

**DATE** 18 JAN 2018  
**DAY** Monday

# **DENR**

## **IN THE NEWS**

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

### Euro 4 policy, proper car care and less traffic to improve air quality in Metro Manila–Paje

THE country's chief steward of the environment and natural resources said air pollution in Metro Manila is aggravated by a number of factors, such as the use of "dirty" fuel, improperly maintained motor vehicles and the perennial traffic problem.

But, with the policy prescribing the use of cleaner fuel for motor vehicles, Secretary Ramon J.P. Paje said residents of Metro Manila can expect better air quality.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) chief said gasoline stations are now mandated to sell Euro 4 fuel. He advised motorists to patronize pump gasoline stations that comply with the policy.

Paje said the use of Euro 4 fuel took effect on January 1 by virtue of two orders issued separately by the DENR and the Department of Energy (DOE).

The DENR chief said the use of Euro 4-compliant gasoline and diesel will help reduce the level of air pollution, particularly in Metro Manila. He



**PAJE: "Imagine if you travel and you are caught in traffic, your engine keeps running. Instead of reaching your destination in just an hour, you are in the middle of the road for three hours."**

noted that around 80 percent of air pollution comes from mobile sources.

With gasoline stations mandated to sell only Euro 4 fuels, he said all vehicles would now have cleaner emission. Before Euro 4, the Philippines is following the Euro 2 standards for motor vehicles.

Euro 4 has 50 parts per million (ppm) of sulfur, 1-percent benzene and a 35-percent limit on aromatics, compared to Euro 2's 500-ppm sulfur, 5-percent benzene content and no limit on aromatics.

Paje said sulfur in air poses cardiovascular and pulmonary illnesses, especially in children and

the elderly, leading to premature deaths. Exposure to benzene could lead to blood and bone diseases, like anemia and leukemia, he added.

Last year the DENR issued Department Administrative Order 2015-04, enjoining the DOE to ensure the availability of Euro 4-compliant fuels by July 1, 2015, in view of worsening air pollution in Metro Manila due to the sheer volume of vehicles plying its roads.

The Land Transportation Office said that as of January 2014, there are almost 7.7 million vehicles all over the country, some 2.1 million of them are in Metro Manila. Paje said the mandatory use of Euro 4 fuel will help reduce air pollution, and it does not matter whether a motor vehicle is old or new, as long as they are properly maintained and are "road worthy."

"Imagine if you travel and you are caught in traffic, your engine keeps running. Instead of reaching your destination in just an hour, you are in the middle of the road for three hours. The emission is two times or three times longer," he said. *Jonathan L. Mayuga*



# Healthier air seen with law on cleaner fuel

By VANNE ELAINE P. TERRAZOLA

**T**he Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is hoping for cleaner air in the country this year following the full implementation of a government policy requiring oil companies to sell cleaner fuel products.

In a statement sent yesterday, DENR Secretary Ramon J.P. Paje said he is confident that air pollution, especially in highly urbanized areas like Metro Manila, will be "significantly reduced" as the directive requiring the use of cleaner Euro 4 fuel and imposing stricter emission standards for all vehicles became effective on January 1.

Euro 4 standards are set by the European Union, defining acceptable limits for vehicular emissions particularly sulfur and benzene. It has 50 parts per million (ppm) of sulfur, one percent benzene, and a 35 percent limit on aromatics.

In 2010, the agency had issued the DENR Administrative Order (DAO) No. 2010-23 which set the revised emission standards for motor vehicles effective Jan. 1, 2016.

This gave vehicle manufacturers and importers lead time to make their engines compliant to Euro 4 standards.

"Around 80 percent of air pollution in the country comes from mobile sources. With oil retailers required to sell only Euro 4 fuels, all vehicles would now have cleaner emissions and thus, we can expect cleaner air," Paje said.

Prior to Euro 4, the country has been following Euro 2 standards for motor vehicles. Euro 2 has 500 ppm sulfur, five percent benzene content, and no limit on aromatics.

Sulfur in air poses cardiovascular and pulmonary illnesses especially in children

and the elderly, and could even result in premature deaths.

Exposure to benzene, meanwhile, could lead to blood and bone diseases like anemia and leukemia.

Paje urged motorists to patronize oil companies selling Euro 4 fuels.

"It does not matter whether your car is old or new. Your emission matters more for us to achieve cleaner air," he stressed.

The DENR chief however added that vehicle owners should also make sure their cars un-

dergo regular maintenance or checkup.

Vehicles using fuels with lower sulfur content have been found to have less corrosion in engines and other parts, as well as maximized mileage, according to the DENR.



# The Manila Times

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**

## Euro 4 enforcement hopes for cleaner air

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is confident that air pollution, particularly in highly urbanized areas like Metro Manila, will be significantly reduced as a government directive requiring the use of cleaner fuel products and imposing stricter emission standards for all vehicles starts full implementation.

"Filipinos can look forward to breathing better air this year and beyond with the full implementation of Euro 4 standard, a policy requiring oil companies to sell cleaner fuel products," Environment Secretary Ramon Paje said.

Paje noted that around 80 per cent of air pollution in the country come from mobile sources.

"With oil retailers required to sell only Euro 4 fuels which became effective on January 1 this year, all vehicles would now have cleaner emissions and thus, we can expect cleaner air," he said.

Prior to Euro 4, the country had been following Euro 2 standards for motor vehicles.

Euro 4 has 50 parts per million of sulfur, one per cent benzene, and a 35 per cent limit on aromatics, compared to Euro 2's 500 ppm sulfur, five per cent benzene content, and no limit on aromatics.

These values are globally-accepted European emission standards for motor vehicles.

Sulfur in air poses cardiovascular and pulmonary illnesses especially in children and the elderly, and could even result in premature deaths.

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As early as 2010, the DENR issued

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This was to give vehicle manufacturers and importers lead time to make their engines compliant with Euro 4 standards.

But in March last year, the DENR issued DAO 2015-04 enjoining the Department of Energy to ensure availability of Euro 4-compliant fuels by July 1, 2015 in view of worsening air pollution in Metro Manila because of sheer volume of vehicles plying its roads.

The Land Transportation Office said as of January 2014, there are almost 7.7 million vehicles all over the country, some 2.1 million of them are in Metro Manila.

Paje urged the public to patronize oil companies selling Euro 4 fuels.

"It does not matter whether your car is old or new. Your emission matters more for us to achieve cleaner air," he said.

The DENR chief, however, added that vehicle owners should not only depend on cleaner fuel but also make sure their cars undergo regular maintenance or check-up.

Euro 4 standards are set by the European Union (EU), defining acceptable limits for vehicular emissions particularly sulfur and benzene.

Under a series of directives, implementation of Euro 4 standards within the EU should have begun in 2005, Euro 5 in 2009 and Euro 6 in 2014.

Vehicles using fuels with lower sulfur content have been found to have less corrosion in engines and other parts, as well as maximized mileage.

**JAMES KONSTANTIN GALVEZ**



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# TURNING GARBAGE INTO GOLD

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

**U**SING his pedicab, Gerry Ignacio, not his real name, buys junks inside a subdivision in a town in Cavite. He buys old newspapers, empty bottles, plastic containers and even broken home appliances.

"I bring them to the junk shop. I earn from each item. From bottles, newspapers, plastics and from worn out cooking pots or appliances," he said in Tagalog.

Gerry, 35, considers himself "self-employed" and earns P150 to P300 daily. Buying and selling junks has been his source of income since he was 12 years old.

The saying that there is gold in garbage is true for Gerry.

Sometimes, with no capital to buy junks, Gerry scavenges in an open dump near his home, where he had to deal in a turf war with other scavengers, and, more seriously, expose himself to serious health risks.

Thousands of Filipinos, mostly those who have no opportunity to land a job due to lack of education, end up as scavengers.

For the government, however, turning garbage into gold is easier said than done. Especially when the garbage problem has gone from bad to worse.

Not all garbage produced every day are actually hauled off to open dumps or sanitary landfills. Some end up in canals, rivers and esteros; street corners and vacant lots, according to the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC).

### Environmental pollution, health risks

IN the Philippines, with an estimated population of 100 million and an estimated 40,000 tons of garbage produced every day, or 14.6 million tons a year, solid waste management has become a serious health and environmental issue.

Garbage can be a major cause of air, water and soil pollution that can harm the environment and pose serious health risks to people.

Indiscriminate dumping of garbage kills rivers and other water bodies; it prevents the free flow of water and contaminate water, aside from causing flood.

All rivers in Metro Manila and other highly urbanized cities in the provinces are already found to have high biological and chemical oxygen demand, making some of the country's rivers biologically dead or too polluted for fish and other species to live in or survive.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has an ongoing program to revive the country's dying rivers. Called "Adopt an Estero," segments of river tributaries are adopted by DENR partners, including several local government units (LGUs) but mostly private companies.

Liquid residues from decaying garbage also pollute the soil, killing beneficial nutrients, making the soil barren and unproductive.

Huge concentration of garbage, such as in open dumps, also emits intoxicating odor, causing air pollution. Worse, garbage heaps are known to produce methane gas, which could trigger fire. Methane is a greenhouse gas, which increases temperature that causes climate change.

### Poor implementation

OFFICIALS of the DENR and NSWMC blame LGUs for the country's worsening garbage problem.

LGUs have been identified as the main culprit behind the poor implementation of Republic Act (RA) 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, a law which aims to address the country's looming garbage crisis—enacted more than 15 years ago. Environment Secretary Ramon J. Paje said as of the end of 2015 only 36 percent, or 545 LGUs, comply to all aspects of RA 9003. There are a total of 1,634 LGUs in the Philippines.

Paje said a total of 54 materials recovery facilities (MRFs) were established last year with the help of the DENR, bringing to 8,656 the total number of MRFs in the country, servicing a total of 10,327 barangays. There are over 42,000 barangays all over the country.

According to the NSWMC, the agency primarily tasked to implement RA 9003, there are still around 400 open dumps in various parts of the country, which it intends to shut down, converted or replaced with sanitary landfills or controlled waste facilities, as mandated by law.



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*Turning garbage into gold*

### National Ecosavers Program

LGUs, however, are not the only problem. Segregating waste at source—the households—is another big problem.

In 2012, the DENR, in partnership with the Department of Education (DepEd) and Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), launched the National Ecosavers Program (NEP). The program aims to institutionalize waste segregation at source by giving incentives to students who will bring to schools junks that can still be recycled or sold to junk shops. Ildefonso said it needs to be institutionalized in every household, barangay, city or municipality. The program is ongoing, with a total of 763 public elementary schools taking part.

"Thousands of students benefit from the program," Ildefonso said.

Under the NEP, participating students are given an Ecosavers passbook. The credits they earn are recorded every time they bring junks. In return, the students receive cash or good from the accumulated points over a certain period. During program's launch, 2,500 Ecosavers passbooks were turned over by the DENR to the DepEd for distribution.

### Zeroing in on wastes

LGUs can greatly benefit from proper solid waste management, starting with segregation and recycling.

Most LGUs pay for the hauling tons of garbage within their jurisdiction. With proper waste segregation, recycling and composting, the volume of wastes can be substantially reduced, thus, saving LGUs financial resources while creating jobs or livelihood opportunities.

Sonia Mendoza of Mother Earth Foundation said properly used, the additional fund earmarked for solid waste management can help build the capacity of many LGUs. Mother Earth Foundation is just one of many NGOs that promote waste recycling

The group has been promoting zero waste and has provided LGUs with technical support as well as training in proper waste management—and with huge success.

Under its zero-waste advocacy, Mother Earth Foundation was able to help several barangays to address garbage woes, effectively reducing wastes through proper segregation, recycling, composting and other activities by as much as 80 percent. She said Barangay Potrero in Malabon City is now a model barangay in solid waste management. The same with Barangay Fort Bonifacio in Taguig City.

"Many barangays were able to reduce their wastes and can be considered model barangays through proper solid-waste management," she said. Mother Earth Foundation has developed a module for LGUs to improve solid waste management which it is promoting for adoption by LGUs.

### Support to LGUs

THE DENR and NSWMC said LGUs would continue to get the needed technical assistance to enhance their solid-waste management capabilities. "We will continue in providing training to help them establish the facilities they need," Cuna said.

Cuna, also the concurrent Director of the DENR's Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), said as early as 2014 the DENR has proposed a cost-sharing scheme for the establishment of sanitary landfills or MRFs with LGUs.

Lack of financial resources should not be a hindrance, Cuna said, suggesting that LGUs can explore other options, such as public-private partnership (PPP).

"In the absence of financial resources, LGUs can pursue PPP projects to put up whatever facility they need to comply with the provisions of the law," he said.

Several LGUs have existing PPP projects for solid waste management, ranging from recycling and reprocessing junks to biomass to energy.

### Biomass-to-energy projects

WITH a lot of creativity and ingenuity, garbage, including agricultural waste, can be useful and can be sold as recycled waste byproducts.

Huge volume of garbage can be converted into something very useful—such as natural gas and fuel—which can be used to generate electricity.

Ildefonso said to prove that proper solid waste management is possible, the NSWMC will pilot-test biomass-to-energy projects and put ecology centers or resource-recovery facilities one each in the Visayas and Mindanao.

Once successful, the NSWMC will push for the establishment of similar facilities, at least 16 or one for every region. "We would show in resource-recovery facilities what could be done to garbage. The same with proper segregation, recycling, composting and marketing of recycled materials," Ildefonso said.

The NSWMC, he said, has earmarked a total of P230 million, or P115 million each for the Visayas and Mindanao. He said the agency is still scouting for the possible pilot sites of the projects, where waste segregation and recycling are already being enforced.

### Big problem, big opportunity

WITH the country's commitment to reduce its carbon footprint by 70 percent under a business-as-usual scenario from 2020 to 2030, the government sees a big opportunity in pursuing renewable energy through biomass waste-to-energy projects.

Under its "condition commitment" in the Intended Nationally Determined Contribution submitted to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Leonor said biomass and waste-to-energy projects can factor in.

He said besides massive reforestation, biomass-to-energy projects are being eyed for financing under the Green Climate Fund mechanism, a special UN fund to help strengthen the climate change capacities of developing countries.



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### Turning garbage into gold

Eligio Ildefonso, executive director of the NSWMC Secretariat, said there are currently 120 sanitary landfills or controlled waste facilities in the country; 300 more need to be put up if all 400 open dumps are to be closed within the year.

In open dumps, mixed garbage, regardless of their classification, are dumped. In sanitary landfills, wastes are segregated and, mostly, residual wastes are sealed and buried underground.

#### Cracking the whip

THIS year, as it steps up the implementation of RA 9003, the DENR and NSWMC are posing to file charges against defiant LGUs for failure to comply with the provisions of RA 9003.

Besides the conversion of open dumps into sanitary landfills and establishment of MRFs, the law mandates LGUs to implement waste segregation, recycling and composting to reduce the volume of garbage produced every day.

Last year more than 30 LGUs have been charged before the Office of the Ombudsman for violating RA 9003, for failure to close existing open dumps within their jurisdiction.

More LGUs who blatantly defy orders to close the dumps and implement the provisions of RA 9003 will be charged before the Office of the Ombudsman, Ildefonso said.

#### What segregation?

WASTES are supposed to be segregated according to their characterization. They are either biodegradable or nonbiodegradable. Implementing proper waste segregation solves half of the garbage problem. Wastes that can be recycled are separated. Also under the law, toxic waste, such as waste tainted with hazardous chemicals that pose serious environmental and health problems, do not belong in open dumps or sanitary landfills, because they require a more rigid management regime for disposal purposes.

Rene de la Cruz, a garbage truck driver, said segregation at source is rarely enforced.

An employee in a town in Cavite, de la Cruz, not his real name to protect his identity because he is not authorized to speak publicly, told the BUSINESSMIRROR he has been driving the town's garbage truck for more than 15 years. Incidentally, the law mandating waste segregation was passed 15 years ago.

"Waste segregation is not implemented. The garbage we collect are not segregated," he said. While hauling garbage, he said he and his colleagues try to segregate but get only those that can be sold to junk shops for extra income.

In the process, he and his colleagues are able to earn extra from P500 to P1,000 every day.

"At least we earn extra. Some of my colleagues are not regular employees. They are volunteers only," he disclosed.

He said all the garbage they collect go straight to the town's open dump, where scavengers salvage whatever they can sell to junk shops.

This reflects a serious problem in segregating waste at source, as 70 percent of the country's garbage produced every day are actually household waste, including toxic, such as broken light bulbs and batteries. De la Cruz said residents do not segregate their garbage and the haulers never asked them to do it because local officials do not require proper waste segregation, anyway.

Environment Assistant Secretary Juan Miguel Cuna said sanitary landfills should be put up to encourage LGUs and communities to practice proper solid waste management. "We can't convince them to practice recycling and waste segregation if garbage get mixed in open dumps," Cuna said partly in Tagalog.

#### Low budget, low priority

FOR years, governments, both national and local, provide very little budget for the implementation of the law. It was only this year that a bigger budget allocation was granted for the implementation of

RA 9003, with P500 million having been realigned for solid waste management from the DENR's National Greening Program (NGP), on top of its regular budget for the purpose.

This year, a total of P588.2 million will be spent by the DENR and NSWMC for solid waste management. LGUs provide very little budget for solid waste management and is the reason for the poor implementation of the garbage law, says Environment Undersecretary for Environment and International Affairs Jonas Leones.

"Solid waste management is not in the order of priorities of LGUs. It is time for LGUs to prioritize the garbage problem," he said.

Leones said some P8 billion is needed to fully implement RA 9003. A budget proposal made by the DENR-EMB for such hefty amount was turned down in 2014.

#### Lack of technical know-how

ILDEFONSO said aside from the poor political will, LGUs lack the technical know-how to implement the law. He noted that many LGUs have failed to come up with a credible solid-waste management plan.

Many of the 10-year solid-waste management plans submitted to the NSWMC by LGUs have been rejected because they lack substance, such as waste characterization and analysis, a study from which a good plan on how to manage solid waste can be drawn, Ildefonso said.

The NSWMC said only 79 percent of LGUs, or 1,287 out of the total 1,634 LGUs, have submitted their 10-year Solid Waste Management Plans for 2010-2015, beating the June 30, 2015, nonextendable deadline. Of the submitted plans, only 122 have been approved by the NSWMC as of November 25, 2015, 60 of which were approved only last year.



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Turning  
Garbage  
into  
gold.



GARBAGE collectors segregate junks on top of a moving garbage truck. JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

While the Clean Air Act prohibits waste incineration, Leones said there is an opportunity in constructing power or methane plants fuelled by biomass wastes in sanitary landfills. Some private companies are also eyeing to produce biofuel from wastes.

"We have many open dumps. When we convert them into sanitary landfills we can put up methane plants," Leones said.

Natural gas, such as methane, can be harnessed and harvested from sanitary landfills which could partially help address the country's power shortage.

There are several waste-to-energy plants operating in the Philippines, including the Bacavalley Montalban Methane Plant in Rodriguez, Rizal, which produces 14 megawatts (MW) of electric-

ity by extracting methane using landfill gas. Another project, the Bacavalley San Pedro Methane Plant in Laguna produces 4 MW of electricity, using the same technology. The Payatas Landfill Methane Recovery Plant in Quezon City produces 1 megawatt, while the Consolacion Landfill Recovery Plant, in Cebu produces 4 MW of electricity.

Some cement plants in the Philippines are now using biomass to generate power in their operation.

Converting tons of waste into energy is like hitting two birds with one stone, Leones said.

Besides, cutting costs in the disposal of wastes, the government, particularly LGUs, can generate revenues and energize communities through landfills' largely untapped resources to boost revenues, in the process, turning garbage into gold.



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**This is On Me**

**Floro Mercene**

**Plastic pollution  
in the ocean**

Before, people assumed that because the ocean was so big, vast and deep, that the effects of dumping trash and litter into the sea is of no harm to anyone. Unfortunately, oil spills, toxic wastes, floating plastic and various other factors have all contributed

to the pollution of the ocean, and now we are being threatened by pollution.

The biggest source of pollution in the ocean originates on land. Thousands of tons of waste and trash are dumped into the ocean on a daily basis. Marine life is dying, and as a result the whole oceanic ecosystem is threatened simply by various sources of pollution.

Plastic pollution is one of the most serious threats to the ocean. Plastic does not degrade; instead, as plastic ages, the sun's light and heat break it

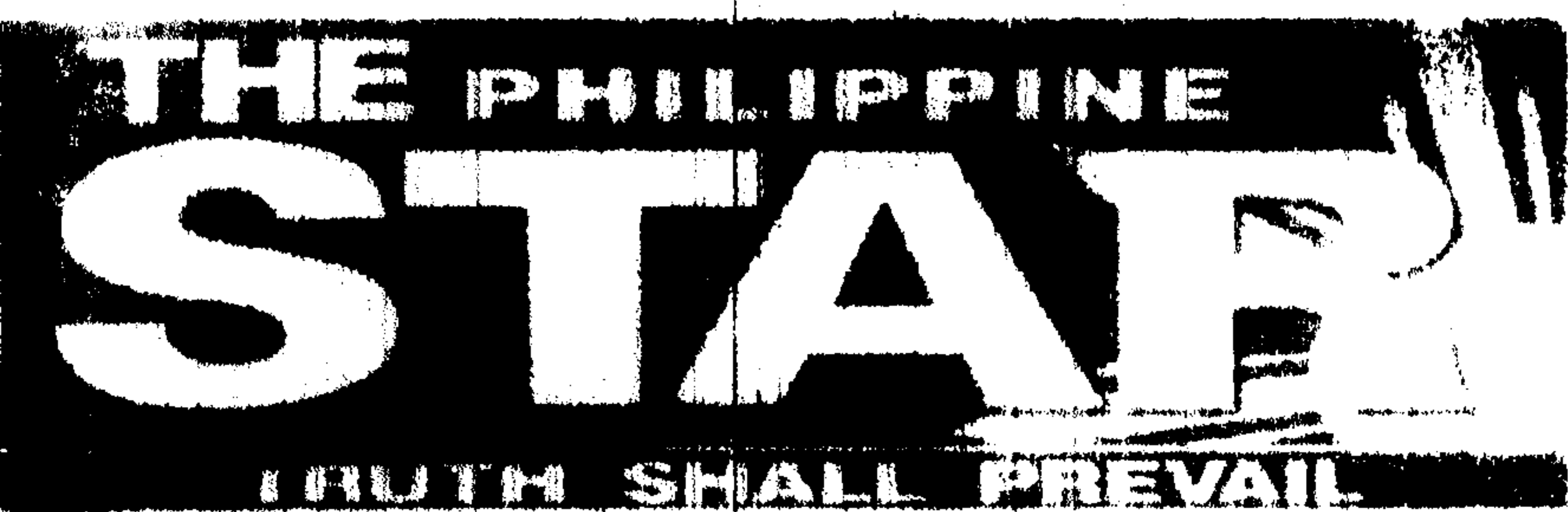
into smaller and smaller pieces of just a few millimeters, and it never disappears. It poses a significant health threat to various sea creatures. This tiny plastic confetti, along with larger pieces of floating plastic, creates a big problem. Birds and filter feeders that strain food out of the water may mistake plastic for plankton, fish eggs, or other food.

Overall, plastic is the number one source of pollution in the ocean. Plastic bags have been found blocking the breathing passages and stomachs of many marine species, including whales,

dolphins, seals, puffins, and turtles. Plastic six-pack rings for drink bottles can also choke marine animals. A 2014 study estimated that 8 million tons of plastic trash enters the sea from land every year.

Any disposable plastics such as single-use thrown away plastic bags, packaging materials, containers, saran wrap, disposable razors, zip-lock bags, bottles, bottle caps, kitchen utensils, cigarette lighters and others, if you do not dispose of them correctly, almost everything you throw away can reach the sea.





*The only paper you read from cover to cover!*

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**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**

# Proposed environment insurance bad for busi

**The local business community is concerned a proposed House bill on environment insurance would serve as a roadblock in the ease of doing business in the country.**

The Philippine Exporters Confederation Inc. (Philexport), along with the local business sector, has expressed reservations about a draft legislative bill requiring environmentally critical businesses to secure environment insurance coverage. Industry stakeholders said there are already enough measures

in place to cover the cost of possible ecological damage arising from business operations.

House Bill No. 5485 entitled "An Act Requiring Mandatory Environment Insurance Coverage (MEIC) for Environmentally Critical Businesses" is co-authored by Representatives Rosenda Ann Ocampo and Amado Bagatsing.

The MEIC "seeks to require owners and operators of environmentally-critical businesses to secure a mandatory environmental insurance

By RICHMOND MERCURIO

coverage for the payment of damages and environmental rehabilitation as a result of environmental impairment from its operations."

Philexport said local business groups believe the proposed MEIC would add another layer to the "already cumbersome documentary requirements for registration and doing business in the country."

In the World Bank Group's 2016 edition of its "Doing Business Report," Philexport said the Philippines has already slipped six notches

to 103rd from last year in terms of ease of doing business.

The group said the bill would run counter to the effort in streamlining doing business in the country.

Philexport and the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) explain mechanisms for environmental protection are necessary and is redundant given the existing environmental impact assessment system, the environment

## Proposed... From C-1

fund (EGF), and similar mechanisms which are already required to be created to address concerns over environmental preservation.

Both organizations added the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) already mandates an EGF for projects the agency determines as posing "a significant public risk or where the project requires rehabilitation or restoration."

"With DAO 2003-03, the DENR has already established the power and authority to sanction any entity they find to be violating the law," PCCI said.

The PCCI is also questioning Section 3 of the proposed bill which makes MEIC

a prerequisite for the issuance of the environmental compliance certificate or certificate of noncoverage.

PCCI is calling for further studies to determine if the Philippine insurance industry has the financial and technical capacity to implement the environmental insurance coverage.

"We should likewise benchmark with our neighboring countries in Asia if MEIC is being implemented," it said.

Philexport said among the other major concerns of enterprises about the proposal is how much would the insurance premium be considering that small firms do not have the financial capacity that large corporations have.



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# Miners hoping to see a new 'friend' in Malacañan

Investors will really want to see who our new leaders will be, because that will, in turn, shape up the country's minerals policy."  
—Recidoro

BY MARY GRACE PADIN

**D**EVELOPMENTS on the domestic front—including the seemingly mining-friendly roster of presidential bets—are giving miners hope for a strong rebound this year. The external factors, however, particularly the China gloom and depressed prices of commodities, are tempering their expectations.

Chamber of Mines of the Philippines Vice President for Legal and Policy Ronald S. Recidoro

told the BUSINESSMIRROR that 2016 will be another challenging year for the mining industry, especially since the prices of metals in the international market continue to tumble.

"The prices of these commodities are dependent on several factors, primarily China, given the downturn in the Chinese economy and the appetite for the minerals that we export is currently down. And it's not just for the Philippines; it's a global trend," he said.

SEE "MINERS," A2

China, with its massive industrialization program in the past decade, ramped up its infrastructure initiatives, increasing its need for base metals, such as nickel, iron and copper. However, the downturn in its economy has cut its demand for such commodities.

Also, Recidoro said China has amassed a substantial stock of the metals during the times it was aggressive in its development and construction. This reserve has not yet been used up. The situation in China has caused prices of metals in the international market to go down.

The Philippines exports its metals—such as gold, copper and nickel—mainly to China and Japan.

But the mining companies also have reasons to be optimistic, buoyed by developments in the domestic front.

For one, investor confidence is not affected yet by the May elections, as none of the presidential bets have openly expressed opposition to mining activities, according to Michael Toledo, Philex Mining Corp. vice president for Public and Regulatory Affairs.

He said this is important because mining is seen to help ensure the sustainable growth of the Philippine economy.

Recidoro said local stakeholders are keenly following the political movements for upcoming polls. "Investors will really want to see who our new leaders will be because that will, in turn, shape up the country's minerals policy."

The industry is also implementing several initiatives in their internal operations to boost their viability.

Philex, for one, will still continue to increase its production this year.

The latest report from the company showed improvements in its metal output. Philex's copper production in the third quarter of 2015 rose by 2 percent to 8.82 million pounds, from 8.64 million pounds recorded in the same period in 2014. The company's gold output during the period increased by 5 percent to 27,910 ounces.

However, the increment in production was not enough to prevent the reduction in the company's revenues due to the depressed metal prices in the world market.

Philex's consolidated operating revenues for the third quarter of last year went down by 7.32 percent to P2.406 billion from P2.596 billion in 2014.

Other mining firms, such as Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. and Nickel Asia Corp., also observed increases in production levels and reduction in revenues in their latest reports in 2015.

Data from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources also showed that the value of Philippine metallic production in the first nine months of 2015 went down to P85.78 billion as compared to P107.24 billion, in the same period in 2014.

But Toledo said the strategies implemented by Philex in managing its costs and reducing its expenses, together with its increased metal output, have partially offset the impact of the low prices in the global market.

"We put into place, as part of our strategic planning, a number of cost-reduction measures, which have been very successful. At the same time, we still endeavor to continue our production levels," he said.

"Most of our mining companies would have to reduce their cost. To offset the downturn in prices, they'll try to lower their cost," Recidoro said. Two more factors are boosting the miners' optimism.

"The good thing now is oil prices have gone lower, so that's helping. We're also looking at the dollar exchange rate because that will help us as net exporters," Recidoro said.

But, naturally, he said some small miners have been severely affected. Some were not able to address their losses, forcing them to temporarily stop their operations until such time that the prices of commodities have improved.



## Laguna de Bay plan fused with environment laws

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

**A**N updated master plan for the sustainable development of the Laguna de Bay has been approved by the board of directors of the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA), providing strategic direction to ensure the lake's sustainable development.

Approved during the LLDA's board of directors' meeting held at the agency's Green Building in Quezon City last December 15, the 2016-2026 Laguna de Bay Updated Master Plan (UMP) is harmonized with four important environmental laws and puts premium on climate-change impacts, according to Cesar R. Quintos, head of the LLDA's policy, planning and information division.

The LLDA board of directors act as the highest policy-making body in the management of the Laguna de Bay.

The area includes the 90,000-hectare freshwater lake, the country's biggest and third-largest lake in Asia, and a major fishing ground and aquaculture hub in Luzon.

The UMP carries a hefty budget of P88 billion for the implementation of various government-funded projects and activities. In doing so, it will promote public-private partnership (PPP) schemes for big-ticket projects, such as the Laguna Lakeshore Expressway Project (LLEP), Quintos told the BUSINESS-MIRROR in an interview.

Four laws have been enacted since 1995: the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the National Solid Waste Management Act and the Fisheries Code.

Quintos said the UMP is geared toward further improvement of air, soil and water quality, solid-waste management and disaster risk reduction.

The impacts of climate change, Quintos added, were an important consideration in the crafting of the new plan.

"Another reason for the crafting of a new plan is the development of new technologies. We need to cope and be able to make use of these new technologies," Quintos said.

Among the big government-funded projects identified in the Laguna de Bay UMP are construction of a centralized sewerage system and a centralized wastewater-treatment plant. These carry a total proposed budget ranging from P20 billion to P25 billion.

Quintos explained that the projects are geared toward reducing all forms of pollution in the lake, while implementing various capacity-building programs to empower local government units (LGUs) and communities to benefit from the Laguna de Bay's bounty.

Some of the big-ticket projects will be implemented through PPP, while



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A broader look at today's business

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*Laguna de Bay plan fused w/ environmental laws.*

some will be funded by the national government, such as sanitary landfills and materials-recovery facilities (MRFs).

"As much as possible, we want the LGUs to finance their own waste facilities," Quintos said. "But we [also] want to establish solid-waste management systems within our jurisdiction," he said.

This, he said, will require funding for the construction of MRFs in areas that still do not have one.

Previous activities of the LLDA with the help of the World Bank led to the establishment of 16 MRFs in various towns. Around 40 LGUs currently have MRFs, according to Quintos.

He said addressing the garbage problem in the lake caused by indiscriminate dumping of household waste in the lake or river tributaries connected to the lake is among the LLDA's priority thrusts under the UMP.

"Industrial-waste problems have somehow been addressed already. The household waste is a more serious problem today."

The Laguna de Bay area covers 66 cities and municipalities in Metro Manila, and five neighboring provinces—Laguna, Rizal, Batangas, Cavite and Quezon. All cities and

municipalities in Laguna and Rizal are part of the watershed.

We really need "a centralized sewerage system and wastewater-treatment plant," Quintos said. "These are new additions. Before, the master plan is more about regulation."

Also integrated in the plan are the Comprehensive Land Use Plans of the LGUs within the Laguna de Bay region, he said.

Quintos added that components of the said government projects and activities include commitments of the LLDA to the Governance Commission for GOCCs.

Several goals and objectives are maintaining water quality for fisheries and implementation of solid-waste management for LGUs and communities within the LLDA jurisdiction.

He said the LLDA commits to improve fisheries production.

Around 60 percent to 70 percent of fish supplies to Metro Manila come from the Laguna de Bay.

The target, he said, is to increase fish production by 10 percent to 15 percent and keep the number of fish pens and fish cages within the maximum limit allowed by the Fisheries Code.

Under the Fisheries Code, the area allowed for aquaculture should be limited

to 10 percent of the water body.

Quintos said, because of the popularity of the aquaculture business in the Laguna de Bay in 1996, the number of fish pen and fish cages grew and the area expanded beyond the lake's carrying capacity, reaching as much as 15,000 hectares.

"We need to improve fisheries production to keep the price of fish in Metro Manila market at affordable level," Quintos said. Otherwise, the price of fish would increase and would impact hard on the poor, he explained in Tagalog.

Quintos added that the plan is to give more areas for open fisheries in the lake and confine aquaculture production within the designated areas.

The strict implementation of the lake's zoning plan, Quintos added, will be implemented. It is aimed at maximizing revenues from the lake's use, particularly in aquaculture, he said.

The LLDA has encountered problems because of the proliferation of illegal fish pens and fish cages without its permission. Until now, it has not succeeded in clearing the lake of illegally built fish pens and fish cages.

LLDA officials allege that some owners of these illegal fish pens and fish cages are connected to influential people and people in the government.



## PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

### LGUs act to restore Manila Bay's beauty

By Joel dela Torre

INITIATIVES to ensure greater compliance among local government units (LGUs) are being undertaken by the government to restore Manila Bay's pristine state.

According to Interior and Local Government Secretary Mel Senen Sarmiento, the DILG and other concerned agencies are in joint efforts to bring back Manila Bay to its previous state in coordination with the LGUs.

"Hindi nagpapabaya ang DILG katuwang ang ibang ahensya ng pamahalaan at mga LGUs sa kanyang tungkulin na pagandahin at ibalik ang dating kagandahan at kalinisan ng Manila Bay," Sarmiento said.

LGUs which have jurisdiction over Manila Bay play a big role in the clean-up drive through implementation of measures on environmental laws, rules and regulations, particularly in the conduct of inspection and monitoring of establishments having hygienic septic and wastewater treatment facilities.

Sarmiento stressed that DILG is not the lead agency implementing the Manila Bay Clean Up, Rehabilitation and Preservation (MBCRP) program. There are 12 other national government agencies, he added, which are mandated by the Supreme Court to enact initiatives preventing the continuous cycle of man-made pollution to restore Manila Bay to its pristine form, fit for swimming and other of contact recreation.



# Freedom Island's birds eyed as tourist attraction

By CITO BELTRAN

slung' kettle

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By PERSEUS ECHEMINADA

The Parañaque City government is planning to make migratory birds at Freedom Island as a tourist attraction, Mayor Edwin Olivarez said yesterday.

This scheme would complement the development of a fisherman's wharf along Coastal Road, where tourists from the nearby Entertainment City may enjoy boat rides, sightseeing and dining at floating restaurants, he said.

Olivarez said the wharf will be constructed through a public-private partnership program.

"The city government is set to convert Bulungan – the fish market – along Coastal Road into a fisherman's wharf," he said.

At Bulungan, fishermen unload their catch of the day

from Manila Bay. Buyers bid on the fish – sold in bulk – by "whispering" their offers to the fisherman, who announces the winner without the other bidders knowing the winning offer.

Navotas City has a similar facility.

Bulungan will remain a fish market but additional attractions, including floating restaurants and boats for hire, will be available to local and foreign tourists, Olivarez said.

When asked about the danger migratory birds pose to aircraft at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, the mayor said that with modern technology to keep the birds away, bird strikes are no longer a threat "to incoming and outgoing planes at NAIA."





# THE PHILIPPINE STAR

TRUTH SHALL PREVAIL

*The only paper you read from cover to cover!*

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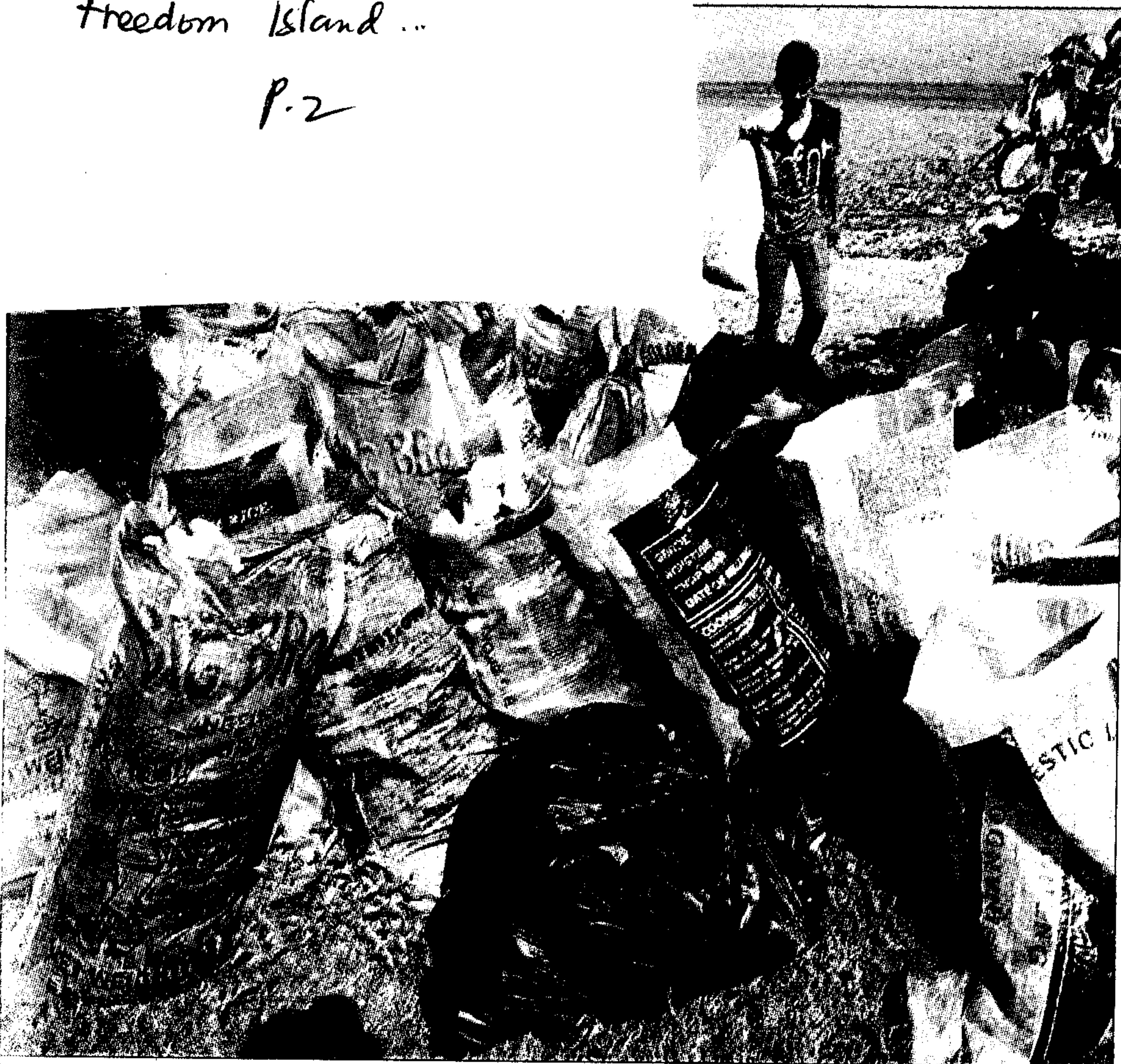
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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Freedom Island ...

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A volunteer rests after helping gather trash that washed ashore on Freedom Island in this Sept. 9, 2015 photo. Inset shows two egrets catching fish in the waters of Manila Bay off the island, which has been declared a sanctuary for migratory birds. The Wild Bird Society of the Philippines has identified about 100 species of birds in the area. The island is also home to rare species of mangrove.

KRIZJOHN ROSALES/EPA



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# INQUIRER

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## Philippine eagle toys in designer dresses auctioned

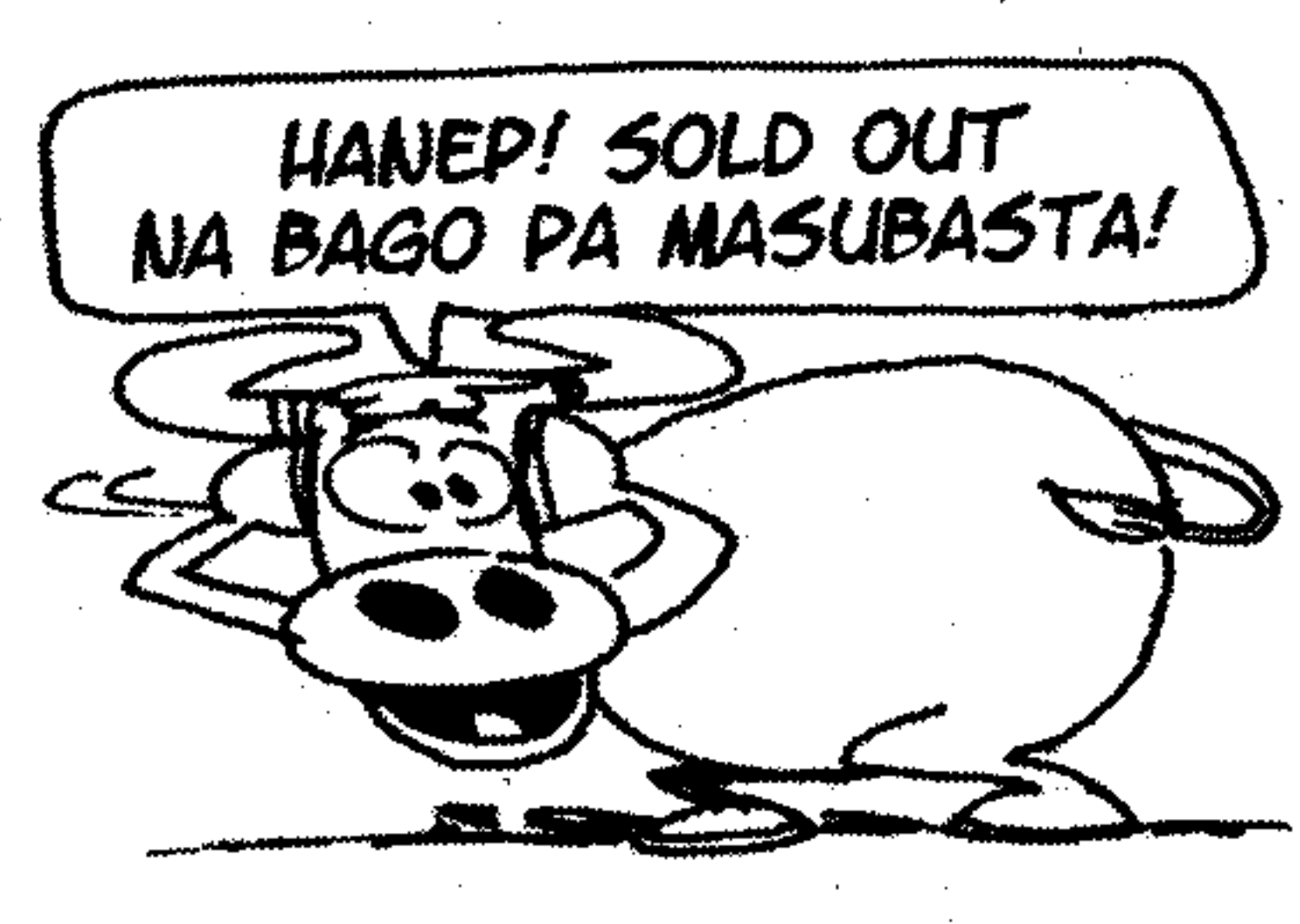
By Jinggoy I. Salvador  
Contributor

DAVAO CITY—Even before the Philippine eagle stuffed toys in custom-made Renee Salud outfit were presented to the public for auction on Thursday, these had

already been sold out. But this didn't stop the guests of the Marco Polo Hotel here from pledging P10,000 for a pair of the toy birds in one-of-a-kind designer clothes.

The turnout of support

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## Philippine eagle toys in designer dresses auctioned

From page A1

surprised both the organizers and the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF). They are now committed to creating additional designer eagles for the donors.

Salud used authentic fabrics from the different tribes of Mindanao in creating a his and hers costumes for the 10 pairs of eagle stuffed toys.

More than owning the iconic representations of the eagle dressed by an equally iconic Filipino fashion figure, the event was aimed at protecting the feathered creature from getting plucked out of existence.

### Critically endangered

Since 1994, the Philippine eagle has been considered critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. About 400 pairs of Philippine eagles remain in the wild, more than half of them in Mindanao, according to an estimate by PEF.

Uncontrolled hunting, loss of habitat due to forest destruction and pollution continue to be the main causes of their decreasing population.

Philippine eagles are monogamous and can lay only one egg in two years—unique behaviors that make them vulnerable to extinction.

### Hijos de Davao

Shortly after the presentation of the dolled-up eagles by the members of the Hijos de Davao, who were in Renee Salud as well, Marco Polo exceeded the P1-million mark in donations.

Of the amount, P750,000 was raised by the hotel chain through the fund-raising campaign



**DESIGNER TOY** In a Renee Salud outfit, a Philippine eagle stuffed toy is presented for auction by Jackie Garcia-Dizon, immediate past president of Hijos de Davao, to raise funds for the protection of the critically endangered bird species.

JINGGOY SALVADOR/CONTRIBUTOR

in Marco Polo Davao, Marco Polo Cebu, Marco Polo Ortigas and Marco Polo Hong Kong hotels.

The gathering was originally planned as a simple turnover ceremony with Marco Polo Hotels president-designate Jennifer Cronin and PEF chair Carlos Dominguez and Halifax Davao Hotel Inc. (owner of Marco Polo Davao) presenting the donation to PEF executive director Dennis Salvador.

But the expanded program that injected a stylish twist encouraged everyone, including members of Davao's elite, corporate guests, tourism partners and friends from the national and local media, present in the ballroom to dig into their pockets.

With donations pouring in, the auction proved to be a success.

The fund-raising campaign was the brainchild of Philippe Caretti, Marco Polo Hotels vice president for operations.

Although the Marco Polo Davao has been a partner of the PEF for more than a decade and the "adoptive parent" of Philippine eagle "Marikit," the fund-raising campaign was a welcome project for the PEF. **With a report from Inquirer Research**



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### Artificial reefs attract marine life in S. Leyte

By Ronald O. Reyes

TACLOBAN CITY—Marine life congregation on artificial reefs has dramatically increased six months after 72 bamboo artificial reef modules were launched off barangay Poblacion, Padre Burgos, in Southern Leyte, said a provincial consultant on marine tourism.

"To date, 146 fish species or families and 124 species of invertebrates were identified or documented," said Rio Cahambing, who is also the consultant on coastal resource management in the province.

The project is a joint undertaking of French non-governmental organization Scaph Pro (Philippines) Oceanographic Research and the local government of Padre Burgos, with the provincial government providing the technical support.

The number of species of fishes, invertebrates and other marine organisms that has since congregated and colonized the artificial reefs was detailed in a report recently submitted by Jean Francois Marailhac, a French oceanographer and vice president of Scaph Pro, (Philippines) and its president Michael Levett, operator of True Blue Diving in Padre Burgos to the local government of Padre Burgos.

"The project is still on its first phase, and Scaph Pro Philippines intends to expand the artificial reef area to the adjacent barangay of Cantutang, Padre Burgos," Cahambing said in a statement.

Cahambing added that Southern Leyte Gov. Roger Mercado recently donated bamboos to be made into additional artificial reef modules.

"The materials are now ready for transport from the

governor's tree park in Barangay Bogo, Maasin City to the construction site in Sta. Sofia, Padre Burgos," Cahambing added.

"In the trunk line are several additional artificial reefs ready to launch as soon as logistic requirements are met in the next few weeks. The group is targeting a total of 400 modules to cover the two coastal barangays."



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## Balanga bishop alarmed by dockyard near school

ORION, Bataan—Balanga Bishop Ruperto Santos has opposed the construction of a dockyard near a school in the coastal village of Sta. Elena here, citing the serious health threat on students there.

Santos said the ongoing construction at the 9-hectare property near the shores of Sta. Elena proceeded without consulting its neighbor, St. Francis Catholic School.

The dockyard is being developed by a Manila-based firm, Orion Dockyard Inc. Work on the site began in June last year.

The company has not issued any statement.

"[The dockyard] is at the back of St. Francis Catholic School. The diocese [of Balanga] is very much alarmed and worried with what has been done there in Sta. Elena, with [the] construction of the dockyard. Our reasoning: [It poses] danger [on the] safety of children, [and work there disturbs] their studies and [affects their] health because of sand and copper blasting," the bishop said in a text message.

Santos also referred to the destruction of a mangrove forest in the area, for which Orion Mayor Antonio Raymundo complained to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in December last year.

Citing the loss of nearly 4,000 mangrove trees, the bishop said the diocese and its clergy "stand

firm ... in protecting our lands and seas."

Sister Paola, St. Francis Catholic School's mother superior, said school officials and teachers had complained to the Sta. Elena village government that the company had begun construction work without a public hearing.

"For us, nothing we do would stop the project. It's already there. What we don't understand is why we were informed about the project only now," she said.

She said teachers had complained about dust that penetrated the teaching staff's living quarters as well as the noise created by heavy equipment.

The dockyard has divided the community.

Carlos Leoveras, a fisherman near the project site, defended the dockyard. "Why criticize the project when it pours investments into our village," he said.

He said he and other fishermen had been relocated to new homes in another village.

The municipal aquatic and fishery council in Orion said about 3,000 fishermen would be displaced, following the loss of the mangrove trees that served as a fish sanctuary for years.

The DENR granted Orion Dockyard Inc. an environmental compliance certificate (ECC) for its back-filling activities, but not for clearing the mangrove forest.

*Greg Refraccion, Inquirer Central Luzon*



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## PH won't escape water crisis, USAID exec warns

By Jigger Jerusalem  
*Inquirer Mindanao*

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Water shortage on a massive scale would be felt a decade from now and the Philippines will not be spared from the crisis, a director for the environment, energy and climate change office of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) warned.

Dani Newcomb, citing a projection made by the Food and Agriculture Organization, said that by 2025, two-thirds of the world's population would be living in areas suffering from a severe lack of water caused by a number of factors.

"Water resources are under increasing pressure due to population growth, high urbanization, environmental degradation, weak governance, natural disasters and climate change," Newcomb said during the launching of

the nonrevenue water (NRW) reduction program that USAID initiated to help the Cagayan de Oro Water District (COWD) and its more than 87,000 consumers here.

As solutions to cushion the impact of climate change are being discussed by world leaders in various venues across the globe, water-saving measures are seen as one way to mitigate the impact of water shortage on communities, she added.

Cagayan de Oro is one of the areas USAID has been working with under the Cities Development Initiative, a component of the broader Partnership for Growth, to save on water. Other recipients include the cities of Iloilo, Puerto Princesa, Tagbilaran, Batangas and Zamboanga.

The project was designed to reduce NRW, or water that is lost as a result of leaks, wastage, pilferage through illegal connections and other means.

'Water resources are under increasing pressure due to population growth, high urbanization, environmental degradation, weak governance, natural disasters and climate change'

The COWD admits it is losing 80,000 cubic meters of water, or 53 percent of the 150,000 cubic meters it generates each day. The acceptable level of NRW should only be 20 to 30 percent.

The NRW is not unique to Cagayan de Oro as other regions in the Philippines face similar challenges, Newcomb said.

USAID, she said, is committed to not only supporting the country's economic growth and

development, but the delivery of water and sanitation services that can also affect public health, productivity and quality of life.

She said that because water supplies were threatened by typhoons, floods, droughts and sea level rises, climate resilience was a key factor in USAID's work in other parts of the country.

"We work closely with water utilities and local govern-

ments to integrate climate resilience in water supply services and in local planning. With projected water shortages, we appreciate now more than ever the increasing importance of water-use efficiency as one of the potentially effective ways to address the adverse effects of climate change on water resources," Newcomb added.

"With climate change projections that predict less overall future rainfall, the COWD decided it was time to increase its water supply through NRW reduction. By addressing this problem, the COWD can use the water saved to improve their services for everyone. They can even expand to serve other areas still lacking a water connection," said a USAID statement.

COWD general manager Rachel Beja said she was hoping that the NRW program would be sustained in the coming years.



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICES

## El Niño takes its toll on palay, corn production in Davao region

By ALEXANDER D. LOPEZ

**D**AVAO CITY – The prolonged El Niño phenomenon, which experts said will extend until May or even up to June this year, has already taken its toll on the palay and corn production in Davao region, the Regional Development Council in the area (RDC-11) reported.

In a press briefing held Friday, National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA-11) regional director Maria Lourdes Lim, the RDC-11 vice chair said palay production has suffered a 7.3 percent decline while corn production was down by 21.4 percent.

Data provided by RDC-11 said Davao region only had 334,844-metric ton (MT) palay production from the first to the third quarter of 2015, which was lower than the 361,350-MT recorded for the same period the previous year.

Corn production also slumped 131,734 MTs for the first three quarters of 2015 from 185,845 MTs in 2014.

To mitigate further impact on palay and corn production in the area, Davao del Norte Governor and RDC-11 chair Rodolfo del Rosario said the implementation of the Roadmap to Address the Impact of El Niño (RAIN) will top this year's priorities for the council.

"The RAIN that was prepared by the

cabinet-level El Niño Task Force and chaired by NEDA secretary will be prioritized this year among the 11 concerns of RDC-11 as this will address the impact of El Niño particularly on food security, energy security, health and safety," Del Rosario pointed out.

Lim also told reporters that the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) has already done its assessment on the status of irrigation facilities in the region.

Davao region has a total irrigable area of 110,353 hectares but target for accomplishments for implementation of irrigation projects also declined to 62.29 percent last year from a target of 66.04 percent.

The same failure to reach target goals in irrigation was also suffered by the region in 2014 which only reached 61.36 percent accomplishment compared to a target of 65.22 percent.

Other national agencies under the El Niño Task Force, including the Department of Agriculture in the area (DA-11) are also working for measures to mitigate the impact of the prolonged dry spell to the farmers in Davao region, she added.

Agricultural products that also suffered decrease in production last year include coconut, from 1,856,579 MT in 2014 down to 1,726,986 MT last year; and coffee that only yielded 6,493 MT

production last year compared to 6,624 MT production in 2014.

On the other hand, RDC-11 also presented that significantly gained in terms of production last year that include cacao, durian and banana.

Cacao posted the highest figure in terms of production with 3,571 MT last year compared to 3,173 MT in 2014, or a growth rate of 12.5 percent and durian with 51,293 MT last year or a 9.3 percent increase compared to 46,898 MT in 2014.

Banana, the leading agricultural export product in Davao region also indicated increase in production last year that was posted at 2,573,743 MT or a three percent growth compared to 2,499,430 MT in 2014.

Export on banana in 2015 in Davao region was valued at \$219.4 million with the US and Japan as the leading export destinations.

Other leading export products of Davao region last year included coconut, copra and crude oil valued at \$152.2 million; and activated carbon with a value of \$56.9 million.

In general, Lim pointed out, exports in Davao region declined last year by 39.8 percent compared to 2014.

Total exports in the area were only valued at \$716.6 million last year, a figure lower to \$1.19 billion export earnings in 2014.



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**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**



**DAM IN TROUBLE** — The usually sky blue-colored water of Dlayo Dam in Barangay Galintuja, Marla Aurora, Aurora has turned brown last week as a result of floods brought by the typhoons last month. The water level at this dam, a subsidiary of the mammoth Pantabangan Dam in Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija, has been declining because of the effect of the El Niño now prevalent in many parts of the country. (Ariel P. Avendaño)



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## PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

### After El Niño comes the deluge

BY ANGELA LOPEZ DE LEON

A La Niña, the climate phenomenon associated with increased rainfall, has a great chance of following the prevailing El Niño when it ends in July, an official of the weather bureau said. Anthony Lucero, officer-in-charge of the weather bureau's climate monitoring and prediction section, said a La Niña could develop three to 12 months after the El Niño's termination in July.

La Niña, which is the opposite of El Niño, is the periodic cooling of surface temperatures in the Pacific Ocean.

During La Niña, many parts of the country will experience near normal to above normal rainfall conditions, particularly over the eastern sections of the country.

Lucero said it typically lasts between nine and 12 months, but some events may persist for as long as three years.

He said a La Niña usually occurs after a very strong El Niño event, similar to what happened in the previous El Niño years.

He noted that back in 1997 to 1998, when the country experienced one of the worst El Niño events, a La Niña rapidly followed.

"The fact that this year's El

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### AFTER

Niño is being considered as one of the most powerful could see a history repeat itself. If that happens, La Niña could occur by the end of the year or early next year," he added.

Based on climatological records, there have been 12 La Niña events since 1949.

In the 1998 La Niña, records showed almost the whole country receiving above-normal rainfall, causing floods in many areas.

One of the worst effects of the event was experienced in February 2006, when non-stop rains for 10 days brought by La Niña-enhanced northeast monsoon caused a landslide that

buried a community at Brgy. Guinsaugon in St. Bernard town in Southern Leyte, killing more than a thousand residents.

The last La Niña episode happened from July 2010 to mid-2011.

A strong El Niño is now affecting the country.

But Lucero said it is forecast to weaken after March.



## PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

### Paboritong 'lusubin' ang 'Pinas

"PABORITONG landingan, lusubin, bihagin, alipinin, ang bansang Pilipinas. Mayaman kasi ang bayan natin sa mga mineral tulad ng ginto, nickel, coal, at langis din. Paboritong lusubin at gyerahin din ng US ang Middle East o Gitnang Silangan dahil sa yaman nito sa krudo ng langis.

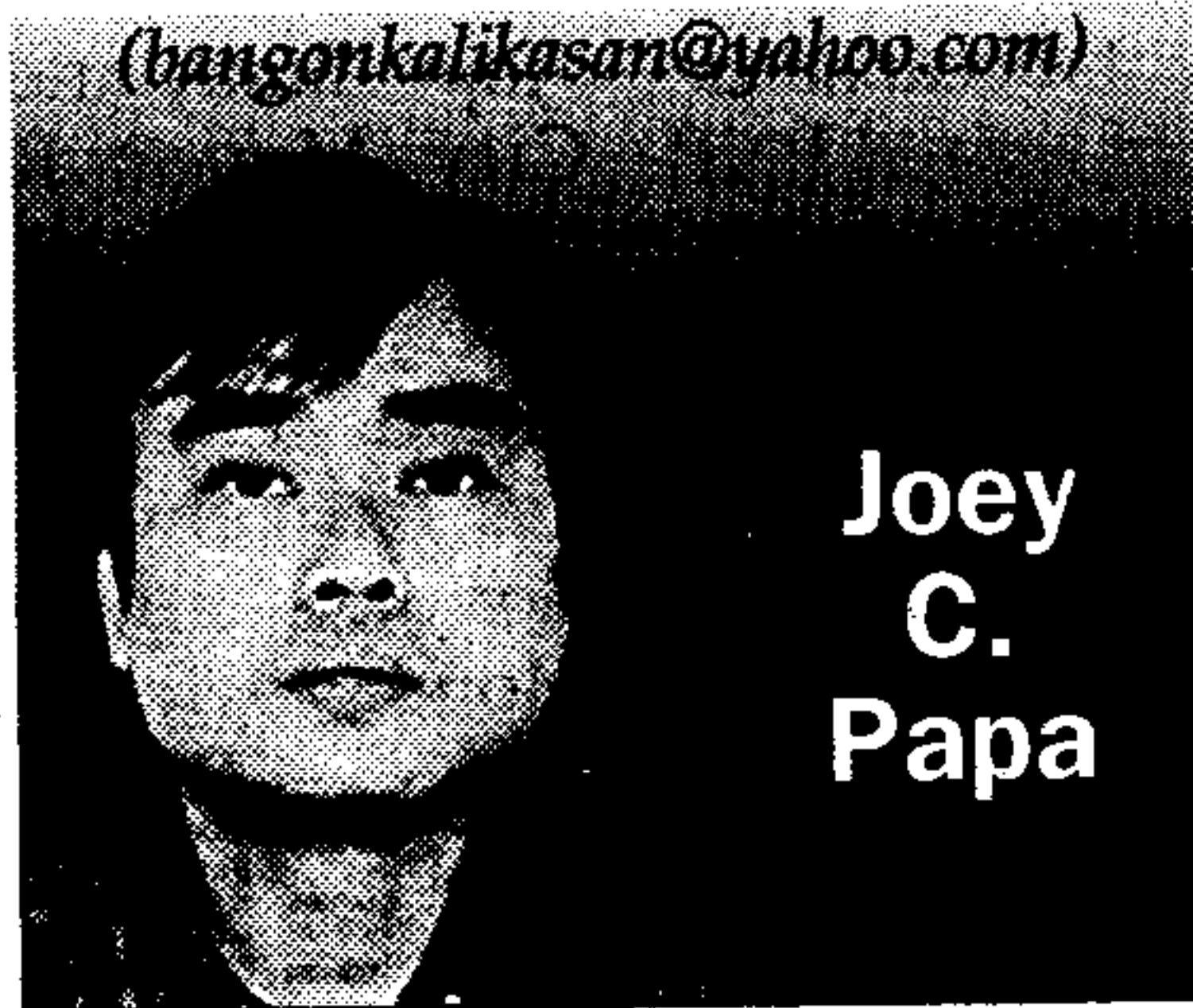
Ngunit naging "paborito" din ng bansang Tsina ang 'Pinas sa usapin ng South China Sea o ang tawag natin ngayon ay West Philippine Sea. Ngunit ayon sa isang kakilala ko na Pilipinong nanirahan at nagtrabaho ng halos tatlong dekada sa Tsina, nasa elementarya pa lang ang mga Tsino, nakasulat na sa mga aklat nila na kanila ang South China Sea. Bakit pa nga naman tinawag na China Sea ang lugar?

Matindi ang naging desisyon ng Supreme Court ilang araw pa lang ang nakararaan. Sinang-ayunan nito ang pagbibigay ng 10 taon security accord sa US at Pilipinas sa pamamagitan ng Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement o EDCA. Nagalit ang mga makabayang kilusan sa pangunguna ng Bagong Alyansang Makabayan at mga kasapi nitong organisasyon.

Walong lugar ang pagtatayuan ng "base" militar: Pampanga (Basa Air Base, Clark Air Base), Nueva Ecija (Fort Magsaysay), Palawan (Camp Antonio Bautista at isang naval base), Cebu (Camp Benito Ebuen at isang naval base), Cagayan de Oro (Lumbia Air Field) ang ibinigay ng Pilipinas sa US upang gawin nilang "base" militar. Magbabantay

#### BANGON KALIKASAN

(bangonkalikasan@yahoo.com)



Joey C. Papa

daw ang mga ito sa ginagawang pagpapalawak ng Tsina sa South China Sea!

Anak ng putakte naman! Parang ginagago ang mga Pinoy! Matagal nang nakasingkaw ang ilong ng mga pinunong bayan natin sa ngayon at maging ng mga nakaraan sa lubid ni Uncle Sam!

Panahon pa ni Ferdinand Marcos nang hilingin noon diumano ng ilang US intelligence officials sa isang mataas na pinuno ng militar ni Marcos ang Palawan upang gawin itong base militar ng US. Lihim 'umano ang pulong na ito. Ang naging sagot ng mataas na pinuno ng militar ni Marcos ay "Yes sir! I will tell it to my president!"

Tila nainis daw ang mga US Intel Officials at sinabing, "No we are telling you that we would like to put up a military base in Palawan because of its strategic proximity to Diego Garcia, Vietnam, and other Asian countries."

Sumagot daw ulit ang opisyal ni

Marcos, "Yes sir, i will tell it to my president!"

Nainis ang mga US intel officials at iniwan ang opisyal ni Marcos.

Ang gusto raw marinig ng mga US intel officials sa opisyal ni Marcos ay sagutin nito na siya na ang bahala sa pagtatayo ng base military kaya nga ginawang lihim ang pagpupulong nila upang kahit si Marcos ay hindi malaman ang pinag-usapan nila ngunit nanatiling tapat ang pinuno sa kanyang presidente hanggang sa huli. Nang mga panahong 'yon ay pumapalag na si Marcos sa US at napabalita ring may sakit na siya at hindi na kayang pamunuan ang Pilipinas Ibig sabihin ay wala nang tiwala ang US kay Marcos kaya kinausap na lang ang isang mataas na opisyal ng militar ng Pilipinas noon.

Gayunman, noon pa man ay dinumog at binihag na tayo ng Espanya, Great Britain (noon), US, Hapon, at ngayon ay pumirmis na ang US sa bansa natin kahit hindi sila ang tuwirang nagpapatakbo ng Pilipinas. Behind the scene na lang sila. Pinainit nila ang isyu ng Tsina at South China Sea samantalang best of friends o BFF naman ang US at Tsina. Malaki pa nga raw ang utang ng US sa Tsina. Marami na nga raw nabibiling produkto sa US na gawang Tsina.

Kawawang Pilipinas? Hindi pa rin naman kawawa hanggang may nagbabantay at naglalayon ng pagkakamit natin ng tunay na kalayaan at demokrasya.

"Hindi tayo iidlip sa magdamag. Hindi tayo susuko sa magdamag."



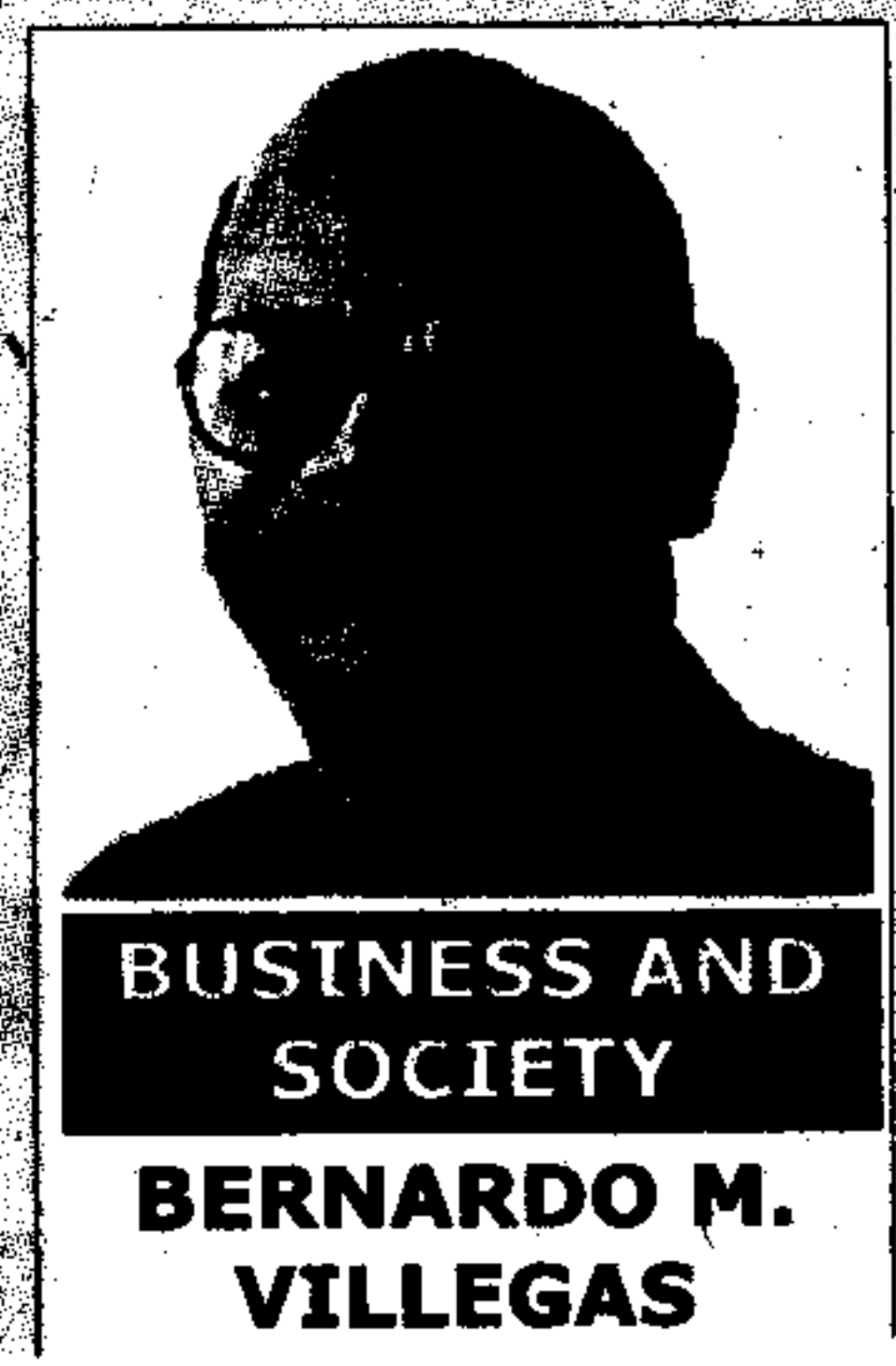
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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICES



### Pope Francis to the youth

Exactly one year ago today, Pope Francis had an encounter with the youth at the campus of the University of Santo Tomas (UST). He had a prepared speech but decided to deliver an impromptu homily in Spanish which was translated into English by Msgr. Mark Gerard Miles. Thanks to Rappler.com, among others, we have a copy of the full transcript of the prepared speech whose content has a very timely relevance as our nation prepares to elect our national and local political leaders next May 9, 2016. Unwittingly, the Pope gave very specific criteria to the youth about the qualities that they should look for in leaders, whether in the public or private sectors. People of business who regularly read this column can be a very important channel to communicate to the youth under their care as well as to those running for national and local elective positions what the Pope considers as the key areas where the youth can make a significant contribution to the common good. Needless to say, these are also the areas in which the not so young should give the appropriate examples to the youth for them to heed the advice of the Pope. We need role models for our youth.

The first key area mentioned by the Pope is predictably the challenge of integrity. He distinguished between two ways that the word "challenge" can be understood. First, negatively, as a temptation to act against one's moral convictions, what one knows to be true, good and right. As is so blatantly obvious among some of the leading candidates for top positions, integrity can be challenged by selfish interest, greed, dishonesty, or the willingness to use other people. In the wrong forms of capitalism, as the Pope frequently points out, these temptations are also quite widespread. Let those business leaders who have signed the Integrity

Pledge being fostered by the Makati Business Club and the European Chamber of Commerce actively campaign among the youth to second the message of the Pope.

The Pope also pointed out that "challenge" can be understood positively: "It can be seen as an invitation to courage, a summon to bear prophetic witness to what you believe and hold sacred. In this sense, the challenge of integrity is something which you have to face now, at this time in your lives. It is not something you can put off until you are older or have greater responsibilities. Even now you are challenged to act with honesty and fairness in your dealings with others, young and old alike. Do not avoid the challenge! One of the greatest challenges young people face is learning to love. To love means to take a risk: the risk of rejection, the risk of being taken advantage of, or worse, of taking advantage of another. Do not be afraid to love! But in love, too, maintain your integrity! Here too, be honest and fair!" These remarks of the Pope remind me of what I heard Tony Meloto of Gawad Kalinga tell some student leaders that he does not believe in the integrity of a leader — whether in business or politics — who cheats on his wife. How can we expect someone who cheats the closest person in his life not to cheat others! And to top it all, some candidates for important positions openly boast about being two-timing husbands!

The second area mentioned by the Pope is concern for the environment. Since his trip to the Philippines, he has expanded this advice into a major



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICES

### Pope Francis to the youth

papal document entitled *Laudato Si* or *Concern for Our Common Home*. In his prepared speech to the Filipino Youth, he made special mention that the Philippines, more than many other countries, is likely to be seriously affected by climate change. But over and above this circumstance, the youth (and all of us) are called to care for creation not only as responsible citizens, but also as followers of Christ! As he wrote: "Respect for the environment means more than simply using cleaner products or recycling what we use. These are important aspects, but not enough. We need to see, with the eye of faith, the beauty of God's saving plan, the link between the natural environment and the dignity of the human person. Men and women are made in the image and likeness of God, and given dominion over creation. As stewards of God's creation, we are called to make the earth a beautiful garden for the human family. When we destroy our forests, ravage our soil and pollute our seas, we betray that noble calling."

The next six years will be crucial in our implementing policies and action programs to protect the physical environment. This was made very clear by world leaders in their recent meeting in Paris. At both the national and local levels, the people we elect should be exemplary in their "care of our common home." Together with responsible people in business — especially in such sectors as mining, agribusiness, manufacturing, energy and tourism — public officials should be especially vigilant to heed the advice given by Bishops in a prophetic Pastoral Letter cited by the Pope.

The Bishops asked everyone to think about the moral dimension of their activities and lifestyles, their consumption and their use of the earth's resources. The Pope seconded the wishes of the Bishops by asking the youth to be responsible in the use of the earth's resources in the context of their own lives. He exhorted them to be concerned about what is happening "to your beautiful land!" I fervently hope that the leaders we will elect in May, 2016 will set the right examples to our youth so that they will be motivated to listen to the Pope

Finally, the Pope ended with the very theme of his entire visit to the Philippines: Love for the poor and the needy. As far as both the State and business are concerned, I have written abundantly on the policies and programs that can address the problem of mass poverty in the Philippines. The Pope, however, descends to the level of the lives and personal behavior of the youth themselves: "No matter how much or how little we have individually, each one of us is called to personally reach out and serve our brothers and sisters in need. There is always someone near us in need, materially, emotionally, spiritually. The greatest gift we can give to them is our friendship, our concern, our tenderness, our love for Jesus. To receive Jesus is to have everything; to give him is to give the greatest gift of all." We should never forget that there are people in need who are not materially poor. A faithful follower of Christ should realize that the worst kind of poverty is spiritual.

For comments, my email address is [bernardo.villegas@uap.asia](mailto:bernardo.villegas@uap.asia)



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*Amica*  
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**PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS**

## Plastic, styrofoam nakatakdang ipagbawal sa CFEZ

**PAMPANGA** - Nagpalabas ng memorandum circular ang pamunuan ng Clark Development Corp. (CDC) na nagregulate at nagtatakda sa paggamit ng plastic, styrofoam at iba pang produktong non-biodegradable sa lahat ng establisimiento at tanggapan sa loob ng Clark Freeport Economic Zone sa Pampanga.

Sa pahayag ng CDC, maaari lamang gamitin ang plastic bag bilang pangunahing packaging material para sa wet goods.

Samantala, maaaring gumamit ng mga biodegradable na plastic at styrofoam bilang insulator basta may sertipikasyon mula sa manufacturer ng produkto at isusumite ang sample nito sa CDC Environmental Permits Department para aprubahan bago gamitin.

Kailangan ding itapon nang maayos ang mga ito matapos gamitin.

Bukod sa pagbabawas sa paggamit ng plastik, layunin din ng nasabing inisyatibo

na hikayatin ang paggamit ng mga eco-bag bilang alternatibo sa plastic bag.

Gayundin ang paggamit ng biodegradable styrofoam at reusable na lalagyan ng pagkain bilang alternatibo naman sa styrofoam.

Nagtakda ng multa ang CDC para sa mga hindi susunod sa nasabing circular.

Nakatakdang ipatupad ng CDC ang total plastic at styrofoam ban sa Abril 21, 2016.

**Gary Bernardo**





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### Pagsasabit ng banderitas, ipagbawal—EcoWaste

Nais ng isang environmental group na ipagbawal ng Simbahan at ng mga community leader ang pagsasabit ng mga banderitas sa panahon ng pista.

Ito ay kaugnay ng mga banderitas na nakasabit sa mga kalye sa Pandacan at Tondo sa Maynila, na nagdiwang kahapon ng pista ng Santo Niño.

Ayon sa EcoWaste Coalition, hindi maaaring i-recycle o magamit

mulí ang mga banderitas bukod pa sa wala naman itong spiritual o functional value sa pista.

Sinabi ni Aileen Lucero, coordinator ng EcoWaste, na pagkatapos ng pista ay karaniwan nang iniwan lang ang banderitas na nakakabit sa mga kalye at hihintaying masira ang mga ito ng bagyo o malalakas na hangin.

Kalaunan, ang mga banderitas ay maaaring tangayin sa mga estero,

drainage, dagat at ilog, na kalaunan ay nagdudulot ng baha, polusyon, at panganib sa aquatic animals, ayon pa sa grupo.

Hindi rin naman nagustuhan ng EcoWaste na makukulay na polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastic sheets, may taglay na toxic chemicals tulad ng lead, ang ginagamit sa paggawa ng banderitas.

**Mary Ann Santiago**



# X-FILES

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## BANDERITAS IPAGBABAWAL NA!

**HINIKAYAT** ng Eco-Waste Coalition, isang environment watchdog, ang Simbahan at mga community leaders na ipagbawal na ang paglalagay ng mga banderitas sa panahon ng mga Kapis-tahan.

Pero tila napapanahon din ang panawagan lalo ngayong panahon ng kampanya kung saan mga mukha at pangalan ng kandidato ang kalimitang ibinabanderitas sa mga kalsada.

Ayon sa EWC, wala namang spiritual value ang mga banderitas kaya hindi na dapat maglagay nito.

Ipinunto pa nito na hindi maaaring i-recycle ang materyales nito pagkatapos ng pagdiriwang.

Ang aksyon ng Eco-Waste Coalition, kasunod na rin ng mga nakasabit na banderitas sa mga kalye ng Pandacan at Tondo, na magdiriwang ng pista ng Sto. Niño ka-

hapon.

Binigyan-diin ni Aileen Lucero, coordinator ng grupo, na pagkatapos ng pista, karaniwan nang ini-iwan na lamang ang mga banderitas na nakakabit sa mga kalye at hihintaying masira ang mga ito ng bagyo at malalakas na hangin.

Kapag nangyari ito, ang mga banderitas, maaaring tangayin sa mga estero, drainage, dagat at ilog, na nagiging sanhi ng baha at panganib sa mga aquatic animals.

Gayundin, sinabi ng EWC na ang mga makukulay na polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastic sheets, na may taglay na toxic chemicals tulad ng lead, ang ginagamit na panggawa ng mga banderitas.

Inirekomenda ng EWC na kung hindi maiiwasan ang paglalagay ng mga banderitas, tiyaking ang gagamiting materyales rito mga recyclable o maaaring magamit muli para hindi makapinsala sa kalikasan.



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**ENVIRONMENT AWARD WINNER** Photo shows Antipolo City Mayor Jun Ynares (back row middle), together with the Task Force Manila Bay and City Environment and Waste Management (CEWMO) personnel, after receiving a Plaque of Recognition and a P60,000 check for winning the Gold Award in Environmental Compliance Audit (ECA) from the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) last week. Antipolo City is one of the most environmentally-compliant cities in Region IV-A in adhering to the Climate Change Advocacy Campaign of the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program entitled "Manila Bay Para sa Kalinisan." PNA PHOTO



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICES

# With 700-MW from coal, Mindanao wants to shed 'dirty energy pathway' tag

By MYRNA M. VELASCO

The share of fossil fuel-fired power plants in Mindanao will climb to 70 percent soon and that earns it the label of straddling a comparatively 'dirty energy pathway', but policy framers in the area said they want that tag to slip out of their domain soon.

As anticipated, the grid will have

- capacity additions of about 700 megawatts from coal plants until the fourth quarter of this year.

That then will be the major trigger on its power mix shift, as the share of hydro will already be slashed starkly to 30-percent.

"That's the scenario based on how investments are coming in terms of power generation," Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) director for Investment Promotions and Public Affairs Romeo Montenegro said.

Following the inauguration of the 300-megawatt Therma South Inc. coal-fired plant of the Aboitiz Group recently, MinDA indicated that three more plants on that technology genre will come on stream until the fourth quarter.

The next ones would be the 105-megawatt initial block of Sarangani Energy Corporation of the Alcantara Group; the first phase 135MW coal plant of FDC Utilities Inc. of the Filinvest group; and the 150MW Malita plant of San Miguel conglomerate.

are not happy with the 'dirty tag' with them defending that their plants are equipped with clean coal technologies, hence, reducing their respective carbon footprints.

Nevertheless, in the 'clean versus dirty fight' of energy technologies, it is a given that they are the ones at the receiving end of a 'bad rap'.

MinDA noted the demand of the grid has been growing by roughly 150MW annually, thus, they want RE to start cornering sizeable share moving forward.

Montenegro indicated that of the 290 pending RE projects, the potential generation is for 2,000MW – and they have been expecting that at least half or around 1,000MW would come to fruition.

"Coal and diesel will make up for the bulk...they're projecting that with all coal plants coming on-line by 2017-2018, coal will jump to around 47%, and hydro will go down to just around 30-percent," the MinDA official reckoned.

Montenegro has qualified though that they have been batting to reverse that energy development track by 2030 – by facilitating the entry of more renewable energy (RE) projects in the grid.

Certainly, the coal plant developers



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## Angels Walks goes int'l, moves toward integration of people with autism

By Charlie V. Manalo

Angels Walk, the yearly celebration for autism awareness spearheaded by the Autism Society of the Philippines (ASP) in partnership with SM Cares, the corporate social responsibility arm of SM Supermalls, has gone international!

On its 16th year of pushing for awareness for people with autism and coinciding with the start of the Autism Awareness Week, advocates of People With Disability (PWD) rights from the Association of Southeast Asian (Asean) region graced the event at the Mall of Asia Arena in Pasay City yesterday.

Mona Veluz, President of ASP said that for the first time, they have partnered with Asean organizations and groups to widen their advocacy not only in the Philippines but in the Asean region.

Representatives from some Asean organizations graced the event.

She said that through the joint efforts of Asean organizations, they are able to reach more people with autism and bring their causes towards a more integrated approach. "Just last year we held the first Asean friendship tournament for people with autism and we have lined several more activities this year which is the reason we are excited for the coming years," Veluz said.

Dang Koe, chairman emeritus of ASP said her group has gone from mere awareness organization toward

social integration of people with autism to make them productive members of society. "We are now on our 16th year of doing this Angels Walk. Our children have grown up and we are now going toward making them productive members in the community and society so that at least when we as parents leave them, we would be leaving them in a more caring society," Koe said.

She added that they have started talking with government officials, other non-government organizations and private companies to push for initiatives that will open job and livelihood opportunities for people with autism. She said while some companies have started to hire PWDs, people with autism have still to be accepted in the workforce.

"We want our children to be useful because they are and they can be with the right guidance, education and opportunities for them to do so. And that has been what we are gearing towards in our advocacy for inclusion," Koe pointed out.

Aside from going international, another milestone during the event was achieved as Angels Walk broke its earlier record of 12,000 participants with more than 15,000 attendees in this year's event.

Koe said their group has indeed come a long way since from a few hundred attendees in 2000 when they started to more than 12,000 last year. The participants marched around the MoA complex and were treated to a show featuring children with autism.



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICES

### • Angels Walk for Autism draws 15,000

In celebration of the National Autism Consciousness Week, at least 15,000 joined the Autism Society Philippines' (ASP) "Angels Walk for Autism" at the SM Mall of Asia (MOA) grounds in Pasay City yesterday, to push for greater dignity, equal rights, and more opportunities for persons with autism (PWAs). The walk, which took participants around the reclaimed commercial complex, also pushed for an "Autism-OK Philippines." Participants included students, local government employees, rehabilitation organizations and supporters and friends of ASP. ASP National President Mona Magno-Veluz said that the event was a venue for the PWA community to go out in public without fear of judgment, as a lot of children with autism "have very structured, very confined lives." "It's also our way of advocating to those who are not within our community, being here allows us to show people what autism really is," Veluz said. "When we started, we had a few hundred walkers from all over Metro Manila. This year, our reach has breached the nation's borders, and we are expecting participants from Association of Southeast Asian Nations countries and Japan," Veluz added. (Monch Misagal).