

DATE : 13 SEP 2010

DAY : Friday

# DENR

## IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



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**Cimatu resumes Pasig River cleanup**

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu affirmed his objective to rehabilitate the Pasig River as the new chair of its rehabilitation commission during his first visit to the office on Tuesday. "We have to clean up and maintain the 3-meter easements. This is what we will do in all esteros in Metro Manila," Cimatu said. —JHESSET O. ENANO

TRIMMING GONE WRONG?

# POWER CO-OP FACES RAPS OVER 'KILLING' OF 125 TREES IN PAMPANGA

By Tonette Orejas  
@ttorejasINQ

**CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—**The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Wednesday filed criminal cases against five officials and personnel of the Pampanga Electric Cooperative (Pelco) 1 for cutting 125 trees in two towns last month.

Laudemir Salac, the DENR officer in Pampanga, said the cases were filed in the provincial prosecutor's office.

Pelco 1 is accused of cutting 47 trees by the roadsides in the villages of San Pedro and San Juan in Sta. Ana town and 78 trees at Barangay San Ildefonso in Magalang town on Aug. 30.

## Trimmed, not cut

These were mostly acacia and narra trees. Those in Magalang were planted under the government's National Greening Program.

"These are cases of trimming and pruning gone wrong," Salac said, adding that



**TREE MASSACRE** At least 47 trees, mostly acacia, are cut by an electric cooperative in Sta. Ana town, Pampanga province. The cooperative's officials, however, say they only "trimmed" the trees due to public safety concerns. —CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

the Pelco 1 officials were sued for violating Presidential Decree No. 705 (Forestry Reform Code of the Philippines).

Included in the complaint were Pelco 1 general manager Loliano Allas and five officials.

Allas on Thursday said they

would answer the complaints but insisted in an earlier interview that the trees were only trimmed and these were covered by a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with a former DENR official in 1999.

He said the trimming was

coordinated with the DENR for two months and that two DENR personnel were also at the site during the activity.

## Public safety

"We trimmed out of concern for public safety," he added.

Citing the account of an area manager, Allas said it was not true that Pelco 1 felled 78 trees in Magalang. "Someone cut the trees," he said, adding that the culprit was being identified at this time.

Photos circulating on social media showed that several trees lost their branches and their trunks standing at not more than 2 meters.

Salac said he had recommended the revocation of the MOA signed by then regional DENR director, Gregorio Nisperos.

He also asked local officials to cancel the permits of chainsaws owned by Pelco 1 and ordered the cooperative to plant 100 trees for each of the 47 trees cut. INQ



## Illegally cut lumber seized in Cagayan

**By Brenda Jocson**

PAMPLONA, Cagayan—More than 2,491 board feet of illegally cut lumbers worth P62,265 were confiscated by police operatives in this town, as the municipal government intensifies its campaign against rampant illegal logging in the area.

The Police Regional Office 2 said the lumber, which were loaded in a motorized boat, were intercepted by the Pamplona police while conducting a patrol in Barangay Tabba, in collaboration with the local government unit here and a team from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Police Brig. Gen. Jose Mario Espino, PRO2 director, identified the suspect transporting the lumber in assorted sizes as Silvester Aquitana, 45, a resident of Barangay Cabbagan in Pamplona.

Espino said a case is being prepared against Aquitana for violation of Presidential Decree 705 or the Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines.

The confiscated lumber were temporarily placed under the custody of village officials in Tabba, Pamplona, who will hand over the products to the DENR for proper disposition.



## ARAW-ARAW TUMATAAS ANG ANTAS NG TUBIG SA ANGAT DAM

NOONG ika-1 ng Setyembre, 2019, ibinalik na ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) ang kanilang alokasyon para sa Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) at dalawang konsesyunaryo, Manila Water Company, Inc at Maynilad Water Services Inc, mula sa 36cms itinaas sa 40CMS. Ang alokasyon para sa irigasyon ay nananatili sa 36cms metro kubiko bawat segundo hanggang sa katapusan ng buwan.

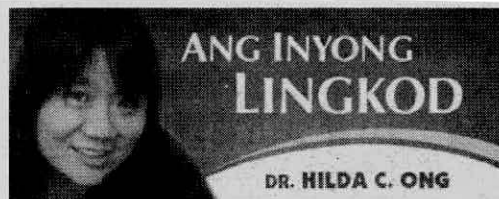
Ayon kay Dr. Seville David, Jr. Executive Director ng NWRB, sa ngayon, ang lebel ng tubig sa Angat Dam ay mahigit na sa minimum operating level na 180 meters, ngunit, mababa pa rin kung ikukumpara sa normal high water level (NHWL) na 210 meters, malayo pa rin sa end of the year target na 212 meters.

Ayon pa rin kay David, kung patuloy ang pag-ulan sa susunod na araw hanggang

sa susunod na linggo, ang alokasyon na 40cms para sa MWSS ay mananatili pa rin hanggang katapusan ng Setyembre.

Base sa ulat ibinigay sa inyong lingkod, ang antas ng tubig sa Angat Dam ay nasa 184.96 metro kahapon (September 11, 2019, 8:00am). Mapapansin sa mga datos, araw-araw tumataas ang antas ng tubig. Dahil sa madalas na ang pag-ulan at tumataas nang bahagya ang lebel ng tubig araw-araw.

Ang panalanging nating



DR. HILDA C. ONG

lahat, sana, tuloy-tuloy ang pag-ulan lalo na sa bahagi o sa paligid ng Norzagaray Bulacan. Gumamit man tayo ng tubig, hindi natin mararamdaman ang pagbaba ng antas ng tubig.

Makakaipon pa tayo para may magamit hanggang sa katapusan ng 2019, kailangan din siguraduhing ng NWRB na may nakalaan para sa panahon ng tag-init sa susunod na taon 2020.

Ang mungkahi at desisyon ng NWRB na dahan-dahan ang pagtaas ng paglaan ng tubig para sa domestic consumption ay hindi na makakaapekto sa pag-supply para sa Metro Manila.

Ang hakbang na ito ay isang estratehiko upang makatipid ng tubig at mabawasan ang pagbagsak ng antas ng tubig sa Angat reservoir hanggang umabot sa year end target.

	ANGAT DAM	IPO DAM	LA MESA DAM
September 9, 2019	183.72m	101.00m	77.32m
September 10, 2019	184.64m	101.01m	77.37m
September 11, 2019	184.96m	101.10m	77.37m





## Aboitiz to rehabilitate Buhisan watershed

CEBU CITY. -- Aboitiz business units in Cebu, together with the Aboitiz Foundation and the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) recently marked the beginning of a multi-million rehabilitation project that covers 150 hectares of the Buhisan Watershed.

Dubbed the Cebu A-Park, the project is an integrated corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative of the Aboitiz business units that are operating in Cebu.

The group has established different A-Parks across the country, a nationwide effort to establish sustainable environment programs through adopting,

rehabilitating, and developing protected areas to become eco-tourism hubs all over the country.

The Cebu A-Park project is envisioned to span five years and will cost over P20 million. It will include reforestation of the 150-hectare adopted area, as well as disaster risk reduction management training and livelihood training for the people's organizations there.

Aboitiz Foundation first vice president and chief operating officer (COO) Maribeth Marasigan, Visayan Electric Co. COO Anton Mari Perdices and PBSP director for Operations Elvin Uy signed the memorandum

of agreement for year one of the project, which will cost P3.2 million, in the presence of representatives from the four barangays covered by the watershed area – Buhisan, Toong, Sapangdaku and Pamutan.

"This project is only the beginning. With all of us starting on the same page, having the same destination and story ending, and agreeing to be measured in the same way, we will achieve more," said Marasigan of the united efforts of the Aboitiz business units for the project.

She added that projects that advance business and communities are among the top priorities of the group.

Aside from contributing to the efforts to protect the Buhisan watershed, Visayan Electric's Perdices said that the project will promote love for nature and eco-tourism as the electric utility will spearhead the establishment of a butterfly sanctuary in the area.

"This area is really a beautiful place to bring your children to, so they are aware of the need to plant trees to protect and save the environment, and to think this is just within the city," Perdices added.

Also included in the five-year project are the establishment of hiking trails, watch towers for bird watching and natural fish spas.



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## MC-riding men kill DENR asset

**By STEVE A.  
GOSUICO**

**RIZAL, Nueva Ecija — A 55-year-old "asset" of the Department of Environmental and Natural Resources in Nueva Ecija was gunned down by two unidentified helmet-wearing assailants in this town on Wednesday night.**

Killed was Gaudencio Arana, of Purok 2, Bgy. Ganduz, Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija.

Reports said the slain victim was a DENR informant assigned with the CENRO Science City of Muñoz office under Florencio Lala.

Police said two suspects wearing helmets on board a motorcycle attacked him near a bridge while he was walk-

ing on the way home along the provincial road in Bgy. Poblacion Norte at 9:30 p.m.

Col. Leon Victor Rosete, provincial police head, said a bystander identified as Joshua Mauyao, 19, tipped the police after discovering the victim dead on the pavement at 9:45 p.m.

Provincial Environment and Natural Resources officer Joselito Blanco said

the victim was instrumental in the dismantling of alleged illegal chainsaw operations being conducted in Bgy. Sampaloc, Pantabangan three weeks ago.

"Latest tip niya ay kasama pa siya ni CENRO Jack Lala 3 weeks ago, kasama siya nanghuli doon sa isang chainsaw sa Bgy. Sampaloc," Blanco told this reporter yesterday.



## DENR 'asset' killed by MC-riding men

**RIZAL, Nueva Ecija —** A 55-year-old "asset" of the Department of Environmental and Natural Resources in Nueva Ecija on Wednesday night was gunned down by two motorcycle-riding assailants in this town.

Killed was Gaudencio Arana, of Purok 2, Bgy. Ganduz, Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija.

The slain victim was a DENR informant assigned with the CENRO-Science City of Muñoz office under Florencio Lala.

Provincial police head Col. Leon Victor Rosete said Arana was walking home on the provincial road in Bgy. Poblacion when shot at 9:30 p.m. on Wednesday.

Provincial Environment and Natural Re-

sources officer Joselito Blancos said the victim was instrumental in the dismantling of alleged illegal chainsaw operations being conducted in Bgy. Sampaloc, Pantabangan three weeks ago.

**Steve Gosuico**





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## Belmonte sablay sa estatwa ni Ninoy

Pinayagan ng mga anak ng namayapang Senador Benigno 'Ninoy' Aquino Jr. ang paglipat sa rebulto ng kanilang ama subalit sa hindi inaasahang pangyayari ay bahagyang nasira ito sa isinagawang road-clearing operation ng Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

Ayon kay Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte, ang ibabang bahagi ng rebulto ni Ninoy na nakatayo sa kanto ng Timog at Quezon Avenue ay bahagyang nabasag ng mga tauhan ng DPWH habang nagsasagawa ng road-clearing

operation upang tugunan ang problema sa daloy ng trapiko sa lugar.

Anang alkalde, kinausap ng lokal na gobyerno ang mga anak ni Ninoy na sina dating Pangulong Benigno 'Noynoy' Aquino III at mga kapatid nitong babae na sina Ballsy, Pinky, Kris at Viel ukol sa paglipat sa rebulto ng ama.

"The Aquino family has given its consent to transfer the statue to a better and more ideal location that is perfect for his stature as national hero. They have no problem about the transfer because it

will be for the greater good of everyone who are affected by the heavy traffic in the area," paliwanag ni Belmonte.

Sa kasalukuyan ay gumagawa na ng special arrangements ang lokal na gobyerno para sa paglipat sa rebulto sa mas magandang lugar.

Naghahanap ang lungsod ng ilang relocation sites, at kabilang sa tinitingnan ay ang Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife at Manila Seedling Bank na pagmamay-ari ng Ayala.

Sinabi rin ng alkalde na sumulat na ang QC govern-

ment kay Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu upang mag-request ng relokasyon ng rebulto ni Ninoy sa Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife.

Kung sakaling tatanggi si Cimatu, ayon kay Belmonte ay ililipat ang rebulto sa Manila Seedling Bank.

Nabatid na ngayong araw ng Biyernes ay aalisin na ng QC Department of Public Order and Safety (DPOS) ang estatwa ni Ninoy at ilalagay muna sa temporary storage facility habang naghahintay ng pinal na lugar na paglilipatan nito. **(Dolly Cabreza)**



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## ACROSS THE COUNTRY

### 7 Chinese held for illegal sand dredging

Seven Chinese citizens were arrested on Wednesday for working without visas and engaging in illegal sand dredging in Masinloc, Zambales.

According to a report submitted to Bureau of Immigration Commissioner Jaime Morente, agents of the BI's intelligence division and the police's 305th Maneuver Company Regional Mobile Force Battalion and Central Luzon Regional Special Operations Group conducted the operation.

"The arrested foreigners violated not only our immigration laws but also the Philippine Mining Act and Executive Order 292," Morente said.

BI intelligence officers Ricardo Cabochan and John Mendez, who led the arresting team, identified the suspects as Chen Shiniu, Chen Shaoshao, Xu Xiansheng, Jiang Xin, Zhao Yihong, Gong Yaan and Xie Yuhong.

The suspects were brought to the BI main office for inquest proceedings.

- Rudy Santos, Robertzon Ramirez



## E-VEHICLES COOL, BUT MINING BATTERY METALS COULD POSE A PROBLEM

By CAI U. ORDINARIO  
@caiordinario

CLIMATE change is fueling the electric vehicle revolution in countries like the Philippines, but the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (Unctad) said firms that will mine battery metals must observe sustainable mining standards.

In the 2019 edition of its Commodities and Development Report, titled "Commodity Dependence, Climate Change and the Paris Agreement," Unctad also said climate change has the potential to cut the productivity of the local aquaculture sector.

"The climate crisis poses an existential threat to commodity-dependent developing countries and will result in the collapse of some economies if decisive action is not taken now," Unctad Secretary-General Mukhisa Kituyi said in a statement.

"Now more than ever before,

these countries need to assess their diversification potential and reduce their commodity dependence, which for decades has kept them exposed to volatile markets and climate change," Kituyi added.

In the report, Unctad noted that climate change is fueling an electric vehicle revolution. This is an opportunity for developing countries with vast reserves of battery metals, such as the Philippines.

Unctad said electric vehicle sales have increased dramatically to 2 million in 2018, from only a few thousand in 2010. Sales are projected to jump to 10 million units in 2025, 28 million in 2030, and 56 million in 2040.

This bodes well for developing countries with "significant reserves of battery metals." These countries include the Philippines, which is rich in cobalt, along with Cuba, Madagascar and Zambia.

SEE "E-VEHICLES," A2

## E-vehicles. . .

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"This increases the urgency of both strengthening the environmental, social and ethical standards of their mining operations and ensuring local value retention to support sustainable development in mining communities," the report read.

"[These countries] must find ways to align potential ramifications of the rapidly emerging global electric vehicle market with their national efforts toward sustainable development," it added.

Unctad also said climate change, which will increase the competition for water and change the water cycle, will negatively affect fisheries and aquaculture industries.

In the short term, the report indicated that climate change may slash aquaculture productivity. Aside from the loss of infrastructure caused by extreme weather events, the sector will also be affected by increased risks of diseases and the spread of toxic algae and parasites.

In the long term, the impact on countries could include reduced access to freshwater, wild seeds, feeds from marine and terrestrial

sources, and decreased productivity due to ocean acidification, eutrophication and other perturbations.

"The report underscores that the high risk faced by commodity-dependent developing countries reinforces their need to adapt, diversify and modernize their economies. They must also adapt to the effects of the climate response measures undertaken by other countries, which are expected to reduce the demand for some key commodities on which they depend," Unctad said.

The report stressed that there's a need to address these concerns and meet the goal of limiting global temperature rise to 1.5°C above preindustrial levels as indicated in the Paris Agreement.

Unctad said based on the findings of the report, the total cost of implementation of climate action plans for 80 developing countries that have specified their financing needs is estimated at \$5.4 trillion.

In addition, the report states that greening fiscal policies can help to ensure taxes, subsidies and similar policy instruments contribute to the implementation of climate action plans and the achievement of the sustainable development goals.



## OPINION

# Mining our way to development

### COMMENTARY

DINDO MANHIT

**B**reakaway development for the Philippines has been elusive. While signs of progress continue to manifest in our society, nationwide development has been hampered by an unstable outlook on how we can harness and manage our natural resources. But we can, in fact, utilize the richness of our natural endowments in a way that can catapult us into a more strategic position, one that would trigger sustained economic growth and regional prosperity.

The 2015 study "Advancing Sound Resource Management as a Requisite for Sustainable Development," by Dr. Carlos Primo David, tackled the issue of resource management. "We are the center of global biodiversity," wrote David. "The country also boasts of scientific attractions more than capable of sustaining a vibrant tourism industry. And yet government seems to think that ecological protection occurs on a different plane as resource development. The real task then is determining how to strike a balance between the two."

As the fifth most mineralized country in the world, the Philippines offers manifold potentials for the mining industry. The country's untapped mineral wealth, estimated to be worth at least a trillion dollars, could propel industrialization on several fronts. However, a policy wall stands between these underground minerals and the continuous inflow of revenues and investments. There is an urgent need to remove the legal and regulatory barriers that have stagnated the mining industry.

Specifically, Executive Order No. 79, issued in 2012 by then President Benigno

Aquino III, and Department Administrative Order No. 2017-10 (banning open-pit mining) are legal and regulatory impediments that need to be rethought and amended. These bad policies continue to penalize legitimate mining companies that comply with the law, pay taxes and virtually assume what should be the government's role of building public infrastructure and providing public services.

In December 2017, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines became the first Southeast Asian mining association to adopt the TSM (Towards Sustainable Mining) standard, and the fourth outside of Canada after Botswana, Argentina and Finland. This industry-led initiative sets the highest standard of responsible mining, with guiding principles and protocols to monitor the performance of mining operations. The TSM standard employs tools designed to improve the environmental and social performance of mining companies, including engagement with civil society and enhanced transparency and accountability.

However, all the merits responsible mining companies have are upstaged by the environmentally destructive and unsafe operations of thousands of illegal mines. The proliferation of these illicit operations endangers lives, and the government is robbed of billions of dollars a year in tax revenues due to smuggling and

nonpayment of taxes.

Meanwhile, as EO 79 prevents the approval of new mineral agreements subject to the passage of legislation that rationalizes existing revenue sharing schemes and mechanisms, House Bill No. 8400 seeks to rationalize and institute a single fiscal regime applicable to all mineral agreements.

Though the mining excise tax has been doubled by the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Law, this bill further increases mining taxes, making them higher than the current mineral production sharing agreement and even higher than what most other countries have with well-developed mining industries. Should HB 8400 materialize into law, it will be an unhappy but acceptable compromise that should pave the way for the lifting of EO 79.

Our huge mineral potential has remained underground and useless for far too long. The government must act on unleashing the progress potential of the mining industry by creating a stable and globally competitive regulatory environment, the same way developed countries have harnessed their minerals as a strategic resource for prosperity.

A vibrant mining industry will spark a surge of decentralized development, lifting millions of Filipinos out of poverty in the most remote and undeveloped municipalities, from the shores of northern Luzon to the southern end of Mindanao.

Dindo Manhit is founder and managing director of the Stratbase Group, and president of the Stratbase ADR Institute.



# DA's appeal: Don't throw dead hogs in creeks

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

**T**HE Department of Agriculture (DA) appealed to backyard raisers on Thursday not to dump dead hogs in creeks and rivers because there is a "grave danger" that diseases that killed the animals could spread.

DA Spokesman Noel Reyes sounded the appeal following reports that dead hogs were found in a creek in Quezon City and in Marikina River. He reminded the public that there are protocols for disposing of dead animals.

Reyes told the BUSINESSMIRROR in an interview that the agency has yet to determine if the hogs were killed by diseases, such as the dreaded African swine fever (ASF).

"If this [disposal of dead hogs in creeks and rivers] is true, may we appeal to the backyard owners

not to dump them, especially in the river. Please call your local veterinarians and inform them that the hogs died," he said.

## ASF protocol

THE disposal of the dead hogs came days after the DA confirmed the outbreak of ASF in hog farms in Bulacan and Rizal.

Under the ASF protocol, hog raisers should contact their city or municipal veterinarian. The local veterinarian will then arrange the visit of the Bureau of Animal In-

dustry (BAI), an attached agency of the DA.

The BAI will then obtain samples from the hogs and send it for testing. Reyes said it usually takes two weeks for the results from the national laboratory to arrive while the international testing, conducted by the United Kingdom-based Pirbright Institute, will take longer.

"There is a grave danger [of the spread of the disease]. Please refrain from throwing dead hogs in creeks or rivers. Even dead ordinary

animals can infect others. It's simply unhygienic," he said.

## Dead hogs in QC

THE local government of Quezon City said it will immediately close all piggeries in the city should the BAI confirm that the dead hogs died of ASF.

In a phone interview with the BUSINESSMIRROR on Thursday, Quezon City Veterinary chief Ana Maria Cabel said piggeries are no longer permitted in any city.

SEE "Hogs," A2

## Hogs...

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Despite this, Cabel said the local government found piggeries in some barangays during their inspection.

"Initially, our findings showed only nine barangays have piggeries. But when we conducted our rounds, the number went up. We even found piggeries in UP," she said.

"We did not expect there would be piggeries inside UP. We did not know that. So we really don't have complete statistics. In Barangay Silangan, we know there are 1,000 backyard piggeries," she added.

Cabel said the Quezon City government is removing all piggeries in the city. Mayor Joy Belmonte, she said, even gave these piggeries six months to leave the city.

Now that there is a possibility that these hogs may be infected by the ASF virus, she said this could hasten the removal of piggeries in Quezon City.

"We need the result of the tests before we act. Our mayor gave them six months to transfer [their piggeries]. But if there is already a disease, this will fast-track the process," Cabel said.

Cabel added that the results of laboratory tests will be available in two weeks. If the animals are positive for ASF, she said the QC government will have to cull all the pigs in the 1-kilometer radius of the area where the dead hogs were found.

She said the creek where the dead hogs were found passes along places, such as Payatas, the Litex area and even Marikina City.

The dead hogs were found at the lowest point of the creek, which has become a catchment area for debris.



# 39 dead pigs dumped in QC, Marikina

By **NON ALQUITRAN**  
and **ROMINA CABRERA**

Thirty-nine dead pigs were found floating in bodies of water in two Metro Manila cities yesterday.

Thirty-six of them were found in Marikina River in Marikina City, while three were floating in a creek in Quezon City.

Marikina Mayor Marcelino Teodoro said the pigs were fished out by local residents from the river from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Teodoro has asked the Department of Agriculture (DA) to probe the pig deaths to determine whether they were infected by African swine fever (ASF).

"There is no slaughterhouse or piggery in Marikina. The dead pigs could have been from upstream of Rizal (province)," the mayor said.

The city's veterinary office reported that 10 dead pigs were fished out of the Marikina River in Barangay Nangka, two in Barangay Tumana and 24 in Barangay Calumpang.

All of the recovered dead pigs were buried apparently to prevent the spread of ASF, according to Marikina City public information officer Arlene Rivera.

Thousands of pigs in Barangay Cupang, Antipolo City were confiscated by the city government in the past weeks and buried alive, triggering an angry reaction from animal lovers.

The DA claimed that several of the confiscated pigs were infected with ASF.

A creek in Cupang is directly connected to the Marikina River.

## Daily monitoring

The local government of Quezon City is now conducting daily monitoring of piggeries within the city, following the discovery of three dead hogs along a creek near Lingayen Street in Barangay Bagong Silangan at around 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday.

Quezon City Veterinary head Ana Marie Cabel said aside from monitoring, they are also conducting a survey of all piggeries in the city.

Cabel said they immediately coordinated with the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) to collect tissue samples from the hogs for testing for ASF.

"There is no need for alarm yet," Cabel assured the residents, adding that the city is still considered free of ASF that was already reported in parts of Bulacan and Rizal.

It is possible that the hogs were carried by the river from another city and only discovered in the shallow part of the creek, according to Cabel.

At least nine barangays in the city have backyard piggeries, with Barangays Bagong Silangan and Payatas having over 1,000 piggeries each.

Last month, Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte ordered the closure of backyard piggeries, saying it was illegal to have such in the city based on the zoning ordinance.

Belmonte said it is possible that the city authorities would also have to establish checkpoints to limit animal movement for preventive measures.

Cabel allayed fears and said pork is still safe to eat. She advised buyers to always look for the meat inspection certificate to ensure that the pork is fit for human consumption.

The DA recently announced that blood samples from 14 out of 20 samples taken from sick pigs tested positive for the ASF.

Meanwhile, the provincial government of Misamis Oriental yesterday disallowed the entry of pigs and various pork products from areas deemed by the BAI as having ASF infestation.

Gov. Yevgeny Vincente Emano has issued Executive Order 2019-13 to create a task force that would oversee the implementation of the ban. — **With Gerry Lee Gorit, Gilbert Bayoran**



## Dead pigs float on Marikina River

A total of 16 dead pigs were found floating on Marikina River, along Bayabas Street in Barangay Nangka. Some of the pigs were trapped in garbage, while others were swept away by strong current.

The Marikina local government has asked the Department of Agriculture to investigate the matter.

"There is no slaughterhouse or piggery in Marikina. The dead pigs could have been from upstream of Rizal," Mayor Marcelino Teodoro said.

**Neil Alcober**



## 16 patay na baboy, ipinaanod sa Marikina River

**PALUTANG-LUTANG** ang mga patay na mga baboy makaraang matagpuan mula sa iba't ibang bahagi sa Marikina River.

Bandang 2:00 ng hapon, umaabot sa 16 patay na baboy ang natagpuan ng Marikina Veterinary Office.

Unang natuklasan ang isang baboy kahapon ng 8:00 ng umaga sa tabi ng rebulto ni Marikit.

Limang baboy rin ang sumunod na natagpuan sa Bayabas St., sa Barangay Nangka na kasama ng mga basura.

Dalawang baboy pa ang nakuha malapit sa Kalumpang Chapel.

Hiniling ng lokal na pamahalaan ng Lungsod ng Mariki-

na sa Kagawaran ng Agrikultura na siyasatin ang mga patay na baboy na natagpuang lumulutang sa Marikina River.

"Walang katayan o pig-gery sa Marikina. Ang mga patay na baboy ay maaaring mula sa mataas na bahagi ng lalawigan ng Rizal," pahayag ni Marikina Mayor Marcelino "Marcy" Teodoro.

Kahapon ng umaga, tatlong patay rin na baboy ang natagpuan sa isang kanal sa Barangay Silangan, Quezon City, katapat ng San Mateo Rizal na tanging ilog lamang ang pagitan.

Ang mga natagpuang patay na baboy ay sinunog na ng Marikina Veterinary Office.

**TOTO NABAJA**





TITLE:

# 36 patay na baboy **PAHINA 3** itinapon sa Marikina River

## 36 patay na baboy, itinapon sa

NI MER LAYSON

# Marikina River

Tatumpu't anim na patay na baboy na hinihinalang tinamaan ng sakit na African Swine Flu (ASF) ang nadiskubrenang itinapon at ipinaanod sa Marikina River sa Marikina City kahapon.

Ayon sa Marikina Veterinary Office, hanggang alas-2:00 ng hapon nitong Huwebes ay kabuuang 36 na patay na baboy ang nakita sa ilog sa bahagi ng Bayabas

Street sa Barangay Nangka at Calumpang.

Nabatid na dakong alas-8:00 ng umaga nang makita ang isang baboy malapit sa estatwa ng "Marikit" habang lima sa mga ito ang na-trapped naman sa mga basura sa ilog, at ang iba pa ay patuloy na inaanod ng malakas na agos ng tubig.

Dalawa umano sa mga baboy ay naiahon malapit

sa area ng Kalumpang Chapel at nailibing na ng mga residente.

Kahapon ay natagpuan din sa Brgy. Calumpang ang iba pang mga patay na baboy.

Kaugnay nito, kaagad namang hiniling ni Marikina City Mayor Marcelino 'Marcy' Teodoro sa Department of Agriculture (DA) na maimbestigahan kung saan nagmula ang mga naturang

patay na baboy na naanod sa kanilang lugar, at kung ano ang ikinamatay ng mga ito, sa pangambang tinamaan sila ng ASF.

Ayon kay Teodoro, walang slaughterhouse at wala ring mga piggery sa

kanilang lungsod kaya't posibleng mula aniya ito sa bahagi ng Rizal at naanod lamang sa kanilang lugar.

Kinumpirma na rin ng DA na tinamaan ng ASF ang ilang baboy na sinuri nila kamakailan.



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## 50 baboy naglutangan sa Marikina River

Tinatayang nasa 50 mga patay na baboy ang nakitang naglutangan mula sa Marikina River na siya ngayong pinangangambahan ng mga residente.

Ayon sa report ng Marikina Veterinary Office, 36 na patay na baboy na ang kanilang nakuha na kung saan nasa 10 ang nakuha sa Brgy. Nangka, dalawa sa Brgy. Tumana, 24 lumulutang sa ilog na sakop ng Barangay Kalumpang.

Nasa 36 patay na mga inahing baboy at biik ang nakuha at sabay-sabay na inilibing sa isang bakanteng lote malapit sa ilog.

Ayon sa mga residente, mula nang nag-uulan ay naka-

kakita na sila ng mga lumulutang na baboy sa ilog habang ang ilan naman ay nakita sa malapit sa basurahan.

Nilinaw naman ni Marikina Mayor Marcelino 'Narcy' Teodoro na walang babuyan sa kanyang nasasakupan na posibleng mula ito sa Rizal area na mataas ang lugar at inanod sa Marikina River at hindi pa tiyak kung saan ito nanggaling.

Kasabay nito, inilibing ang mga narekober na patay na baboy sa malalim na hukay sabay paglalagay ng disinfectant sa mga lugar na pinagdaan ng back hoe na naghukay at nagbaon sa mga baboy.  
**(Vick Aquino)**



## MGA PATAY NA BABOY INANOD SA MARIKINA RIVER

ILANG patay na baboy na pinangangambahang apektado ng African Swine Flu (ASF) ang nadiskubrenang itinapon at ipinaanod sa Marikina River.

Ayon sa Marikina Veterinary Office, hanggang alas-2:00 ng hapon nitong

Huwebes ay 16 patay na baboy ang nakita sa ilog sa bahagi ng Bayabas Street sa Bgy. Nangka.

Isa rito ay nakita malapit sa estatwa ng Marikit, lima ang na-trap sa mga basura sa ilog at ang iba pa ay patuloy na inaanod ng malakas na agos ng tubig.

Dalawa umano sa mga baboy ay naiahon malapit sa area ng Kalumpang Chapel at nailibing na ng mga residente.

Umapela naman si Marikina City Mayor Marcelino Teodoro sa Department of Agriculture (DA) na im-

bestigahan kung saan nagmula ang naturang mga patay na baboy na naanod sa kanilang lugar at kung ano ang ikinamatay ng mga ito, sa pangambang tinamaan sila ng ASF.

Giit ni Teodoro, walang slaughterhouse at wala ring mga piggery sa kanilang lungsod kaya posibleng mula aniya ito sa bahagi ng Rizal at naanod lamang sa kanilang lugar.

Matatandaang, sa area ng Rizal unang inilibing ang libu-libong baboy na hinihinalang tinamaan ng ASF.

*(Madel Moratillo)*



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# Palace: Phl not dropping claims, arbitral victory

By ALEXIS ROMERO

Setting aside or ignoring the 2016 arbitral court ruling on the South China Sea is not the same as abandoning it and relinquishing the country's sovereign rights over its exclusive economic zone (EEZ), Malacañang clarified

yesterday.

President Duterte revealed earlier this week that China had vowed to adopt a 60-40 sharing scheme favoring the Philippines in the proposed joint development of resources in the West Philippine Sea in exchange for setting aside the 2016 landmark ruling.

Duterte, reviled by critics for cozying up to China especially on the West Philippine Sea row, said on Wednesday that the arbitral ruling on the EEZ would be "ignored" so that China could help the Philippines spur "economic activity" in the country's EEZ.

"The setting aside doesn't mean that

we will abandon it. What the President means is that, as we have repeatedly said and as he has said, too, the arbitral ruling is still subject to talks between the two countries; negotiation is ongoing peacefully. But meanwhile, we focus without other concerns that may

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mutually benefit the two countries," Panelo said at a press briefing.

"In other words, there is an impasse so let them talk; so let's talk about other things like this joint exploration," he added.

In a statement, former foreign affairs chief Albert del Rosario said China's asking the Duterte administration to "set aside" the arbitral court ruling "can be viewed as significant recognition by Beijing of the arbitral outcome."

Del Rosario was part of the legal team that helped the Philippines secure a favorable ruling from the UN-backed court based in The Hague.

"In our desire to advance the rule of law, therefore, we should not allow our rightful position to be thrown into reverse gear," he said.

"We surely do not want the consequences of a nine-dash line to once again confront us," he added. He called the arbitral decision "the Philippines' gift to the world."

At their bilateral meeting in Beijing last month, Duterte and Chinese President Xi Jinping discussed the maritime dispute, including the memorandum of understanding on cooperation in oil and gas development signed by the two countries last November.

Xi reiterated that China does not recognize the arbitral ruling, which also invalidated Beijing's expansive claim in the South China Sea. Duterte had said he was not satisfied with the Chinese leader's response and admitted that the maritime dispute would remain a problem "like a sore thumb that sticks out painfully every day."

"Not set aside, but set aside in the sense that, 'OK, let's talk about it, we will continue talking.' That's what he meant. It's not just focused on that. As we have always said, the relationship between the two countries is not measured by the conflict in the West Philippine Sea alone," the presidential spokesman said.

"When he said 'ignore,' he meant set aside. It's still there. There is an impasse. We have not moved forward but we continue to talk. We're still peacefully negotiating the same, in fact that was a joint statement," he added.

Panelo said Duterte regards the arbitral ruling as permanent, binding, final and unappealable. "It's

there forever and ever, like forever," he added.

Panelo also lashed out at Del Rosario, who said the preservation of national patrimony, including the EEZ, is "infinitely more valuable" than coming up with an economic activity.

"He talks too much. We've already responded to all his opinions and he should look at himself on the mirror and admit that he's the one responsible for losing Scarborough Shoal," Panelo said.

## 'Irresponsible, reckless'

It was "extremely irresponsible" for President Duterte to make a "reckless pronouncement" that his administration will ignore the 2016 arbitral court ruling repudiating Beijing's South China Sea claim, supposedly just to spur "economic activity" in the country's exclusive economic zone, Vice President Leni Robredo said yesterday.

In a statement, Robredo reminded the President that his handling of the West Philippine Sea issue will have impact on generations to come.

"It will affect the lives not just of our generation of Filipinos, but that of our children, and our children's children. We must take great care in ensuring that we are not trading away the long-term interests of our nation and our children for short-term profit," she said.

"Guaranteeing a better future for our children is perhaps one of the most important, and most difficult, responsibilities of any administration. Selling that future for a gas deal with China is a shameful way of abandoning that responsibility," she added.

Duterte on Tuesday said he is willing to ignore the arbitral ruling to ensure economic activity inside the country's EEZ, including Chinese-led exploration activity.

He said Xi wants the arbitral ruling set aside so that a joint oil and gas exploration in the West Philippine Sea with China could proceed and unlock for the Philippines a "generous" 60 percent share in revenues.

But Robredo noted that even Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. has emphasized that there is no need to set aside the 2016 ruling for the joint project to move forward.

"Entering into any agreement should not

come at the expense of upholding our rights to the West Philippine Sea," the Vice President said.

"Our own Constitution already grants the State ample authority to enter into agreements with foreign entities for exploration and development of oil and gas resources, provided that these shall lead to 'real contributions to the economic growth and general welfare of the country.' Why, then, was this reckless pronouncement made?" she added.

The Vice President also countered the argument of the President that there are only two choices available for the Philippines for dealing with the issue — capitulation or conflict.

"Again, as a number of respected authorities have done so before, I must point out that this is not true. Open warfare is far from the sole means of asserting our rights to our exclusive economic zone, as our neighboring nations Vietnam and Indonesia have recently and repeatedly proven," she said.

"The strongest anchor to our claim must be consistency—in our official positions, in our negotiations, and in the statements of our top official," she added.

Robredo said a firm and consistent assertion of the country's legal rights does not require a single shot being fired.

"Yet why do the President and his administration constantly fail at doing it? Why are the President and his administration the very ones who undermine our decisive victory before the arbitral tribunal in 2016 with remarks such as this?" she stressed.

## Loan exceeds damage

Meanwhile, a militant fisherfolk group said the estimated P892.8 billion cost of environmental degradation caused by Chinese vessels in the West Philippine Sea was way above the P459 billion loans and official development assistance being extended by China to the Philippines.

"The amount that China has caused in its destruction of the West Philippine Sea outweighs the burdensome loans that the Duterte government has been begging from the foreign aggressor," the Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) said over the weekend.

- Janvic Mateo, Ding Cervantes



## Mitigating climate change to boost economy

The urgent need to move towards a low-carbon economy and build resilience would not only mitigate the worst impacts of climate change in the Asia-Pacific, but also lift the region economically, according to the body overseeing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

As Asia-Pacific Climate Week (APCW 2019) wrapped up in Bangkok, a key takeaway was that long-term holistic planning would enable countries there to tap into the huge potential of renewable energy and new technology while maximizing socio-economic benefits.

Other compelling reasons to rapidly shift to low-carbon and resilience were outlined by high-level speakers who warned that current levels of ambition to tackle climate change are putting the world on a path towards global warming of more than 3 degrees Celsius – that is double the goal of 1.5 degrees.

Participants agreed that in addition to governments, the transformation must be driven by sub-national regions and cities, the private sector and finance.

Noting that over half the global population of 1.8 billion young people live in the vast Asia-Pacific region, UNFCCC said that youth groups played an important role in the week, by engaging with participants and coving discussions

on social media.

Key outcome messages will provide “important input to the Climate Action Summit convened by the UN Secretary-General on 23 September in New York,” UNFCCC said in a press release, adding “the results will also help build momentum” towards the UN Climate Change Conference (COP25) that will take place in Santiago, Chile, 2 to 13 December 2019.

Countries are currently designing enhanced national climate action plans under the Paris Agreement (Nationally Determined Contributions, or NDC) and the Summit in New York will be an opportunity for governments and many climate action players to announce new plans and initiatives before the NDC are communicated to the UN in 2020.

Climate change adaptation planning and finance were also key throughout APCW 2019, with a focus on communities and ecosystems most in need.

On building resilience to climate change, indigenous peoples from the region, academics and others stressed the need for a mindset shift in the fight against climate change, proposing policies to help transform societies for long-term resilience.

Carbon pricing, capacity-building and regional climate finance were also discussed, with a spotlight on highly vulnerable nations.



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## Maynilad to reforest 34 has. of watersheds

WEST Zone concessionaire Maynilad Water Services, Inc. (Maynilad) pledged to plant 34,000 trees and mangroves over 34 hectares of critical watersheds this year, as part of its annual "Plant for Life" Program.

The program is part of Maynilad's continuing effort to reforest the Ipo Watershed and other watersheds within the West Zone, which will help prevent calamities such as land erosion and flooding, and protect water quality in the dams that supply the water needs of Metro Manila.

This year, Maynilad adopted 30 hectares in Mt. Balagbag, Rizal, which is one of the most heavily deforested areas of the Ipo Watershed.

Since the program's inception in 2007, Maynilad has planted almost 800,000 trees in the Ipo Watershed covering an area of



Volunteers gather before ascending Mt. Balagbag in Rodriguez, Rizal, during the recent kickoff of Maynilad's annual "Plant for Life" tree-planting program.

341 hectares. The water company has also expanded reforestation activities to include watersheds in Malabon and Muntinlupa, and the planting of mangroves in Laguna Lake and the coastal areas of Ma-

nila Bay.

"One way to ensure the sustainability of our limited water resources is to plant trees in vital watersheds. Planting trees prevents the soil erosion that could affect

the quality of raw water, and also offers a long-term solution to the cycle of flooding during the rainy season," said Ramoncito Fernandez, Maynilad president and chief executive officer.



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# PH tagged for waste mismanagement

BY PAUL ICAMINA

PLASTICS itself are not the sole problem. Waste mismanagement is more the issue.

This is the conclusion of a study conducted for Stratbase Institute for Strategic and International Studies and presented in a forum of the Philippine Chamber of Food Manufacturers, the country's largest organization of food products manufacturers and distributors.

"It's not plastics per se that is the problem, it's how waste is dealt with," said Vanessa Pepino, non-resident fellow of Stratbase, a research organization.

"We want to shift the discourse from a total ban on plastics to waste mismanagement," she said.

Noting that the Philippines, after China and Indonesia, is the world's third highest source of ocean plastic pollution, Pepino said the country "actually has the lowest waste generation rates."

However, "it has the third highest mismanagement rate," said Pepino, a development economist.

Over half of the waste collected in Manila Bay are plastics, she said. Many of the plastic packaging collected were recyclables: polystyrene and polyethylene terephthalate or PET.

Biodegradable or compostable waste composed 52 percent of the waste followed by recyclables (28 percent). Meaning, they could have been recycled if waste management was efficient.

Still, non-recyclables had the most substantial volume of collected waste, said Pepino.

"Not all plastics are the same," she said, noting for example that a kilogram of plastic bags takes 61 minutes to collect while PET bottles take just 37 minutes to collect and thus earn more for garbage collectors. This is the reason that a lot of PET bottles are collected and recycled,

she said.

A ban on plastics is one-sided, she said. "Waste mismanagement persists because the waste management system is inefficient and overburdened."

Half a million tons of plastic waste are leaked into the ocean, even if they are collected. It happens, for example, if garbage hauler companies dump the plastic near waterways or in open dumpsites which is illegal. About 432,000 tons are not collected and end up as well in the sea, Pepino pointed out.

"There are gaps in our collection system; solid waste management infrastructure systems and regulations are inadequate and outdated. Consumer behavior is unregulated. There is an unsustainable way to how waste is approached. And there is low or noncompliance to the law reflected in open littering, open dumpsite and non-segregation," she said.



**Dealing with waste.** A plastic fish toy is pictured among sachets of various products on a trash-filled shore on Freedom Island, Paranaque City. (Reuters photo by ELOISA LOPEZ)





# Trash buildup on Davao shoreline alarms official

By IVY TEJANO

**D**AVAO CITY — The Davao Ancillary Services Unit (ASU) on Thursday urged city residents, particularly those living along the coast to clean their surroundings and properly dispose of their garbage.

ASU head Paul Bermejo made the

appeal following reports on the alarming rise in the volume of garbage along the city's shorelines.

Bermejo said he received a report that more than 3,000 sacks of garbage were collected from the shorelines in August.

The ASU's Bantay Dagat team collected 3,147 sacks of trash last month, compared to the 2,066 sacks collected

in July.

"Although the increase in garbage collection from the coastlines can be attributed to the onset of habagat, it is still an indication that people continue to throw their garbage anywhere and these ended up in the coastal areas," Bermejo said.

He said it was time for the public to go out of their homes and start clean-

ing to ensure that their trash do not end up in the ocean.

"They should not wait for our coastal clean-up every Saturday, they should make it a daily habit to clean their surroundings," he said.

Bermejo also invited the public to join the Bantay Dagat team and volunteer for the International Clean Up Day on Sept. 21.



## PROPER WASTE DISPOSAL

# VILLAGERS SWAP TRASH FOR RICE IN FIGHT AGAINST PLASTICS

A village outside Metro Manila is trying to tackle the scourge of plastic waste by offering rice to residents in exchange for their trash.

Residents of Bayanan can get 1 kilogram of rice, the country's

staple food, for every 2 kg of plastic waste, which are handed over to the government for proper disposal or recycling.

The Philippines is among the world's top marine plastic polluters, studies show, with laws on

solid waste management poorly enforced and no regulations on packaging manufacturing.

"I weighed in at 14 kilos of residuals, so I got 7 kilos of rice grains. This is a big help for us to have one kilo of rice for the

day," Veronica Dolorico, a 49-year-old supporter of the program, told Reuters.

"I feel that our surroundings are really dirty. If only I could, I would pick up all the plastics along the road when I walk out-

side," she added.

One kg of rice costs about P30-P40, which is costly in a country with a fast-growing economy, but with high rates of urban and rural poverty.

Bayanan collected more

than 213 kg of sachets, bottles and plastic bags in August, said village chief Andor San Pedro, adding that the food-for-trash swap is teaching people how to properly dispose of their waste.

—REUTERS

  
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## Bayanan residents swap trash for rice in fight against plastics

A barangay is trying to tackle the scourge of plastic waste by offering rice to residents in exchange for their trash.

Residents of Bayanan outside the capital, Manila, can get one kilogram (2.2 lbs) of rice, the staple food for Filipinos, for every two kilograms of plastic waste, which are handed over

to the government for proper disposal or recycling.

The Philippines is among the world's top marine plastic polluters, studies show, with laws on solid waste poorly enforced and no regulations on packaging manufacturing.

"I weighed in at 14 kilos of residuals, so I got 7 kilos of rice grains. This

is a big help for us to have one kilo of rice for the day," Veronica Dolorico, a 49-year-old supporter of the program, told Reuters.

"I feel that our surroundings are really dirty. If only I could, I would pick up all the plastics along the road when I walk outside," she added.

One kilogram of rice costs ►12

about ₱30-₱40 (\$0.70), which is costly in a country with a fast-growing economy, but high rates of urban and rural poverty.

One-fifth of the population of 107 million people live below the national poverty line, with monthly consumption of less than \$241 per person.

Bayanan collected more than 213 kilograms of sachets, bottles, and plastic bags in August, said village chief Andor San Pedro, adding the food-for-trash swap is teaching people how to properly dispose of their waste. (Reuters)



## EcoWaste: Toxic lipsticks, whitening creams sold in Davao City

Several cosmetics sold in Davao City contain dangerous levels of mercury and lead, according to environmental watchdog EcoWaste Coalition.

EcoWaste said it bought dozens of skin whitening creams and lipsticks on Sept. 7 and 8, which were found to contain mercury and lead beyond the regulatory limits of 1 and 20 parts per million (ppm), respectively, upon screening using a portable X-ray Fluorescence device. The group said the products were sold for P20 to P120 each.

It said 13 of the 20 skin whitening products contained mercury in excess of the 1 ppm limit.

Mercury amounting to 1,187 to 2,330 ppm was detected in Erna, Jiaoli and S'Zitang creams, which had been banned by the Food and Drug Administration.

Twenty-four of the 100 lipsticks have lead levels ranging from 118 to 30,500 ppm.

Counterfeit lipsticks bearing the names MAC Viva-glam, Dermacol and April Skin were found laced with

lead beyond the 20 ppm limit.

"Both lead and mercury are highly toxic and are not permitted as ingredients in cosmetic products. The continued sale of cosmetics laden with this poison, most of which are contraband and counterfeit items, is putting the health of consumers at risk and should be stopped," Thony Dizon, EcoWaste's chemical safety campaigner, said.

EcoWaste and the Inter-facing Development Interventions for Sustainability urged city government officials to impose stiffer penalties against erring establishments and individuals.

"Aside from its health benefits... halting the sale of poison cosmetics will prevent the leakage of lead and mercury into the environment, particularly when these chemicals are discharged into wastewater and water bodies," the groups pointed out.

The World Health Organization said lead and mercury are among the "10 chemicals of major public health concern."

- Rhodina Villanueva



*Editorial*

# Do the poor not care about the environment?

**E**nvironmentalism is a classist movement," said a Facebook post I chanced upon. It had been shared online a few hundred times, with many commenters agreeing that you can't expect people to care about sustainability when they're still struggling to put food on the table. Only the rich can afford hybrid cars and get excited about "organic" products; naturally, the poor do not share their enthusiasm.

This line of thinking is not only condescending—it's misguided. It implies that the lower classes have no sense of obligation toward the world around them, even the very community they live in. This is easy to believe if you only glance at dense urban-poor neighborhoods lined with garbage. But the distance between concern and apathy is more complex than this.

Regardless of economic status, people care when they understand the impact of environmental issues. For instance, when local governments began campaigning against dengue, their constituents sprung into action, prompted by the very perceivable signs of the epidemic. (Regrettably, though, the antidengue campaign may have started too late for the 250,000-plus people who have been infected.)

A number of studies support the view that income level is not a factor in how much we care for the environment. A multicountry analysis from the University of Bristol even found that people in poorer countries were much more concerned about the air and water quality in their locales.

Lower-income populations actually have stronger grounds to be concerned, as they are the most vulnerable to the effects of environmental breakdown. When floods, droughts and disease outbreaks occur, it is the poor who feel them more sharply. Environmentalism is not a classist movement, but environmental issues are class issues—their impact



**IAMGENM**

HYACINTH TAGUPA

amplifies the gaps between income levels.

The problem is not that the poor don't care, but that their economic standing lends them little opportunity to participate. Take the refillable enterprise, for example. While it's laudable that some cosmetic companies have put up bottle refilling stations, allowing consumers to reuse their shampoo bottles instead of buying new ones, the rest of us are stuck with six-peso sachets because that's what the weekly budget allows.

As with many other things, the underlying cause of people's nonparticipation in environmentalism is socioeconomic imbalance. I agree with advocates and scholars who say that for environmental efforts to really lift off, social and economic injustices must first be eliminated.

As things stand right now, it's not a lift-off but a tall, arduous climb. However, this should not be mistaken for apathy. What we misjudge as people's lack of concern may actually be a need for more accessible avenues to participate.

Re-education would be a good start. The message of environmental conservation must be recalibrated in a way that makes it gras-

pable to and inclusive of everyone across classes. Notice what messages are popular right now: World leaders are flying off to climate meetings, café-goers are buying reusable drinking straws. Not bad ideas per se, but there is nothing in these that would invite contribution from low-income audiences.

It must be emphasized that it's not just about climate treaties; it's also about how our daily activities lead to floods and diseases. We're not just protecting corals because they're pretty; we need a healthy marine ecosystem for aquatic food production.

This education must also push for manageable changes in behavior. It's difficult to translate concern to action when people are unaware of the practices that they are used to. If you grew up in a household that dumped trash into rivers, how would you concretely comprehend that it's wrong?

More importantly, environmental policies must be designed equitably, such that the poor would not have to bear a heavier sacrifice than the rich do. Last year, France had to rethink its fuel tax increase because, while Parisians already enjoyed efficient public transportation, rural citizens spoke out about not having transportation alternatives. More recently, in the US, the "Green New Deal" was introduced, proposing (among others) to provide clean-energy jobs so that oil and gas workers wouldn't have to suffer as the fossil fuel industry is pressured out.

There is no reason to exclude the poor from environmentalism. They have as much—if not more—stake in it as everyone else. If we dismiss lower classes as apathetic and small-minded, we allow them no avenue to contribute. And it is that limited view of people that holds back any form of progress.

hyacinthjt@gmail.com



## Pinoy BTS fans plant trees to mark RM's b-day

By JONATHAN M. HICAP

**F**ilipino fans of K-pop superstars BTS and their leader RM planted 600 trees in Sierra Madre to celebrate his birthday.

RM turned 25 on Sept. 12 and fans in different countries have various projects marked the occasion.

In the Philippines, Pinoy BTS ARMYs, led by Kim Namjoon PH, went to Sierra Madre, the longest mountain range in the country, in Siniloan, Laguna on Sept. 8 to plant the indigenous trees. This is the second year that RM and BTS fans held the "Plant Today, Save Tomorrow" project.

"To celebrate RM's birthday, we planted 600 indigenous trees in Sierra Madre, the longest mountain range in PH, hoping to leave a legacy for RM & ARMY and be part of the solution to climate change," according to the Pinoy RM fans.



PINOY fans in Sierra Madre for their tree planting project to mark RM's (inset) birthday (Twitter)

The tree planting was made possible in collaboration with Fostering Education & Environment for Development (FEED), a non-government organization that supports tree planting and sustainable development.

Before the activity was held, the

fans were taught about the status of forests in the country, climate change and about FEED.

RM, whose real name is Kim Namjoon, was born in 1994 in Sangdo-dong in Dongjak District in Seoul and grew up in Ilsan in Gyeonggi Province, South Korea.



# Makati fully compliant with road clearing ops

Makati has fully complied with the directive of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) to clear primary and secondary roads of obstructions ahead of the 60-day deadline.

Makati and the cities of Las Piñas, Marikina, Navotas and Valenzuela as well as the municipality of Pateros are the six local government units with 100 percent compliance, based on a report

submitted to DILG National Capital Region director Maria Lourdes Agustin.

The report showed that a total of 52,113 meters of roads and sidewalks were cleared in Makati as of Sept. 4.

Mayor Abby Binay said she was happy with the DILG report, which credited the efforts of the city government to promote safer streets.

"As early as 2017, we have been conducting road clearing

operations on a daily basis, which gave us a good headstart," Binay said.

She said the program aims to promote the safety and mobility of the residents as well as workers and businesses in the city.

Binay acknowledged the contributions of local government offices in the campaign to clear the roads of obstructions.

"It was not an easy task,

but with the concerted efforts of the city hall departments and offices and our collaboration with national government agencies, we were able to clear all kinds of obstructions such as sidewalk vendors and illegally parked vehicles to make the streets safe at all times," the mayor said.

✓ A total of 26,621 meters of roads and 25,492 meters of sidewalks were cleared

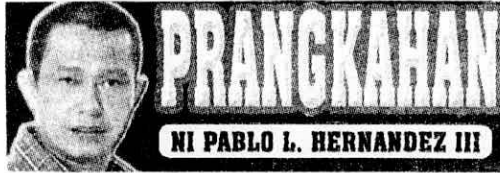
by the city Public Safety Department, Department of Environmental Services, Department of Engineering and Public Works, Economic Enterprise Management Office, Makati Action Center and Makati Veterinary Services Office in coordination with the Makati police.

The teams also removed 1,031 illegally parked vehicles, 111 illegal vendors and other obstructions.

The city government participated in road clearing operations led by the Highway Patrol Group Inter-Agency Council on Traffic.

Binay urged sidewalk vendors and tricycle drivers not to return to the streets or set up illegal terminals in the streets.

She asked barangay officials to do their part in ensuring that the roads and sidewalks are free from obstructions. **- Ghio Ong**



**KORUPSIYON SA ILOG  
PASIG, BUKING, PRRC  
DIRECTOR GOITIA, SIBAK!**

□□□

**IMBES NA LINISIN ANG PASIG RIVER,  
KORUPSIYON ANG GINAWA NG PRRC HEAD—**  
Sinibak ni P-Duterte dahil sa isyung korupsiyon sa Pasig River  
Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) Executive Director Jose

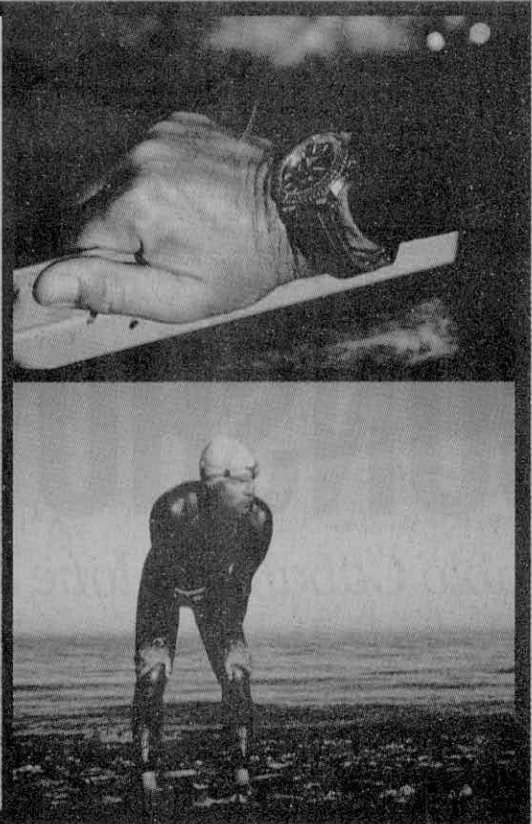
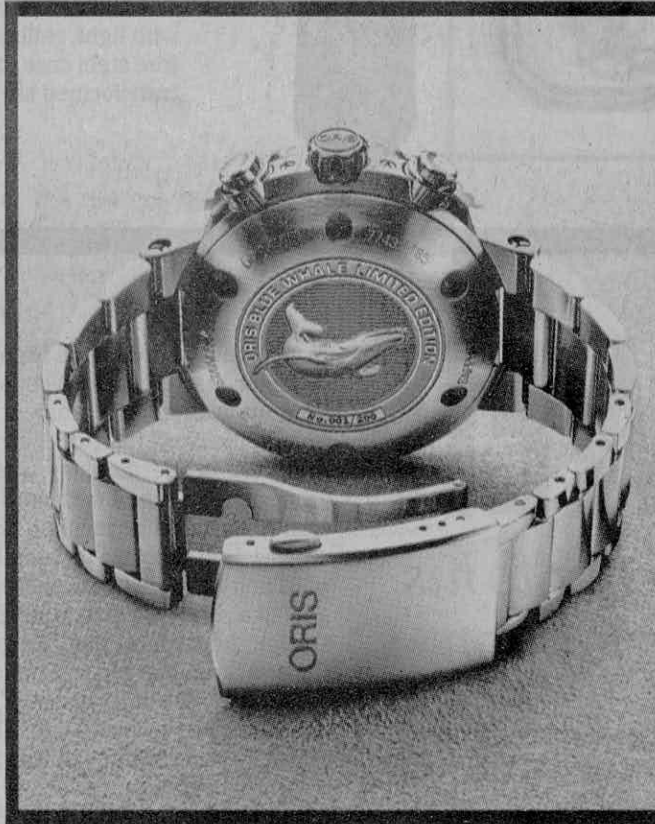
Antonio Goitia.

Aba, dapat lang kasi imbes na linisin nito ang marumi at  
mabantot na Ilog Pasig, eh, ang inaatupag pala nito ay  
korupsiyon, buwisit!





# Oris: Luxury for a cause



**S**teering away from the common impression that luxury watches are only a reflection of someone's wealth, Swiss watchmaker Oris puts environment causes behind its intricate pieces, proving that high-end, expensive watches are more than just timeless fashion pieces and a good investment.

A known name for intricately-designed watch pieces for over 115 years, Oris has introduced a number of watch models designed to bring awareness on ocean protection preservation.

The Holstein-based watchmaker has brought in the local shores the Oris Ocean Trilogy comprised of the Great Barrier Reef Limited Edition III, Clean Ocean Limited Edition, and the Blue Whale Limited Edition.

Aside from mirroring the company's call on cleaning the ocean and restoring the coral reefs as well as protecting the whales, the Oris Ocean Trilogy is housed in a case that is made from plastic derived from ocean waste.

Oris has also added the Whale and Dolphin Conservation on its list of non-government partner organizations that share their same goal of preserving marine life.

Amplifying this campaign, Oris recently introduced the Oris Aquis Date Relief -- another

name on the list of high-performance diver's watches that are driven by the company's thrust in educating the public about protection and conservation of the world's oceans.

Paying homage to its predecessor, the Oris Aquis Date Relief shares the same architecture and performance values with the Oris Aquis Date. Inspired by the color and the feeling of water, the Oris Aquis Date Relief carries elements that remind those who wear it about the beauty of the world's oceans. Its gray dial with sapphire crystal is reminiscent of stormy seas, while Oris's signature diving scale numerals are a reflection of the texture of water.

Coming off in four models, each with different straps, the Oris Aquis Date Relief with self-winding Oris 733 movement has a diameter of 43.50 mm, and is water-resistant up to 300 meters.

Along with the launch of the Oris Aquis Date Relief, Oris has named Swiss expedition swimmer Ernst Bromeis as its ambassador. Bromeis, who is also an advocate of ocean preservation and global water awareness, is a fitting addition to Oris's campaign, as he is off to swim 800 kilometers across Lake Baikal in Russia wearing the Oris Aquis Date Relief.

Know more about the Oris Aquis Date Relief and Oris's thrust in protecting the world's oceans at <https://www.oris.ch/en/home>.