

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

DATE : 03 MAY 2016

DAY : Tuesday

# DENR

## IN THE NEWS

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS  
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# MANILA BULLETIN

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### DENR declares Naga, Baguio river systems as WQMAs

By ELLALYN S. DE VERA

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has designated two river systems with important cultural heritage value as water quality management areas (WQMAs) in Baguio and Naga cities, bringing to 23 the total number of WQMAs in the country.

DENR Secretary Ramon Paje signed two separate administrative orders last April 18 designating Bued River System in Northern Luzon and Naga River in Camarines Sur as new WQMAs.

Paje explained that having been designated as WQMAs, the two river systems not only ensure the sustainable supply of water for areas the two rivers traverse, but will also "boost the local tourism in these places known for their rich cultural and historical heritage."

"Ensuring the water quality of Naga River will help enhance the city as a tourist destination, since it is home of the Peñafrancia fluvial procession," the DENR chief said.

Likewise, he noted that the preservation of Bued River – a major source of water for agriculture and aquaculture in Benguet and

Baguio – will safeguard the image of Kennon Road, one of the vital roads that connect Baguio City and the towns of Tuba and Itogon in Benguet, which are major tourist destinations in the north.

Under the Clean Water Act, the DENR, in coordination with the National Water Resources Board, is mandated to designate certain areas as WQMAs using appropriate physiographic units such as watershed, river basins, or water resources regions to effectively enforce its provisions and improve the water quality of water bodies.

# BusinessWorld

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## Management of Baguio, Naga river systems upgraded by Environment dep't

THE government has reclassified the rivers traversing Baguio City and Naga City, making them eligible for upgraded management under local boards empowered to improve water quality.

The Bued River in northern Luzon and the Naga River in Camarines Sur were designated water quality management areas (WQMAs), which hold the potential of increasing these areas' appeal as tourist destinations if improvements to water quality are effected, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said.

DENR Secretary Ramon Jesus P. Paje said well-managed rivers are expected to "boost the local tourism in these places known for their rich cultural and historical heritage," aside from ensuring sustainable water quality.

Through two separate administrative orders signed by Mr. Paje on April 18, the Bued and Naga Rivers were added to the list of WQMAs, now numbering 23.

"Ensuring the water quality of the Naga River will help enhance the city as a tourist destination, since it is home of the Peñafrancia fluvial procession," Mr. Paje was quoted as saying.

Bued River runs through 25 barangays in Baguio City and the municipalities of Itogon and Tuba in Benguet before draining toward Rosario, La Union, and the municipalities of Sison, San Fabian, San Jacinto and Mangaldan in Pangasinan, much of it along the length of Kennon Road. It serves as a major source of water for agriculture and aquaculture in these areas.

According to Mr. Paje, the designation of Naga River as a WQMA will pave the way for the proposed Naga River Watershed, which covers some 7,686 hectares of drainage area spanning 25 barangays in Naga City and two others in the town of Pili.

Under the Clean Water Act, the designation of WQMA opens up a river to interventions for improving water quality implemented by a governing board.

Each board is chaired by a regional director from the DENR's Environmental Management Bureau with members including mayors and governors and representatives of national government agencies, duly registered non-government organizations, water utilities and the business sector.

— **Janina C. Lim**

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**PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS**

## **'Fire out' declared in Mt. Apo**

BY ANGELA LOPEZ DE LEON

AFTER more than a month, the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP)-Davao Region finally declared a fire out in Mt. Apo yesterday.

BFP spokesman Nestor Jimenez said ground verification and thermal imaging showed there were no longer any active fires and embers in the country's highest peak.

Jimenez said no new blaze has been observed since the BFP declared the fire "under control" last April 11.

The fire in the country's highest mountain started from its peak last March 26.

Earlier, Davao del Sur Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council head Harry Camoro said the bambi bucket operations, fire lines, cloud seeding, natural rains, and more than 200 volunteers contributed greatly to the suppression of the fire.

Information officer Franklyn Buenaflor of the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) in Davao del Sur said the total area burned was estimated at 111 hectares, contrary to the earlier reported estimate of over 300 hectares.

Buenaflor said rehabilitation efforts, including "naturally assisted regeneration," are being undertaken because Mt. Apo's terrain makes it difficult for tree-planting activities.

He said most of the damaged portions are grasslands.

The Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in the Davao Region has decided to indefinitely close all Mt. Apo Natural Park trails to trekking and climbing to allow rehabilitation of the affected area.

The cause of fire is still undetermined.

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THE NATIONAL NEWSPAPER

# Malaya

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## e-Jeepney leads Earth Day bike run as EVAP thanks DTI, BOI

THE electric jeepney once again took center stage at the Annual Earth Day bike run organized by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the National Bicycle Organization.

The no-fumes motorcade was flagged off in Makati led by an e-Jeepney and travelled a 28-km long route which went around the cities of Makati, Mandaluyong, Pasig Quezon and San Juan.

Serving as lead vehicle was an vehicle from EV pioneer PhUV Inc.

Leading a pack of bicycles served notice that this Earth Day event was for an eco-friendly cause. And while their dads joined the main pack in their bicycles, children as young as eight years old likewise joined the fun in their mini bicycles.

"We wanted an electric vehicle to lead the parade so that the bike riders who will be following will not have to inhale the fumes of a gas or diesel powered vehicle. The e-Jeepney did its job in spades!", says Benedict Camara, president of the National Bicycle Organization.

Rommel Juan, president of the Electric Vehicle Association of the Philippines said that an e-Jeepney leading this eco-friendly event is not a coincidence. "The first ever mass transport application of electric vehicles was done in Makati with the deployment of e-Jeepneys for the Makati Green Routes. Green advocates operated e-Jeepneys in a developmental, eco-friendly route in three loops around the financial district".

The e-Jeepneys were launched in 2008 and the e-Jeepneys in Makati were the very first electric vehicles to be registered with the Land Transportation Office and granted the orange license plate and the first to be granted a franchise by the LTFRB.

Juan disclosed that 80% of the air pollution in the Metro is caused by the old, regular Jeepneys thus in an eco-friendly environment, the e-Jeepneys are now the best alternative. "We support the National Bicycle Organization and the DENR for promoting the environment through this Annual Earth Day. We at EVAP believe that every day of the year should be Earth Day. And we hope more and more cities advocate the use of bicycles and electric vehicles in the very near future".

Meanwhile, at a recent appreciation dinner hosted by Department of Trade and Industry Secretary Adrian Cristobal, Jr. in honor of representatives of different industries whom the DTI fondly calls industry champions, Juan expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the DTI and the Board of investments for being instrumental to the viability and growth of the domestic EV Industry.

Juan recalls that when the EV industry started some nine years ago with a call to develop locally assembled electric jeepneys for the City of Makati, it was members of the auto parts manufacturing industry who heeded the call.

"With help from the DTI and BOI, we had to go to China to look for electric vehicle components that were not available locally. It was through the efforts of then commercial counsellor Rico Mariano of Beijing that we were able to find the suppliers we needed".

"As we strove to develop the EV industry further, the task was picked up by the next Beijing commercial counsellor Christine De La Cruz, who ably introduced us to even more suppliers and the big boys of the Chinese automotive industry", Juan says.

He adds that this inspired EVAP to lead-organize the Philippine EV Summit and invite foreign players to look at our infant EV industry, forge partnerships and make investments. "It was through the efforts of commercial counsellor Dita Angara and BOI Director Angie Cayas that we were able to invite major players from Taiwan, Korea and Japan".

"The EV Summit was a tremendous success and was able to attract close to one billion pesos worth of foreign investment for the country. And in the recently concluded fifth edition of the EV Summit, not just completely built up and locally-assembled electric vehicles were prevalent but also suppliers of motors, controllers, batteries, chargers and axles have also expressed interest in having local presence by setting up shop here in the Philippines".

Juan says that DTI and BOI were very helpful when it comes to industry policy with Asec. Fita Aldaba very instrumental in forging the roadmap that the EV industry now follows. "This was responsible for our steady growth. Now we have electric vehicles

in various forms and in numerous areas of the country starting with Makati, Muntinlupa, Filinvest City Alabang, Las Pinas, Dela Salle University, Ateneo University, UP, and in the provinces such as in Cebu, Naga, Palawan and even the island paradise Boracay".

"To make sure the momentum is sustained, we are now working with BOI Director Corieh Dichosa and division chief Lito Umali in organizing technical working group sub cluster meetings that link the EV industry players with the different government agencies such as DOE, DENR, DOST, DOTC, LTO, LTFRB, DBP and Landbank", he says. "They say that it takes a community to raise a child. In the case of our young electric vehicle industry, it took a community of government and the industry players working together to rear and grow the industry. We could not ask for more. We could just express our gratitude to them".



This electric jeepney leads hundreds of bikers who joined the Annual Earth Day bike run.

# The Manila Times

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## Plant more trees to lessen heat in the city

BY LAARNI JOCSON  
HARIBON FOUNDATION

**T**HE soaring temperature in Metro Manila is undeniably the effect of El Niño phenomenon—climate cycle in the Pacific Ocean with a global impact on weather patterns.

In fact, it was only in April of this year when the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) recorded the highest temperature in Metro Manila at 37.5 degrees Celsius. This latest data was close to the hottest temperature in the metro verified since 1987.

However, this heat is exacerbated by aggressive expansion and development in the metro. A 2010 study documented by Nivagine Nievaes, a weather specialist at Pagasa noted that urbanization greatly affects the heat balance in Metro Manila, which leads to an increase in felt temperature by 1 to 2 degrees Celsius.

Construction materials like asphalt and concrete absorb and trap heat of the sun. Structural shapes of buildings, towers, houses and roads also affect the distribution of heat. So the heat we feel does not only radiate from the sun but also from the said urban surface materials. Indeed urbanization affects rainfall, wind circulation and the breeze from Manila Bay.

Metro Manila as the center of socioeconomic activities in the country has to keep up with growing demands for more infrastructures have been built resulting in the fast deterioration of the environment. For roads and buildings to be built, hundreds of trees and foliage are cut down instead of incorporating them in the construction plan. Oftentimes we also cut down trees when we build or



■ Trees and modernization can successfully thrive hand in hand

PHOTO BY KARLA VANESSA REDOR

renovate our houses.

Over the years, the rapid and massive urban developments have in turn neglected the need for the city to breathe. We've built a concrete jungle. Consequently people confine themselves in air-conditioned rooms to cool off rather than stay outside in the blistering heat.

Sadly, rapid modernization overlooked the importance of trees, not only for their aesthetic purposes but for their ecological services as well. Trees

absorb excess carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and potentially harmful gases and filter particulates out of the air by trapping them on their leaves and barks. They provide shade, fresh and cool breeze that we can enjoy for free.

Several studies noted that in one year, an acre of mature trees absorbs the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> produced when you drive your car 26,000 miles. A large tree provides one deliver day's supply of fresh oxygen for four people. Three trees placed strategically around a single-family home can cut summer air conditioning needs by up to 50 percent. By reducing the energy demand for cooling our houses, we reduce carbon dioxide and other pollution emissions

from power plants.

It's therefore important to strategically include trees when we plan our homes, businesses, and especially cities. Greenbelts, nature parks or pockets of lands with lush foliage and trees improve air quality, protect and or retain a portion of the area's natural environment, retain wildlife's habitat and provide urban dwellers outdoor recreational opportunities like safe biking and camping sites, and many other benefits only a natural environment can provide.

Trees and modernization can successfully thrive hand in hand. As city dwellers, we must realize the importance of trees in our daily lives and how they affect our daily routines. We should be active advocates of conserving and propagating trees and maintaining nature parks or greenbelts to ensure that they can continue to provide us with various environmental and health benefits. By doing so, there will come a day that we may not endure as severely this scorching heat anymore.

*(Act. Make an Impact. Support Haribon. To join Haribon's Adopt-A-Seedling, Nurture-A-Seedling programs, and Tree Planting Activities, call 421-1209 and/or email: support@haribon.org.ph to make a donation today.)*

»globalwarning

# PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



### BURNED TREES

EV ESPIRITU / INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

The dry spell seems to have taken its toll on these trees which were burned recently along Pito village in Benguet's Bokod town. Thunderstorms were, however, experienced in other parts of the province.

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## Human Nature kicks off Oceans Month with 'Coastival' in La Union

HUMAN NATURE kicked off Oceans Month with the Human Nature Save Our Seas Coastival in San Juan, La Union. The event culminated with the creation of the "Save Our Seas" Sand Art by celebrated muralist and climate justice advocate AG Saño.

The sand art measured over 180 meters long and followed the "leave no trace" principle — no paints, plastics, or any other materials were used — only sand, water, and flat wood rakes were used to create it. The SOS sand art signifies a united call for help and a pledge to save the seas and rescue the reefs.

The Human Nature Save Our Seas Coastival is an initiative of Human Nature in partnership with World Wide Fund for Nature, Save Philippine Seas, Coastal Underwater Resource Management Actions — Project CURMA, and community-driven eco-tourism movement La Union Soul.

The first Human Nature Save Our Seas Coastival highlighted how daily personal care habits — how we "shower and slather" — impacts our seas. The event hopes to inspire more vacationers to take conscious steps in protecting marine life, including limiting what they bring into open water.

Held last Labor Day weekend, the event has been dubbed as an eco-friendlier version of "La Boracay". Aside from the sand art, the Coastival also featured fun eco-friendly beach activities like poi dancing, capoeira, and yoga.

"Saving Our Seas can be as simple as making sure that what goes down our shower drains won't pollute



our water ways & affect marine life. What we use on the beach does end up in open water. Over 5,000 metric tons of sunscreen containing coral-bleaching ingredients wash off from swimmers annually," said Anna Meloto-Wilk, co-founder and president of Human Nature.

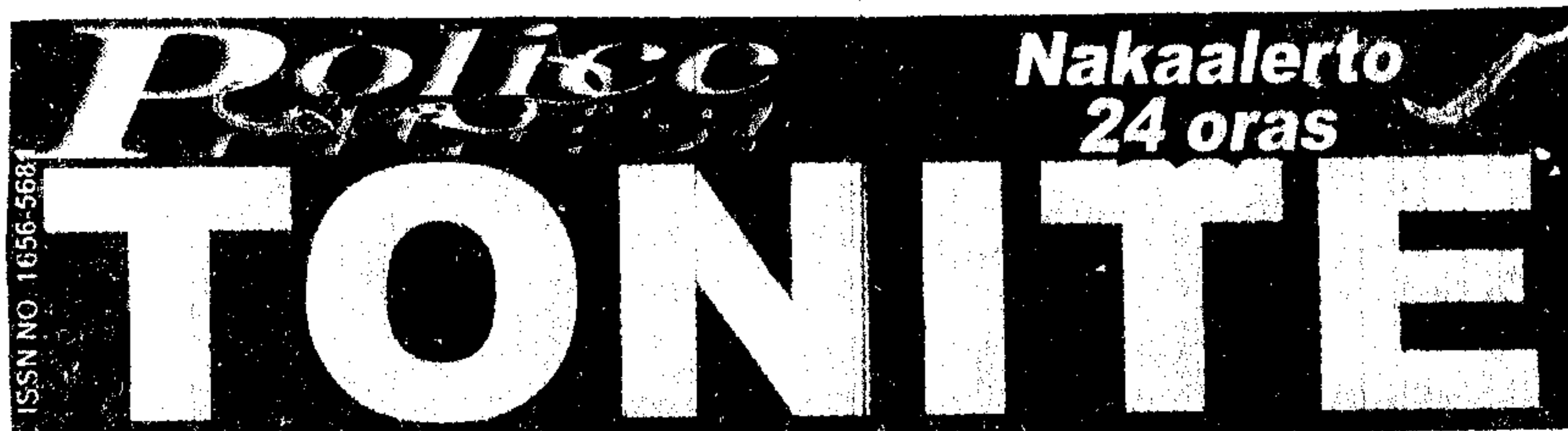
Most synthetic sunscreens that contain ingredients like parabens, oxybenzone, and benzophenone which can bleach corals within just 96 hours of exposure.

The Philippines is home to 22,484 sq km or 32% of the total area of the Great Coral Triangle or 9% of the

world. More than 60% of coral reefs are at risk of being impacted by a variety of sources including marine pollutants present in synthetic sunscreens. Human Nature is the maker of SafeProtect, the country's first and only reef-friendly sunscreen.

Even more, plastic sachets commonly used by vacationers and plastic microbead-filled lotions, face scrubs, and toothpaste also contribute to the pollution problem. Microbeads are only 0.0004 to 1.24 millimeters in size, making them too small to be filtered out by water treatment facilities.

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### **Daan-daang katao lumahok sa Baseco clean-up**

Daan-daang katao ang sumama kay environmental advocate Senator Cynthia Villar sa paglilinis sa komunidad ng Baseco sa Maynila kaugnay ng Baseco Monthly Clean-up project.

Pinangungunahan ng senadora at ng Villar SIPAG (Social Institute for Poverty Alleviation and Governance) ang clean-up activity sa Gasangan, Barangay 649, Baseco sa Manila, kaakibat ang Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), Department of Environment and Natural Resources-National Capital Region, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority at mga residente ng Barangay 649.

Regular na nagsasagawa ang Nacionalista Party senator ng mangrove planting activities at paglilinis sa Baseco.

"I will never get tired of organizing and participating in mangrove planting and coastal clean-ups as long as there are volunteers like our participants here today who stay committed to the cause of environment protection," ani Villar.

Ang paglilinis ay may temang "Barangay and School Accountable for a Sustainable and Exceedingly Clean and Orderly Environment".

Bago ang paglilinis, nagbigay ng inspirational message si Villar. Nagbigay din ng mensahe sina DENR-NCR Director Lourdes Wagan at Virginia Bartolome tungkol sa kahalagahan ng pagpapanatiling malinis ng ating kapaligiran.

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### Daan-daang, lumahok sa Baseco clean-up

Daan-daang katao ang sumama kay environmental advocate Senator Cynthia Villar sa paglilinis sa komunidad ng Baseco sa Maynila kaugnay ng Baseco Monthly Clean-up project.

Pinangungunahan ng senador at ng Villar SIPAG (Social Institute for Poverty Alleviation and Governance) ang clean-up activity sa Gasangan, Barangay 649, Baseco sa Maynila, kaakibat ang Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), Department of Environment and Natural Resources-National Capital Region, Metro Manila Development Authority at mga re-

sidente ng Barangay 649.

Regular na nagsasagawa ang Nacionalista Party senator ng mangrove planting activities at paglilinis sa Baseco.

"I will never get tired of organizing and participating in mangrove planting and coastal clean-ups as long as there are volunteers like our participants here today who stay committed to the cause of environment protection," giit ni Villar na kilala sa kanyang adbokasiya na pangangalaga sa kalikasan.

Ang paglilinis ay may temang "Barangay and School Accountable for a Sustainable and Exceedingly Clean and Orderly Environment".

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## Albay's rosary-themed 'Coral Genesis' restored

By NIÑO N. LUCES

**L**EGAZPI CITY, Albay — More than 100 heavier and bigger artificial reef beads were submerged in the sea off Sto. Domingo town, this province, last Sunday for the re-launching of the rosary-themed Coral Genesis Project.

Engr. Martin Reynoso of the Junior Chamber International (JCI) Legazpi and the project coordinator of the Coral Genesis Project said that the coral-generating rosary beads are now larger and made of materials that can withstand strong currents triggered by typhoons.

First launched in 2013, the Coral Genesis Project is a rosary-themed artificial reef installed underwater in the Albay Gulf. However, due to strong typhoons that passed in the province, including supertyphoon "Yolanda" which hit in November, 2013, the reef beads were destroyed.

"More than 100 new artificial reef beads are of an improved and heavier dome design and are more resistant to storms were deployed occupying an area twice the size of a basketball court," Reynoso said.

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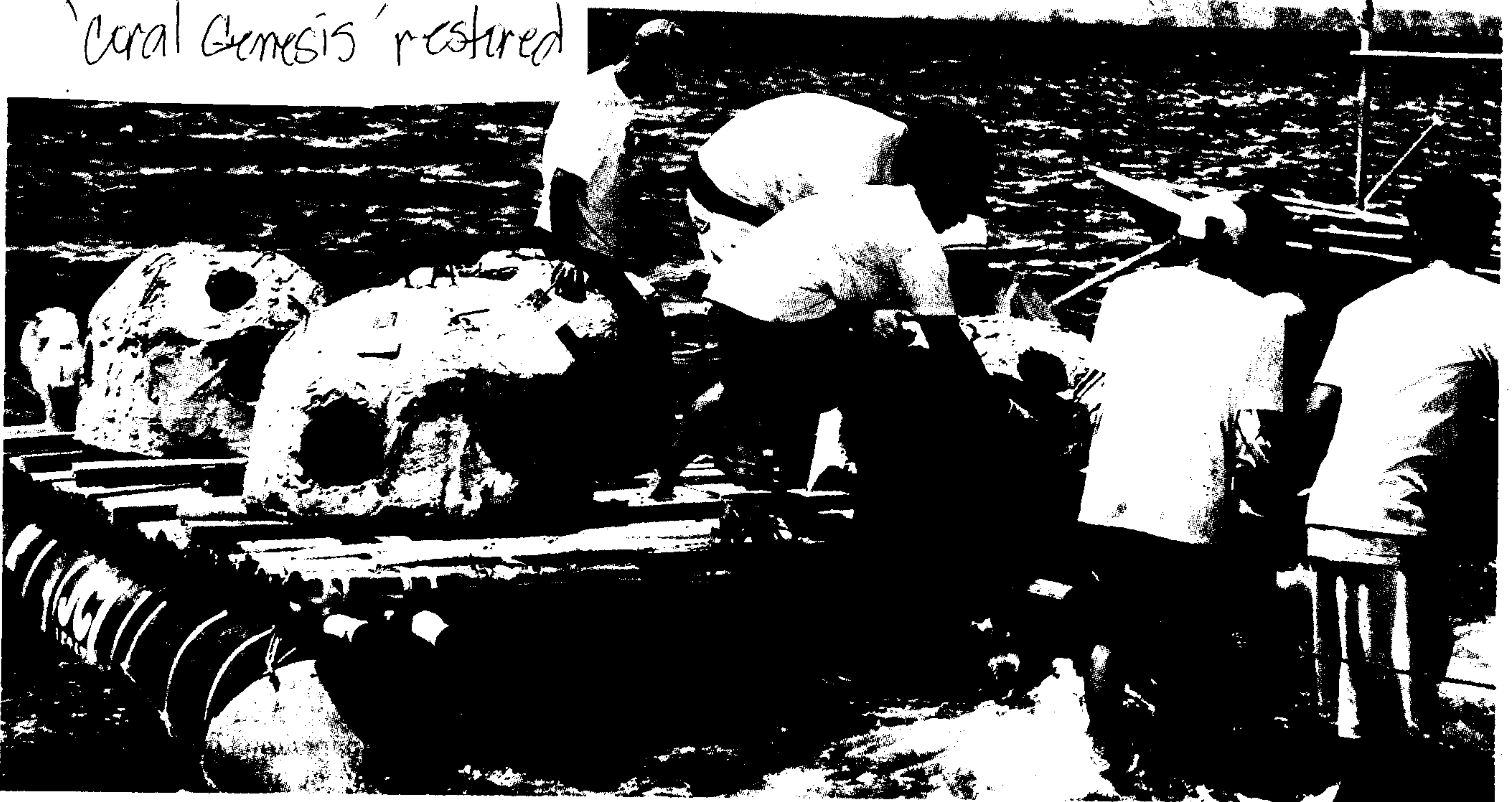
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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Albay's rosary-themed  
'Coral Genesis' restored



**CORAL GENESIS PROJECT** — Fishermen of Barangay Pandayan, Sto. Domingo Albay, load the artificial reef beads onto a raft setting out to relaunch the Coral Genesis Project in the sea off Albay on Sunday. (Niño N. Lucas)

He said that this time, the Bicol University Research and Development Center completed a study on where best to establish the rosary-like artificial reef.

The beads are attached with solar panels and nickel that emit electricity

and facilitates corals grow faster, Reynoso explained.

Reynoso told the Manila Bulletin that the re-launching aims to continue the tourism development and environmental protection through partnerships the JCI-Legazpi, provincial govern-

ment of Albay, Bicol Scuba Divers Foundation, Bicol University, LGU Sto Domingo, Mary's Healing Sanctuary by Rev Father Efren "Momoy" Borromeo and the local community and the fishermen of the coastal villages of Sto Domingo.

The re-launching started with a mass and blessings of the beads by Auxillary Bishop Quiambao, and mass by the healing priest Father Momoy Borromeo which he stated in his mass that such project is in response to Pope Francis' "Laudato Si" — a call to actively care for the environment.

On the other hand, Albay Governor Joey Salceda said such projects as the "coral genesis," which restores coral reefs and associated underwater habitat, would be a significant boost to strategies employed for sustainable management of marine ecosystems.

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*Albay's rosary-themed 'Coral Genesis' was blessed*



**PUBLIC-PRIVATE PRAYER PARTNERSHIP** — A priest from the parish church in Sto. Domingo, Albay, blesses the artificial reef beads for the rosary-themed Coral Genesis Project to benefit tourism development and environmental protection through a so-called 'Public-Private-Prayer' partnership last Sunday. (Niño N. Luces)

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## GSIS allots ₱539M for members affected by El Niño phenomenon

By **CHINO S. LEYCO**

State-run Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) has allotted P539 million in emergency loan for active members and old-age pensioners in the El Niño-affected General Santos City in South Cotabato, provinces of Guimaras and Sarangani.

In a statement, GSIS said the loan is open to 17,235 active members who are working or residing in the calamity-declared areas, have updated premium contributions, but not on leave of absence without pay, and no unpaid loan amortization in the last six months.

The 2,052 old-age pensioners in the El Niño-affected areas may also apply for the loan. Active members borrowing for the first time may apply for a ₱20,000 loan. Those with an existing emergency loan may borrow up to ₱40,000, from which the outstanding balance will be deducted.

The loan is payable in 36 equal monthly instalments with an interest rate of six percent per annum computed in advance. It is covered by a loan redemption insurance, which deems the loan fully paid in case of the borrower's demise, provided the loan repayment is up to date.

Active members may apply through any GSIS Wireless Automated Processing System (GWAPS) kiosk located in all GSIS branch and extension offices; provincial capitols; city halls; selected municipal offices; large government agencies such as the Department of Education.

They may also apply in 27 Robinsons

Malls; and SM City branches in North EDSA, Manila, Pampanga, Cebu, and SM Aura in Taguig.

Old-age pensioners must file their loan application over the counter. If they are also active GSIS members (when they reentered government service), they may avail of this emergency loan only once.

The deadline of application for the loan is May 4, 2016 in Guimaras, May 5 in General Santos City, and May 7 in Sarangani. Loan proceeds are electronically credited to the borrower's GSIS eCard or unified multipurpose identification (UMID) card.

Meanwhile, GSIS announced that applications for the enhanced GSIS Scholarship Program (GSP) are being accepted until June 10, 2016.

For Academic Year 2016-2017, GSIS made several enhancements to further improve the program. The number of scholars was increased from 200 to 400. Aside from shouldering the actual cost of tuition and miscellaneous fees not exceeding ₱40,000 per academic year, GSIS has also raised the scholar's monthly allowance from ₱2,000 to ₱3,000.

In addition to children and dependents of active GSIS members, GSP's coverage has now been extended to children of permanent total disability (PTD) pensioners below 60 years old.

GSP is no longer limited to incoming college freshmen but also welcomes those in higher college levels, a new feature of the program from AY 2016-2017 to AY 2017-2018, during which the Philippine educational system's K to 12 program is going through a transition period.

# The Standard

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### GSIS bares loans in drought-stricken provinces

THE Government Service Insurance System allotted P539 million in emergency loans to active members and old-age pensioners in the El Niño-affected General Santos City in South Cotabato and the provinces of Guimaras and Sarangani.

The loan is open to 17,235 active members who are working or residing in the calamity-declared areas, are not on leave of absence without pay, have updated premium contributions and have no unpaid loan amortization in the last six months. The 2,052 old-age pensioners in the areas may

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The deadline of application for the loan is May 4, 2016 in Guimaras, May 5 in General Santos City and May 7 in Sarangani.

Loan proceeds are electronically credited to the borrower's GSIS eCard or unified multipurpose identification card.

For inquiries, qualified borrowers may email [gsiscare@gsis.gov.ph](mailto:gsiscare@gsis.gov.ph); visit the GSIS website, [www.gsis.gov.ph](http://www.gsis.gov.ph); or call the GSIS Contact Center at 847-4747.



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# 'Green Jobs' now a law

By MARICHU VILLANUEVA

President Aquino has signed into law the Philippine Green Jobs Act of 2016 granting special tax deductions and duty-free importation of capital equipment for companies that will help create a "green economy" for the country.

Aquino signed Republic Act (RA) 10771 on April 29, or 63 days before he steps down from office.

"Green jobs," as defined in RA 10771, refers to employment that contributes to preserving or restoring the quality of the environment, be it in the agriculture, industry or services sector.

"Specifically, but not exclusively, this includes jobs that help protect

ecosystems and biodiversity, reduce energy, materials and water consumption through high efficiency strategies, decarbonizes the economy and minimizes or altogether avoids generation of all forms of waste and pollution," RA 10771 stated.

"Green jobs are decent jobs that are productive, respect the rights of workers, deliver fair income, provide security in the workplace and social protection for families and promote social dialogue," it added.

To encourage business enterprises and generate and sustain "green jobs," as certified by the Climate Change Commission (CCC), Section

5 of the newly signed law provides these incentives:

- Special deduction from the taxable income equivalent to 505 of the total expenses for skills training and research development expenses, which is over and above the allowable ordinary and necessary business deductions for said expenses under the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997 as amended;

- Tax and duty-free importation of capital equipment, provided that the capital equipment is actually, directly and exclusively used in the promotion of "green jobs" of the business

enterprise.

Malacañang said incentives that would be granted under RA 10771 will be in addition to fiscal and non-fiscal incentives already granted or provided for under existing laws, orders, issuances and regulations of the government.

RA 10771 also clarified that nothing in it will be interpreted or construed to diminish or limit in whatever manner the incentives granted under the following existing laws: RA 10121 or the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010, RA 10068 or the "Organic Agriculture Act of 2010," RA 9513 or

the Renewable Energy Act of 2008, RA 9513 or the Biofuels Act of 2006;

RA 9275 or the Philippine Clean Water Act, RA 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, RA 8749 or the Philippine Clean Air Act of 1999, and RA 8550 or the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998.

The newly signed law also mandates the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to coordinate with other government agencies to formulate a National Green Jobs Human Resource Development Plan.

Likewise, RA 10771 includes the DOLE secretary as additional member of the CCC, chaired by the President.

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### Semirara expects higher net profit

By Riza T.  
Olchondra

SEMIRARA Mining and Power Corp., which posted a 24-percent increase in net profit last year, expects double-digit growth again this year with the opening of new power stations and improvements in efficiency for coal mining and coal-fired power plant operations.

Semirara president Victor A. Consunji said the rehabilitation of existing power plants could generate additional electricity and boost company income this year. Commer-

cial operations are finally in sight for the 300-MW coal-fired power plant of subsidiary Southwest Luzon Power Generation Corp. (SLPGC) and this could add P2 billion in income coming from the P8.5 billion generated in 2015, he said.

"We are hoping that if Unit 3 and 4 (of SLPGC) will run as it is running operational now, I think there's a big possibility that we will have an upward trend. But how many percent, we don't know because that depends on so many factors," Consunji said. He also noted that the coal mining business of Semirara is affected by falling international coal prices

### Semirara grows profit by 24 %

From page B3

while volatile oil prices add to business costs.

Revenues from the 300-MW SLPGC coal-fired power plant should surge this year from just about P100 million last year, Consunji said.

"That will pull the full year contribution compared to last year," said CFO Junalina S. Tabor. "Our ballpark estimate is for every 300 MW to contribute P2 billion in profit that will add to income."

Consunji said the impact of the new power station's operations should be significant enough to help the company generate double-digit growth coming from P8.5 billion in 2015 and assuming the company could

control the costs.

In 2015, SLPGC failed to achieve commercial operation status due to a series of technical issues. The power station with two units of 150 MW each was commissioned in early 2015 and synchronized the grid on July 7 for one unit and on August 16 for the second unit. However, the fine-tuning and debugging activities are still in progress and some equipment needed upgrading and replacement for reliability.

"We are aiming to close all these equipment and parts issues before the end of the first half of 2016 to achieve final turnover and acceptance of the two units within the year," Consunji said.

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### *Ilocos pageant aims for ecological balance*

**By Leilanie Adriano**  
*Inquirer Northern Luzon*

LAOAG CITY—From across the country, a bevy of beauties and hunks assembled for a pageant on April 30 along the shores of the famed Blue Lagoon at Barangay Balaoi in Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte province.

It was no ordinary pageant.

The 13 pairs were contending for the title of Mr. and Miss Hannah's Ecotourism Philippines 2016 and were representing the direction of ecotourism that has been changing the landscape of Ilocos

Norte's growing economy.

Homegrown resorts, like Hannah's Beach Resort and Convention Center (HBRCC), have been expanding. "[But] while we are developing the tourism

infrastructure, we should not forget to preserve our environment," said retired Air Force Col.

Ricardo Nolasco Jr., HBRCC owner and a sponsor of the Ecotourism Philippines pageant.

Primarily aimed at promoting sustainable ecotourism development, the three-year-old pageant hopes to inspire other tourism stakeholders to preserve the environment, Nolasco said.

Overlooking the Maira-ira cove and white sand beaches in Barangay Balaoi, HBRCC is the only member of the International Ecotourism Society of America in the Philippines and Asia.

The beach resorts in other areas lost their business due to their inability to address crippling environmental issues, Nolasco said.

To avoid these issues, HBRCC developed its own sewerage and water disposal systems and ecological projects, in coordination with the local and international agencies, to "ensure we do it right," he said.

HBRCC used to be the Nolascos' retirement home until they decided to develop the resort,

which is located between verdant mountains and a lagoon.

"There are no more slow tourist seasons in Pagudpud," said Mayor Marlon Sales. "It's always a peak season for tourists because of these promotional activities being conducted by HBRCC."

According to the Ilocos Norte tourism office, 444,980 tourists spent their Holy Week in the province, topping the 232,678 recorded last year.

The surge of tourists during the holidays represented a 91.24 percent increase from last year's number, the office said, adding that 60 percent of these tourists are repeat guests.

**HOMETOWN**  
*Snapshot*

# The Manila Times

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## Greenpeace to release secret documents on EU-US trade deal

**THE HAGUE:** Greenpeace on Sunday said it was in possession of leaked documents showing that a planned huge free trade deal between the United States and the European Union poses "major risks for climate, environment and consumer safety".

The campaign group said it would on Monday publish 248 pages of classified documents to "shine a light" on negotiations for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), an ambitious treaty both sides want completed by year-end but which is facing mounting opposition.

The leaked pages will be published online at 0900 GMT, Greenpeace said in a statement.

It says the cache -- obtained by Greenpeace Netherlands -- represents two-thirds of the TTIP draft text as of the latest round of talks in April, and covers a range of issues from telecoms to food and agriculture and trade barriers.

"These leaked documents confirm what we have been saying for a long time: TTIP would put corporations at the center of policy-making, to the detriment of environment and public health," said

Greenpeace EU director Jorgo Riss.

The US and the EU have been trying to reach a deal on the world's largest trade agreement since 2013.

It is billed as a free-trade and investment deal for the 21st century, focused on harmonising regulations, lowering barriers on investment, opening access to government contracts and addressing new areas like data trade and consumer protections.

But it is facing rising resistance and protectionist sentiment, as critics question the benefits of more open trade.

In Europe in particular there is deep suspicion that TTIP will erode social and consumer protections to the advantage of big business.

Greenpeace says the confidential documents prove that long-standing environmental protections are being ignored and claims there is no mention at all in the proposed text of global goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The group also says the US wants the EU to drop its so-called "precautionary principle" under which products that may be harmful are banned.

Instead, the less strict US ap-

proach "that aims to manage hazardous substances rather than avoid them, finds its way into various chapters," according to Greenpeace.

"It is time to shine a light on these negotiations. Hard-won environmental progress is being bartered away behind closed doors," said Faiza Oulahsen, campaigner for Greenpeace Netherlands.

Following the latest TTIP negotiations last month, American and European negotiators said they had made progress but "substantial work" remained to agree a deal in 2016.

They said that while 97 percent of tariff issues had been covered, three percent -- the most challenging, including for farm products -- remained.

Last week, US President Barack Obama and German Chancellor Angela Merkel made a joint pitch for the TTIP, saying the vast pact could spur much-needed economic growth.

But on Sunday President Francois Hollande warned that France would reject the pact if it endangered the country's agricultural sector.

AFP

# The Manila Times

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**

## GOODNESS AT YOUR DOORSTEP Eco-friendly delivery service begins rolling

FILIPINOS might be used to seeing motorcycles when receiving their home-delivered goods but with the pilot phase of Human Nature's "Goodness at Your Doorstep" service, bamboo bikes may soon become a regular fixture at the doorsteps of eight communities in Makati.

"Goodness at Your Doorstep" is the first bamboo bike delivery service that sends Human Nature personal care, cosmetic and home care products to homes and offices at Dasmarinas, Forbes, Urdaneta, San Lorenzo, Belair, San Antonio, La Paz, and Sta. Cruz.

The initiative is a partnership between Human Nature and Bambike—a socio-ecological enterprise based in the Philippines that hand-makes bamboo bicycles with fair-trade labor and sustainable building practices—with service powered by Zyllem, the leading provider of same-day local deliveries in Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

"Human Nature started because we wanted to find ways to reverse all the damage that's being done to our beautiful country by harmful products and thoughtless consumption," Human Nature president Anna Meloto-Wilk said.

She further noted that the company makes a conscious effort to close environment sustainability gaps—from manufacturing to getting products to their customers' homes.

Human Nature is no stranger to sticking to its guns. In the past 7 years, Human Nature has rooted each business decision on its Pro-Philippines, Pro-poor and Pro-environment promise; fostering a corporate mindset that



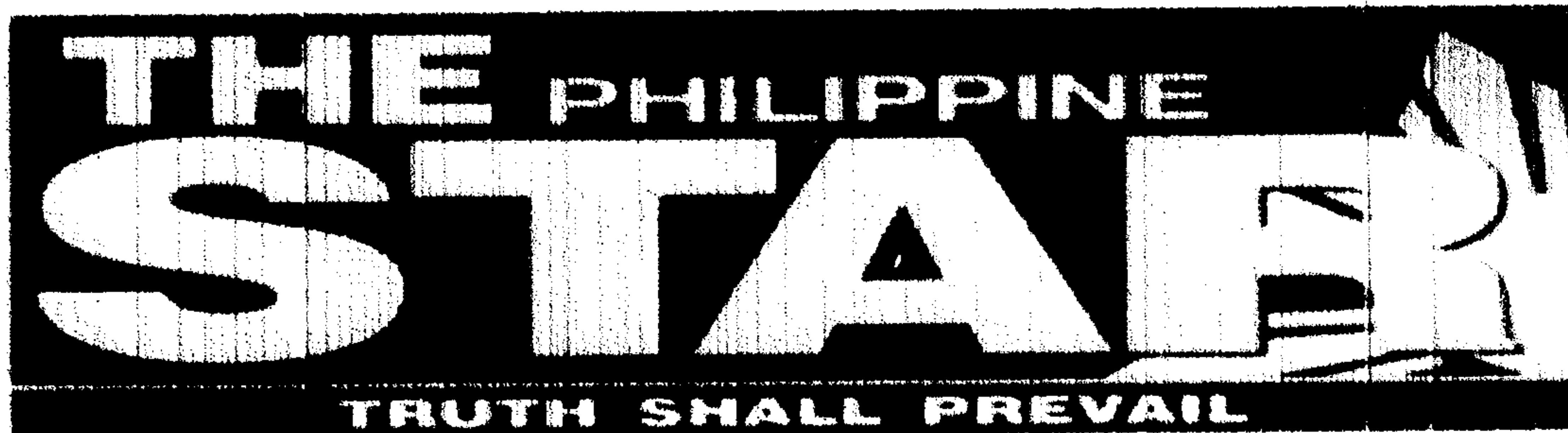
■ Anna Wilk, co-founder and president of Human Nature (right) with Bryan McClelland, founder of Bambike, a socio-ecological enterprise that hand-makes bamboo bikes at the launch of 'Goodness at Your Doorstep' delivery service

puts the needs of the poor and sustainability at the top of its agenda.

"Partnering with Bambike is another small step in the right direction. Hopefully, Goodness at Your Doorstep will inspire other businesses. We hope to see hundreds of Bambikes on the streets of the Metro being used by delivery companies. This would significantly cut down pollution," Meloto-Wilk added.

The bamboo bikes are the latest addition to Human Nature's delivery fleet. While Human Nature will still use motorized delivery vehicles for most of its deliveries, the company hopes that more of its branches will adopt the bike delivery system this year. The company has 31 branches across the Philippines.

Deliveries for areas covered by the pilot phase of "Goodness at Your Doorstep" will come from Human Nature's Wilcon IT Hub branch at Chino Roces Avenue in Makati City. The delivery is free for orders over P2,000. For orders P2,000 and below, a fee of 100 for same day delivery and P50 for next day delivery will be applied.



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## The fight against global warming

By MA. THERESA D. TARDECILLA

One of the biggest problems that confronts our country is global warming.

It greatly impacts our health, property, means of living and almost every aspect of our lives.

Global warming is the term used to describe the gradual increase in the average temperature of the Earth's atmosphere and the seas. It is believed to be permanently altering the world-wide climate.

Global warming brings drought, weather changes, melting icebergs, floods, heat waves, warming of oceans, rising sea levels, violent storms and hurricanes.

Since we have been experiencing this phenomenon, one may say that planet earth is in ICU right now. It is in critical level. It needs to be cured and given thorough care or else we will continue to suffer from the wrath of nature.

It is not too late.

Each one of us must take part because if global warming will continue at its present rate, our planet won't be safe to live in anymore. In our own little ways, we can contribute a lot.

Let's plant more trees. Join tree planting campaigns which add more to the millions that have been planted and nurtured by schools, private companies, NGOs and the government.

Practice waste segregation or better the reduce, reuse and recycle principle of conservation. Reuse and recycling greatly conserve energy, save natural resources and reduce waste.

Think of creating business with recyclables. Who knows, it might lead to you becoming an entrepreneur.

Participate in the "Earth Hour Campaign." Better yet, make your Earth Hour weekly!

Join the "Oh My Gulay Campaign" and the "Gulayan sa Barangay." Vegetables are good for your health, save you money and enrich idle soil or lots.

Let us always think of these words: Protect, Preserve, Conserve and be Saved.

If more collaborative efforts can be done, little by little, soon we can discharge our planet from confinement in the ICU.

We should save and help protect our Earth, and show appreciation for God's creation.

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# BusinessMirror

A broader look at today's business

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## Reclamation at Scarborough Shoal?



**Edgardo J. Angara**

**S**INCE 2012, a steady rotation of two Chinese Coast Guard vessels has effectively blockaded the traditional fishing grounds of Filipino fishermen at the Scarborough Shoal to the west of Pangasinan. The patrol has intensified, as five more vessels were spotted there a few weeks ago, according to the Department of National Defense.

The *South China Morning Post* (SCMP)—a Hong Kong-based broadsheet just bought by Alibaba—recently quoted an anonymous source close to the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy that Beijing plans to start reclamation work this year at the atoll. The move is reportedly a reaction to the increasing closeness of the United States and Philippine military and would most likely be accelerated once the Permanent Court of Arbitration makes a ruling on the ongoing disputes this June.

Reclaiming Scarborough Shoal—

known as Panatag Shoal or Bajo de Masinloc to Filipinos and Huangyan Island to the Chinese—is allegedly considered by Beijing a decisive step in China's endgame of gaining de facto control over the vital naval routes and immense natural resources of the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea).

Beijing says the shoal falls within its nine-dash claim, asserting that Yuan Dynasty mariners were the first who discovered it in the 13th century and had exercised jurisdiction ever since.

That assertion has no basis at all. Supreme Court Justice Antonio Carpio and Dr. Jay Batongbacal of the University of the Philippines Institute for Maritime Affairs and Law of the Sea, have pointed out that Chinese maps from the period do not even indicate the shoal and that the Chinese only started affixing a name to the geographic feature in 1983.

In truth, Bajo de Masinloc, later named Scarborough Shoal, has been historically associated with the Philippines, and has appeared in 17th-century European maps of Southeast Asia. Its precise location was determined during the 1792 Malaspina Expedition, sponsored by the Spanish government. And by the 19th century, Spain already exercised jurisdiction over it and occupied it, conducting the first formal survey of the shoal in 1800.

That ownership was passed on to the Americans through the Treaty of Paris of 1898 and affirmed by the Treaty of Washington of 1900. Throughout the Commonwealth period, the US Coast Pilot Guides (US Coast and Geodetic Survey) reflected Scarborough Shoal in its navigation

maps clearly within the Philippine sovereign domain and continued throughout since the Philippine regained independence in 1946. In 1963 the Philippine Navy even bombarded and dismantled a smuggler's base discovered on the shoal. Dr. Batongbacal argued strongly that no other government action could express sovereignty so completely and convincingly than said state action.

But in addition to the Philippines's historical title and actual possession, Scarborough Shoal clearly falls within our territory, it's being merely

124 nautical miles or 260 kilometers away from our shorelines. The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea—of which China is a signatory—gives the riparian country the exclusive economic jurisdiction over 200 nautical miles from its baselines.

In the face of such incontrovertible facts, Beijing should exercise utmost restraint. Any reclamation would be a sharp stab at the hearts and stomachs of many Filipino fishermen and such brazen move could unleash widespread grassroots outrage.

E-mail: angara.ed@gmail.com.

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IN this April 16, 2012, file photo, protesters display placards during their rally outside the Chinese Consulate at the financial district of Makati City, to accuse poaching by Chinese fishermen at the disputed Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea. AP

## SOUTH CHINA SEA WATCH: SCARBOROUGH SHOAL AS A RED LINE

**B**EING so close to the main Philippine island of Luzon, the Scarborough Shoal is a particularly sensitive piece of real estate.

The uninhabited coral reef was exploited both Filipino and Chinese fishermen, and was used as a bombing range by the United States Air Force until Washington closed bases in the Philippines in 1991. In 2012 Chinese vessels seized the shoal, following a tense standoff with Filipino ships.

The *South China Morning Post* reported, citing an anonymous military source, that Beijing will start reclamation work on the shoal later this year and may add an airstrip to extend the air force's reach. Transforming the shoal into another military outpost so close to Manila and the busy Luzon Strait, which connects the South China Sea with the Pacific Ocean, would be the biggest challenge yet for the Philippines and its ally, the US.

China did not confirm nor deny the report.

The Philippines has contested China's vast claims in the South China Sea at a United Nations tribunal, which is expected to rule soon in what many believe will be an unfavorable outcome for Beijing. China has refused to take part in the proceedings, and there are worries whether it might respond by cementing its island holdings, or even expanding them by fortifying Scarborough, too.

Jay Batongbacal, director of the University of the Philippines College of Law's Institute for Maritime Affairs and Law of the Sea, cited historical documents showing the US ceded the shoal to the Philippines as part of American administered territory at independence in 1946. This is evidence that the shoal is covered by the Mutual Defense Treaty, and thus, the US has an obligation to prevent it from being permanently controlled by China, he said.

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## SCARBOROUGH SHOAL AS A RED LINE

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The shoal, therefore, represents "a red line" to the US and its allies, he said.

China says Huangyan Island—Chinese for Scarborough—appears on maps as Chinese territory starting in 1935. Last week the new US Air Force contingent from Luzon flew sorties near Scarborough, drawing a mild rebuke from China.

The Wall Street Journal quoted US officials as saying that Navy ships canceled a freedom of navigation operation scheduled for April, in order to "lower the temperature" in the South China Sea.

### US lawmakers want more naval operations

MEMBERS of the US Congress are urging the Obama administration to order more naval operations in the South China Sea.

"I don't know why we are not doing it weekly, or monthly," said Republican Sen. Bob Corker, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations

alienating its neighbors and risked "conflict, instability and isolation," unless it changed its approach and clarified its claims in accordance with international law.

### China's 'consensus' with 3 Asean members questioned

CHINESE Foreign Minister Wang Yi's statement that Beijing had reached a consensus with Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia and Lao PDR on the South China Sea has been met with some skepticism—and concern from other Asean members.

Cambodian government spokesman Phay Siphon said that no new agreement with China on the issue has been reached. Laos and Vietnam, which is also squabbling with China, issued a joint statement pledging to accelerate the settlement of disputes in line with international law. They also called for a binding Code of Conduct to govern disputes, something Beijing has been reluctant to conclude.

Singapore's senior diplomat Ong Keng

**“No matter how many and how frequently US ships come to the South China Sea, that would not change the fact that the islands and adjacent islands are China's inherent territory.”—CHINESE DEFENSE MINISTRY SPOKESMAN COL. WU QIAN**

Committee, noting the US has about 60 percent of its naval vessels in the Pacific region.

Sen. Cory Gardner said sending US ships into the area every three months "is simply insufficient to send a strong message to China."

Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken said such operations will take place regularly.

Blinken agreed with Sen. Marco Rubio that China's objective was control of the entire South China Sea. Blinken said China was

Yong said Beijing may be trying to split the regional bloc.

"Having [the Chinese] foreign minister announce that two of non-claimant states, namely, Cambodia and Laos, have decided that they are not going to do this and that, seems to me like interfering in the domestic affairs of Asean," said the former Asean secretary-general. China asked Singapore to clarify Ong's comments. *AP*

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## Gov't workers to get mid-year bonus on May 15

By JESS DIAZ

The government is not giving out the mid-year bonus of its personnel ahead of the May 9 elections, apparently to avoid accusations that the incentive is intended to boost the chances of winning of its candidates.

"The payment of the mid-year bonus equivalent to one-month salary is not earlier than May 15," Budget Secretary Florencio Abad said in a text message yesterday.

He said the funds for the incentive are now with government agencies.

The DBM chief said state corporations and local government units are authorized to charge the funds out of relevant appropriations in their

budgets.

He added that under a law recently passed by Congress and signed by President Aquino, bonuses and other incentives totaling up to a maximum of P82,000 are exempt from income tax.

The grant of mid-year and yearend bonuses to government workers is mandated under Executive Order No. 201, which Aquino issued last Feb. 9 to fulfill a promise to upgrade salary rates in the bureaucracy.

He had submitted a draft of the proposed Salary Standardization Law 4 to Congress as the enabling authority for the adjustment, but the

legislature failed to pass it.

The fate of the proposed law now rests with Aquino's successor and the next Congress.

Under the increased salary rates scheme contained in EO 201, government officials and employees holding Salary Grades 1 to 28 will get their mid-year bonus in full, as they are covered by the law exempting incentives of up to P82,000 from taxation.

The lowest-paid state worker, who holds Salary Grade 1, has a basic monthly pay of P9,478, up by P478.

Salary Grade 28, which is the pay level

of a bureau director, pays a monthly salary of P80,760, up by P13,076 from the previous rate of P67,684.

The bureaucracy has 33 salary grades.

A majority of government personnel will receive tax-exempt mid-year and year-end bonuses. Most of them are clustered in Salary Grades 11 to 13.

Based on the bureaucracy's staffing blueprint, holders of Salary Grade 11, including teachers, number 426,575, while those with Salary Grades 12 total P114,966. There are 159,409 holding Salary Grade 13.

There are a total of 700,950 personnel with Salary Grades 11 to 13, or

nearly half of the 1.5-million government workforce.

The lowest-paid public school teacher now receives a basic monthly salary of P19,077, up by P528 from the previous P18,549. A Salary Grade 12 holder now gets P20,651. His old salary was P19,940. He thus received an increase of P711.

Salary Grade 12 pays P22,328, up by P892 from the previous P21,436.

In contrast, the salary of a Cabinet member went up by P27,086, from P90,000 to P117,086.

The basic pay of an undersecretary increased by P17,408, from P78,946 to P96,354.