabilang ang ADB ay gumawa ng 'joint framework' para sa mga aktibidad na may kinalaman sa Paris agreement. Nabatid na sa ADB Strate-

gy 2030, itinaas nito sa 75% ang kanilang operasyon sa pagsuporta sa 'climate change mitigation' at 'adaptation' sa loob ng 11-taon at nangakong uunahin na mag-invest sa 'low-carbon economy.'

"However despite this rhetoric, ADB's deafening silence on retiring coal-fired power plants it had earlier funded in the region and banning financing for fossil fuels speaks in stark contrast with this commitment," ayon kay Annabel Perreras, advocacy coordinator ng NGO Forum on ADB.

Binigyang-diin naman ni

Gerry Arances, Executive Director ng Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development (CEED), panahon na para idesentralisado ng ADB ang 'renewable energy microgrids' gaya ng sa Pilipinas.

Aniya, napatunayan nang epektibong alternatibo para sa pagkakaroon ng malinis at abot-kayang elektrisidad ang 'renewable energy microgrids' partikular sa mga isla at remote area sa Metro Manila.

Kabilang sa mga NGO na nanawagan sa ADB na aksyunan ang nararanasang 'climate crisis' ay ang Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCJ), Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development (CEED), NGO Forum on the ADB, Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC), Sanlakas at mga

kinatawan mula sa komunidad na apektado sa ADB-backed project sa Zambales.

JAN SINOCRUZ



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NGO sa ADB: Climate Crisis sa Asia-Pacific, aksiyunan

HINIKAYAT ng Non-governmental organizations (NGO), mga miyembro at partners nito sa Asian Development Bank's (ADB) na aksiyunan ang nagaganap na 'climate crisis' sa Asia Pacific, kasabay nang kanilang isinagawang ika-14 na Asia Clean Energy Forum (ACEF) na sinimulan nitong June 17 at magtatapos sa June 21, 2019.

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Binigyang-diin naman ni Gerry Arances, Executive Director of Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development (CEED), na panahon na para idesentralisado ng ADB ang 'renewable energy microgrids' gaya ng sa Pilipinas.

"It is high time for ADB to make use of decentralized renewable energy microgrids like in the case of the Philippines. These have been proven to be an effective alternative in providing clean, affordable and accessible electricity particularly among unelectrified and remote households, small island grids and impoverished communities and even in metropolis like Metro Manila where electricity prices are rising," paliwanag ni Arances, Executive Director of Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development (CEED).

Kabilang sa mga NGO na nanawagan sa ADB na aksiyunan ang nararanasang 'climate crisis' ay ang Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCI); Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development (CEED); NGO Forum on the ADB; Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC); Sanlakas; at mga kinatawan mula sa komunidad na apektado sa ADB-backed project sa Zambales.

Anila, sa paglalagak ng investment sa 'distributed renewable energy systems', mahalagang makatutulong ito sa pagtupad ng commitment ng ADB sa pagpapabuti ng governance at pagtupad sa Bank's stated objective na pag-sisiguro ng energy access para sa lahat.



NGO sa ADB: Climate Crisis sa Asia-Pacific, aksiyonan

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"However despite this rhetoric, ADB's deafening silence on retiring coal-fired power plants it had earlier funded in the region and banning financing for fossil fuels speaks in stark contrast with this commitment," ayon kay Annabel Ferreras, Advocacy Coordinator, NGO Forum on ADB.

Binigyang-diin ni Gerry Arances, Executive Director of Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development (CEED), na panahon na para idesentralisado ng ADB ang 'renewable energy microgrids' gaya ng sa Filipinas.

Aniya, ito ay napatunayan nang epektibong

alternatibo para sa pagkakaroon ng malinis, abot-kaya at mapupuntahang elektrisidad partikular ng mga naninirahan sa mga isla at remote area, maging sa Metro Manila.

"It is high time for ADB to make use of decentralized renewable energy microgrids like in the case of the Philippines. These have been proven to be an effective alternative in providing clean, affordable and accessible electricity particularly among unelectrified and remote households, small island grids and impoverished communities and even in metropolis like Metro Manila where electricity prices are rising," paliwanag ni Arances, Executive Director of Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development (CEED).

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ADB kinalampag sa 'Climate Crisis sa Asia Pacific'

Kinalampag ng Non-governmental organizations (NGO), mga miyembro at partner nito ang Asian Development Bank's (ADB) upang agad na aksiyunan ang 'climate crisis' sa Asia Pacific, kasabay nang kanilang isinagawang ika-14 na Asia Clean Energy Forum (ACEF) na sinimulan nitong Hunyo 17 at magtatapos sa Hunyo 21, 2019.

Sa press conference kahapon sa Quezon City, nabatid na noong 2018, ang multilateral development banks (MDBs) kabilang ang ADB ay gumawa ng 'joint framework' para sa kanilang mga aktibidad na may kinalaman sa Paris Agreement.

Sa estratehiya para sa 2030, itinaas ng ADB sa 75% ang kanilang operasyon sa pagsuporta sa 'climate change mitigation' at 'adaptation' sa loob ng 11-taon at nangakong uunahin na mag-invest sa

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(Dolly Cabreza)



Tree-planting sa Iloilo ngayong Sabado

INAASAHANG halos 1,000 volunteers ang makikiisa sa gaganaping tree-planting activity ng probinsiyal na pamahalaan ng Iloilo ngayong Sabado, Hunyo 22.

Sa pagbabahagi ni Lawyer Arturo Cangrejo, officer-in-charge ng Provincial Environment and Natural Resources (PENRO), sinabi nitong ang idaraos na tree-planting activity sa komunidad ng Pangilihan, Janiuay ay bahagi ng pagdiriwang ng Philippine Arbor Day tuwing ika-25 ng Hunyo.

"We propose to plant 7,500 seedlings, including forest trees and fruit-bearing trees, such as cacao, duhat (Java plum), and jackfruit," pahayag ni Cangrejo sa isang panayam nitong Martes.

Nanawagan naman si Cangrejo sa lahat ng mga katuwang na sektor, ahensiya at mga mamamayan ng Iloilo na makilahok din sa aktibidad na isasagawa.

Pinaalalahanan din niya ang mga makikiisa na magdala ng tubig ngunit inirekomenda niya na huwag gumamit ng mga single-use water plastic bottles.

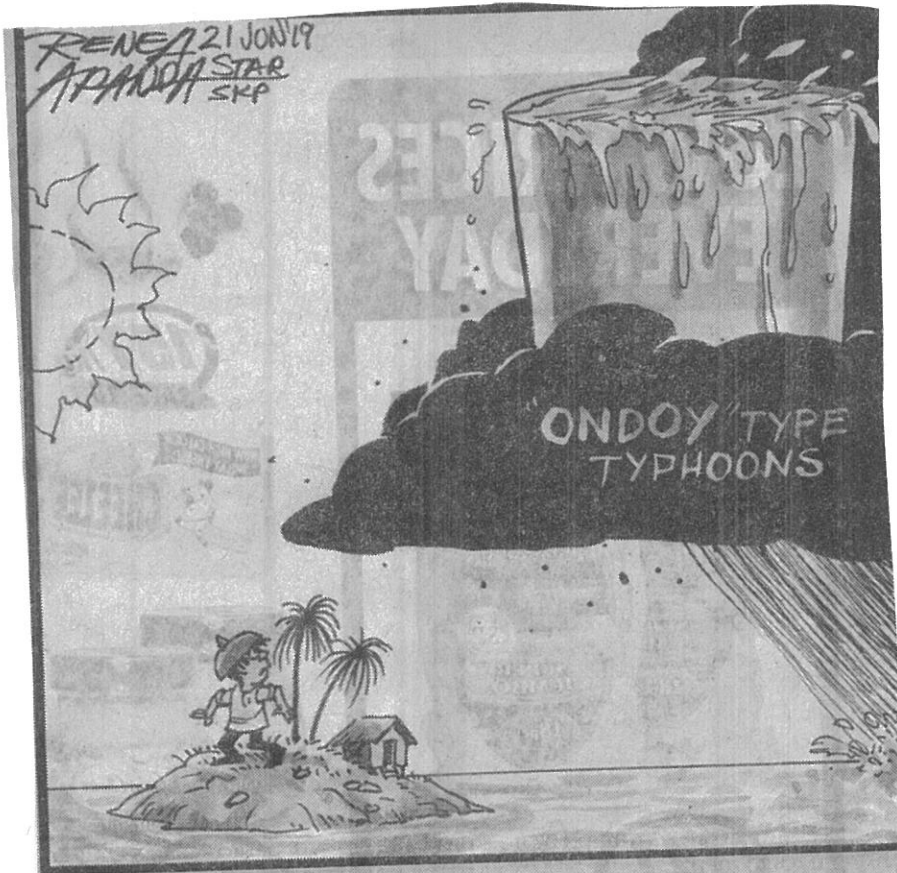
"We advise them to bring their own water bottle. The PENRO will provide water to refill their containers," aniya.

Dagdag pa dito, hinikayat din niya ang mga lalahok sa programa na magsuot ng tamang kasuotan para sa aktibidad.

Magtatagpo, aniya, ang mga kalahok sa Ceres Motorpool, Dungon B village sa lungsod na ito ng distrito ng Jaro.

Taunang ipinagdiriwang ang Philippine Arbor Day upang maisulong ang mas malusog na ecosystem.

Isinasaad sa Proclamation No. 396 ang "active participation of all government agencies, including government-owned and -controlled corporations, private sector, schools, civil society groups, and the citizenry in the tree-planting activity."



Preparing for another Ondoy

Ten years ago, Tropical Storm Ondoy dumped a month's average volume of rainfall in just six hours in many areas of Luzon. During that brief period, people, cars and shanties were carried away by rampaging floodwaters in Metro Manila. Residents scrambled to their rooftops as floods rose at incredible speed, inundating homes, shutting down roads and isolating many areas.

A week later, families were still mourning the hundreds who died and the floods had not yet subsided in many communities when Typhoon Pepeng ravaged the same areas, aggravating the suffering of those affected by Ondoy. After several weeks, the floods still had not completely subsided in certain communities such as those around Laguna de Bay, where residents also had to contend with an outbreak of leptospirosis.

EDITORIAL

Weather experts attributed the heavy rainfall to an El Niño phenomenon in that year. Meteorologists explain that the unusually warm ocean temperature in this part of the planet during an El Niño triggers strong evaporation and condensation, producing heavy rainfall during the wet season. The weather experts have alerted the public to prepare for the possibility of Ondoy-like storms this year following the drought that has dried up farmlands and led to water rationing even in Metro Manila.

The death and destruction from Ondoy and Pepeng led to the enactment of Republic Act 10121, the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010. RA 10121 provides a framework for dealing with natural calamities. The law must be revisited to ensure that all sectors are sufficiently prepared for another Ondoy.



TRASH PILEUP IN NEIGHBORHOODS

DELAY ON ROAD REPAIR HAMPERS GARBAGE COLLECTION

IN BULACAN TOWNS

CITY OF SAN JOSE DEL MONTE—Tons of garbage remain uncollected in seven towns and a city in Bulacan province as repairs on the damaged road leading to a private sanitary landfill here have been delayed.

Gov. Wilhelmino Sy-Alvarado called for an emergency meeting on Thursday to seek solutions to a looming garbage crisis.

Dump trucks of the Wacuman sanitary landfill at Barangay San Mateo in Norzagaray town had stopped hauling garbage on May 24 after a portion of Igay Road here collapsed due to landslides caused by incessant rains.

Gerry Cenal, Wacuman architect and administrator, said the road collapsed due to its substan-

dard materials. The road is 3 kilometers from the Wacuman dump.

Elizabeth Apresto, head of the Bulacan provincial environment and natural resources office, said the road had not been repaired due to legal issues.

Some of the affected towns

have identified landfill areas in the provinces of Pampanga, Tarlac and Rizal, and in Navotas City in Metro Manila as alternative dumps.

Emelita Lingat, head of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Bula-

can, said her office had been monitoring if local governments were already sending their garbage to sanitary landfills outside the province.

But Apresto said local governments in the towns of Bulakan, Baliwag, Paombong, Hagonoy,

Doña Remedios Trinidad, San Miguel and Balagtas, and the City of Malolos had yet to remove their garbage that had piled up on the streets and in residential areas.

"Some of the affected local governments find it expensive to take their garbage outside the

province and are just waiting for Wacuman landfill to operate again," Apresto told the Inquirer.

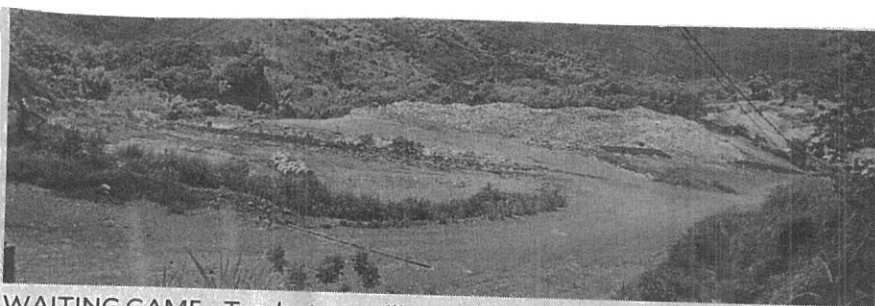
Closure

On April 22, Mayor Alfredo Germar of Norzagaray ordered the closure of Wacuman dump for operating without a business permit.

The landfill operator had a dispute with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas over property ownership but the firm had continued operating despite this.

Lormelyn Claudio, Environmental Management Bureau chief in Central Luzon, earlier directed the affected local governments to resolve the garbage problem within a week. —CARMELA

REYES-ESTROPE INQ



WAITING GAME Trash starts piling up in communities, like in Bulakan town (right photo), while local governments wait for a sanitary landfill in Norzagaray town to resume its operation. —CARMELA REYES-ESTROPE



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Daily Tribune

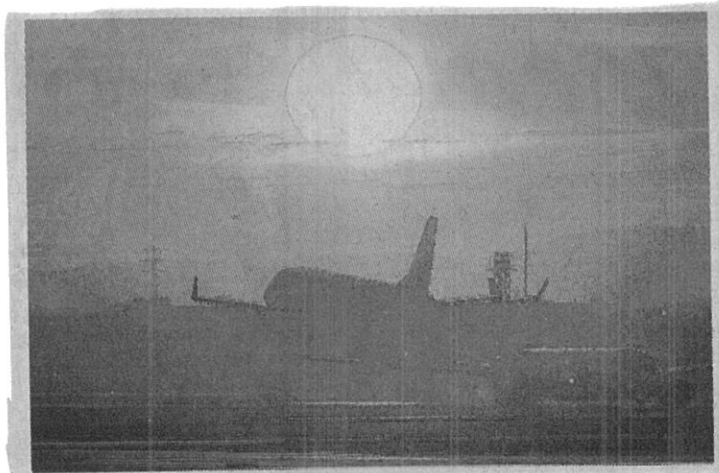
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DUSK provides a backdrop to a plane as it takes off amid revelations by environmentalist groups that flying contributes more to carbon dioxide emissions than previously thought.

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Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Strategic Communication Initiatives Service

The Manila Times
www.manilatimes.net

Regions

Negros governor open to coal plants

BY EUGENE Y. ADIONG

BACOLOD CITY: Governor-elect Eugenio Jose Lacson said he would not refile the proposed ordinance to declare Negros Occidental as "coal free," which will virtually open the province to investors wanting to put up a coal-fired power plants.

Lacson said right now, Executive Order (EO) 19-08, as issued by outgoing governor Alfredo Marañon Jr. on March 7, does not carry much weight.

The EO declares that only clean and renewable sources of energy will be allowed in the province.

It reinforces the Renewable Energy (RE) Act of 2008, which encourages the development and utilization of RE sources as tools to effectively prevent

or reduce harmful emissions thereby balance the goals of economic growth and development while protecting health and environment.

"More and more countries have been decommissioning its coal-fired power plants due to the damage it causes to the environment and in fact have been shifting to RE projects," it said, adding that with proper technology transfer, the province has the landscape, capac-

ity, and resources for further development and investment in RE projects.

The EO also tasked all department heads in the provincial government to pursue a policy on renewable energy.

It also directed the establishment of the Provincial Renewable Energy Council, a policy-making body in formulating measures encouraging renewable energy programs for a greener and energy-sufficient province. The council will be chaired by the governor.

The order also recommended to the *Sangguniang Panlalawigan* (Provincial Council) the passage of Renewable Energy Ordinance, further stating opposition to the setting up of a coal-fired power plant in the province

However, this has not been

acted upon by the Sanggunian Panlalawigan.

Meanwhile, the committees on energy and environment, which were tasked to conduct hearings, have not submitted any report yet.

Board member Romel Debulgado, chairman of the Committee on Environment on Wednesday, said they already visited the coal plant in Iloilo City.

According to Debulgado, there was no significant impact on the environment despite being located in the city proper.

He said it also spurred the economy in the surrounding communities.

In 2018, the SMC Global Power Corp. expressed its intention to develop a 300-megawatt circulating-fluidized-bed coal-fired power plant in San Carlos City, Negros Occidental.



PHL's resiliency projects not fairly distributed — WB

THE World Bank said the government needs to adopt a new method for estimating disaster damage that goes beyond asset losses, because the current approach tends to highlight the value of projects in or near the National Capital Region (NCR).

In its "Lifelines: The Resilient Infrastructure Opportunity" report, the World Bank said: "the most important interventions will take place

in the Manila area if asset losses are the main measure of disaster impacts."

"Assessments of national risk and identification of critical infrastructure need to account for multiple policy objectives and therefore, use a set of metrics that goes beyond asset losses," it added.

The World Bank noted that the Philippines was able to save more than \$1 billion because of natural systems that protect the coastlines against flood and storm surges. It said that nature-based solutions for flood protection reduce the need for hard infrastructure such as dikes.

"In the Philippines, mangroves, reefs and other natural system prevent more

than \$1 billion in annual disaster losses," the bank said.

Other countries that benefit from the protection provided by reefs are Cuba, Indonesia, Malaysia and Mexico, the World Bank said, noting that these countries save an estimated \$400 million each from flood damage annually.

The World Bank also noted the importance of service providers having contingency plans in

case of power interruptions.

"In the Philippines, after a typhoon, water tankers (have been) contracted to ensure service continuity despite infrastructure damage."

The World Bank said it is necessary for resilience measures to be fairly distributed across populations and backed by metrics based on socioeconomic impacts on the affected population.

In a separate statement, World Bank Group President David Malpass said, "Resilient infrastructure is not about roads or power plants alone. It is about the people, the households and the communities for whom this quality infrastructure is a lifeline to better education and better livelihoods."

— Reicelene Joy N. Ignacio



THE WORLD BANK



A LAW EACH DAY

[Keeps Trouble Away]

JOSE C. SISON

Unending controversies

Since the start of his term in 2016, controversies and confusions continue to hound Duterte (PRRD) and his administration. And it is quite clear that no one else can be blamed except PRRD himself and his officials. Their unclear and sometimes contradicting statements have really brought about so many controversies and have caused a lot of doubts and disorientations on so many people.



The most recent dissensions and disputes were about this government's refusal to allow the United Nations to investigate its various human rights violations. They have not yet completely died down but another controversy has already arisen. This is about the ramming and capsizing of a Philippine fishing boat with 22 Filipino fishermen on board by a Chinese vessel along the Recto Bank in the West Philippine Sea. The incident becomes even more striking and deplorable because the Chinese did not rescue the Filipino fishermen who were left adrift at sea for hours thus endangering their lives.

This maritime incident which occurred last June 9 should have elicited an immediate reaction from this government because the lives of 22 Filipinos were endangered and a Philippine fishing boat was damaged and sunk. Indeed the Captain of the Filipino fishing boat upon his rescue together with the rest of the fishermen by a Vietnamese vessel narrated that their boat was hit by the Chinese vessel causing it to capsize but its crew left them adrift at sea.

Intriguingly, this government especially PRRD kept quiet for quite a time although his Defense Secretary Lorenzana has initially deplored such maritime disaster particularly his denunciation of the vessel's captain for not ordering the rescue of the Filipino fishermen. PRRD's silence once more drew lots of adverse comments, conclusion and speculations by most Filipinos. The more obnoxious among them is the observation that PRRD is really pro China as many have already surmised before. In fact he was even accused of treason for such long silence on the incident. His beleaguered Spokesman Salvador Panelo once more tried to explain PRRD's silence by claiming the President was just being cautious and wanting to get all the facts first.

The most deplorable and unfortunate aspect of this episode is PRRD's assessment of the incident after being silent for more than a week. He downplayed the ramming of the Filipino fishing boat and declared that it was just "a little maritime accident." Such assessment again drew the ire of so many of our countrymen because PRRD seemed to confirm the belief of a great number of Filipinos that he is afraid of China and that he favors China and the Chinese over his own country and people. This is the consensus among a great number of Filipinos because even if the hitting of the fishing boat is just a minor event, the fact remains that 22 lives of Filipinos were endangered because the crew of the Chinese vessel did not rescue them and just left them adrift at sea. Such inhuman act cannot be definitely considered as a minor incident because the lives of our countrymen were exposed to great danger. PRRD's own Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. said in his speech at the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), said that "abandoning people in distress is a felony." Thus the government should have at least filed a diplomatic protest against China.

As it is now emerging, and based on the conclusions of most Filipinos, the long silence of PRRD and his officials on this maritime incident has a reason. They were indeed preparing sufficient proof to support their soft assessment. Thus the very captain of the fishing vessel has changed his tune and said that he did not actually see the whole incident as he was asleep when it happened. He even confirmed that the collision of the two boats was really an accident. His turn around came after Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Pinol talked to him. So people are now concluding that the ship captain of the fishing boat was "convinced" to recant his previous declaration in order to support PRRD's assessment belittling the maritime collision. Another official who appears to have softened his stance and change his assessment of the maritime collision is Secretary of National Defense Delfin Lorenzana. While PRRD kept his silence on the matter, he already angrily denounced the incident and assailed the captain of the Chinese vessel for not rescuing the Filipino fishermen. Now he is defending PRRD's initial silence allegedly because he did not have enough information yet about the incident. Furthermore he now agrees with PRRD that the fishing boat incident really appears to be just a minor accident based on the information gathered. Then of course Presidential Spokesman Panelo also joined the chorus and disputed the notions that PRRD does not want to offend China when he broke his silence and came out with a statement that the sinking of the Filipino boat is a "little maritime accident."

This on-going notion about PRRD's being Pro-China or that he is "scared" of China will not be completely dissipated because PRRD's policies and actions really appear to favor China. When he assumed office, he already announced a major change in foreign policy by shifting his preference for China than the US. Such shift may really be for our best interest. The problem however is that people cannot erase the growing impression that our country is now under the control of China much like the previous relations we had with the US where we could not completely cut-off our dependence on said country after regaining our independence in 1946. So it will be better for this administration to refrain from appearing to be too dependent on China also.

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Duterte off to Bangkok for Asean summit

President Duterte will leave for Bangkok today to participate in the 34th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit hosted this year by Thailand. He and his delegation will leave this afternoon from his home province Davao, Malacañang said.

He is expected to attend the ASEAN Leaders' Interface with representatives of ASEAN Inter-parliamentary assembly (AIPA) tomorrow, which follows an earlier meeting with heads of Thailand's top business groups.

The ASEAN Leaders' Interface will also be done with the ASEAN Business Advisory Council and representatives of the ASEAN Youth.

Barring any hitches, Duterte will be attending the 34th ASEAN plenary to be followed by the gala dinner, also on Saturday.

The President's schedule will be packed on Sunday with the ASEAN Leaders' retreat and the 13th Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMPEAGA) Summit.

There are also efforts for a possible bilateral meeting between Duterte and Thailand's leader, the Department of Foreign Affairs said during the pre-departure briefing last Tuesday.

During the briefing for the media delegation, Foreign Affairs Assistant Secretary Junever Mahilum-

West said the issues over the incident at Reed Bank could be tackled during the ASEAN as he is not discounting the possibility that the Philippines may have an "opening" to discuss the matter during the exchange of views on regional developments.

The matter may also crop up during the discussions on regional and international developments as the South China Sea will be on the agenda and the leaders are going to exchange views on this issue, he added.

The Philippines is coordinator of the ASEAN-China dialogue partnership from 2018 to 2021.

During this coordinatorship, West said the Philippines is negotiating with ASEAN member-states and China on the Code of Conduct for the South China Sea, on the South China Sea.

"And in these negotiations, incidents like what happened to our fishermen will be among those on the agenda," he said.

"During the exchange of views on regional developments, there is an opening to raise these issues. Because incidents like what happened emphasize the importance of having a Code of Conduct so that we could avoid, we could prevent these incidents from happening in the future," West said.

- Christina Mendez

SKETCHES ANA MARIE PAMINTUAN

Accountability

The maritime incident near Recto Bank will soon be resolved - with the Philippines apologizing to China for causing trouble.



That was the joke yesterday following the amendment of the Filipino fishing boat captain's story of what happened on June 9. This was after Agriculture Secretary Manny Piñol distributed cash assistance and 11 fishing boats to the 22 crewmembers of the Gem-Vir (GemVer) boat in their home province of Occidental Mindoro.

Piñol yesterday denied bribing or scaring the captain to change his narrative and apologize to President Duterte. The agriculture chief, who became the subject of nasty jokes, stressed that several of the other fishermen had not changed their stories about what happened.

With the Philippine government amenable to a joint investigation with China, however, a number of those who believed the fishermen's original narration of events have simply shifted to the national pastime of jumping to conclusions, giving up on any formal probe.

The Chinese government has a point: Beijing is enjoying the best of ties with Manila, thanks to the friendship offered by President Duterte. Why should China jeopardize those ties by having its vessel deliberately ram a Filipino fishing boat?

Unfortunately for bilateral ties, there are possible answers to that "why" - foremost of which is that Chinese maritime militias are on a mission to enforce their nine-dash-line claim over nearly the entire South China Sea, and the Philippines is in the way.

The claimed area includes Recto or Reed Bank off Occidental Mindoro, over which the Philippines was awarded sovereign rights by the United Nations-backed Permanent Court of Arbitration, based on the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea or UNCLOS.

In accordance with that ruling, the Philippines has exclusive economic rights over Recto Bank. Chinese boats aren't even supposed to be there, although of course Beijing does not recognize the arbitral court ruling even if it is a signatory to UNCLOS.

That "why" also does not address the abandonment of the Filipino fishermen in the water after their boat was hit. Beijing has retracted its initial claim that the Chinese ship had fled to avoid a swarm of other Filipino vessels in the area. Even without the satellite images belying this story, the narrative still stretched credulity. If there was indeed such a swarm, why did it take four hours for the fishermen to be rescued - and by a Vietnamese boat? (The Vietnamese weren't supposed to be in our economic zone either, but Filipinos are grateful that they were.)

A joke that went around last Tuesday was that the 22 Filipino fishermen might soon be included in the matrix of individuals supposedly plotting to oust President Duterte. This was fueled by Duterte's statement that critics considered to be dismissive of the plight of the 22 fishermen.

Duterte's spokesman Salvador Panelo has a point in stressing that conflicting statements must be reconciled, especially on such a diplomatically sensitive issue as this one. Panelo seems impressively prescient; certain details in the fishermen's story that he questioned were among those that were changed the next day in the Gem-Vir captain's narrative.

Malacañang may want to pay attention to public sentiment about a Chinese invasion of sorts. All over Metro Manila, Chinese enclaves are sprouting, with buildings rapidly being constructed for online gaming activities, supported by grocery stores and Chinese-only dining places.

Being part-Chinese, I should be glad to see my mainland "cousins" swarming (that word again) all over Metro Manila. But this does not stop a Filipino like me from questioning the cousins' exclusivity and disregard for the requirements of doing business in my country.

Now they are not only disregarding our sovereign rights over Recto Bank, but also (if the original Gem-Vir story is accurate) leaving our fishermen to the mercy of sharks.

On Wednesday, passions were tempered by reports of the Philippines' official response to the incident: Foreign Affairs Secretary Teddyboy Locsin had brought it to the attention of the United Nations in New York, during a gathering to mark the anniversary of UNCLOS.

Locsin said abandoning people in distress at sea was a "felony" and a contravention of UNCLOS, to which both the Philippines and China are signatories.

Panelo, who has been previously contradicted by Locsin, said the next day that abandonment at sea is OK if the potential rescuers themselves face threats. But Beijing has already retracted the story of the Chinese vessel fleeing because it was "swarmed" by Filipino boats.

Prof. Rommel Banlaoi, president of the Philippine Association for Chinese Studies, says he has reached out to his friends from the Chinese mainland following the Recto Bank incident.

Facing us on "The Chiefs" this week on Cignal TV's One News channel, Banlaoi stressed that the two countries have many areas of cooperation that must not be jeopardized by the Recto Bank incident.

But at the same time, he said, "we want accountability, we want compensation for the fishermen, and we want the (Chinese) activities to stop."

Will the crew of the Chinese fishing boat be penalized? Will they be hailed as heroes by Beijing for staking their claim in Recto Bank? Will they be promoted in the Chinese People's Armed Forces Maritime Militia?

The US Defense Department's 2018 annual report submitted to Congress notes that this militia, placed some months ago under the Chinese military, is unique in the world, carrying out "confrontational operations short of war" in pursuit of Beijing's geopolitical objectives in the waters around China.

After initially renting small boats from private fishing firms, Beijing decided to build its own ships with built-in arsenals for its maritime militia. Banlaoi said the provincial government in Hainan now has 84 of these vessels.

One of those vessels is believed to have hit the Gem-Vir. What would Chinese accountability entail? Banlaoi replied: an apology from the Chinese boat crew and their identification, so that Filipinos will know how Beijing would deal with them.

"I tell my Chinese friends it's triggering our patriotism," Banlaoi said. "It's uniting us."



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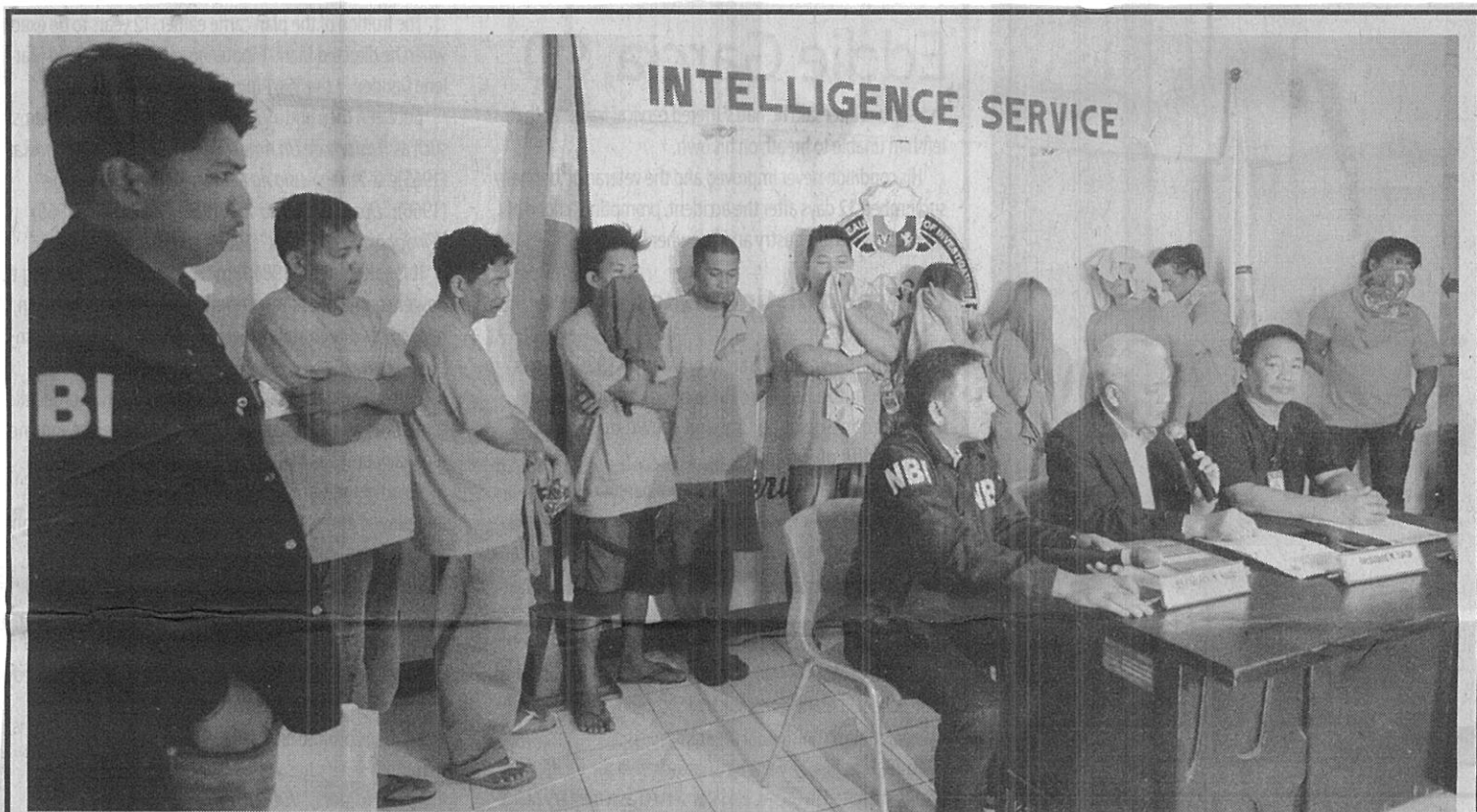
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Department of Environment and Natural Resources
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE



FORBIDDEN TO MINE The National Bureau of Investigation Deputy Director Ferdinand Lavin presents to media on Thursday, two Chinese nationals and nine Filipinos who were arrested in Floridablanca, Pampanga for illegal quarrying. PHOTO BY ENRIQUE AGCALI