

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

DATE : 04 MAY 2016

DAY : Wednesday

# DENR

## IN THE NEWS

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# BusinessMirror

A broader look at today's business

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

### Stronger protection measures for 2 river systems in N. Luzon, CamSur

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA [@jonlmayuga](#)

**T**HE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has put in place stronger protection measures for two river systems as potential supply of clean water and for ecotourism purposes.

Placed under Water Quality Management Areas (WQMA) by the DENR through separate administrative orders are the Bued River System in Northern Luzon and the Naga River in Camarines Sur.

Under the Clean Water Act, the DENR, in coordination with the National Water Resources Board (NWRB), is mandated to designate certain areas as WQMA 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.

The law also seeks to provide a decentralized management system for water quality protection and improvement of river systems.

Likewise, the DENR is tasked to create a governing board for each WQMA, which is chaired by a regional director of the DENR's Environmental Management Bureau (EMB).

Its members include the mayor and governor of the concerned local government unit and representatives of relevant national government agencies, duly registered non-governmental organizations, and business and water-utility sectors.

The governing board serves as a planning, monitoring and coordinating body. It also reviews the WQMA action plan prepared by the EMB.

The DENR and the stakeholders address the water quality problems, sources of pollution and the beneficial use of the receiving water body. They also determine what control measures to institute to effectively achieve

water quality objectives or improvements.

There are now 23 water bodies declared as WQMAs, a statement news released by the DENR said on Tuesday.

Environment Secretary Ramon J.P. Paje signed on April 18 separate administrative orders declaring the Bued River System and the Naga River as WQMAs, the statement added.

Paje said securing the integrity of the two river systems not only ensures 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 environment chief said.

The preservation of Bued River 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 province, which are major tourist destinations in the north, the DENR chief said.

A major source of water for agriculture and aquaculture, Bued River runs through 25 barangays in Baguio City and the municipalities of Itogon and Tuba in Benguet before it drains toward Rosario town in La Union, and the municipalities of Sison, San Fabian, San Jacinto and Mangaldan in Pangasinan via the historic 30-kilometer Kennon Road.

According to Paje, the designation of Naga River as 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 Pili town.

Designating WQMA aims to beef up the protection initiatives of the Naga River Development Council and in support of the Naga River Revitalization Project.



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## *Take a selfie for biodiversity*

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The Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Biodiversity Management Bureau (DENR-BMB), in cooperation with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, mounts its annual photo contest for the third time, dubbed as "Selfie for Biodiversity and Livelihood 2016" in commemoration of the International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB) on May 22.

IDBD is an international event mandated by the United Nations as part of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) of 1993, with the task of creating global awareness on the importance of biodiversity, how they impact the ecosystem, and why everyone should be involved in their protection.

With this year's theme "Mainstreaming Biodiversity: Sustaining People and their Livelihoods," the contest welcomes photo entries that tell a story on how efforts in protecting biodiversity help to sustain livelihood.

Entries may highlight commitments, efforts or campaigns to protect biodiversity and may cover aspects such as food production, water protection, animal stock protection, or other topics related to the theme.

GIZ GmbH remains committed in helping the Philippine government in educating the public of the need to be more proactive in protecting the environment and our rich biodiversity.

The contest is open to individuals residing in the Philippines, male or female, aged 13 and up. Participants may join either on Facebook or

Instagram, and are required to like the Biodiversity Challenge Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/biodiversitychallenge/> and Instagram account <https://www.instagram.com/selfieforbiodiversity> to join the contest.

Photos may be taken using any medium, and must highlight any of the following: the beauty and uniqueness of the country's biodiversity; activities that contribute to protecting biodiversity; and biodiversity and its connection to livelihood.

Entries must include 1) a short description with the subject of the photo (as a title); 2) participants' name, age and the hashtag #selfieforbiodiversity; and 3) short narrative (about 100 words) on what biodiversity means to the person, how Filipinos can help conserve the Philippines' rich biodiversity, how the action can inspire others, and a behind-the-scenes story on how the photo was taken.

Subjects must be on Philippine biodiversity and include unique plants and/or animals, whether on land, in fresh water, in the ocean, or special places like wildlife habitats, protected areas, caves, lakes, or rivers.

Participants may send as many entries as they can, but may only win once.

Photos must be taken over the past year, or from the close of the Selfie for Biodiversity event in May 2015. Previous entries are disqualified.

No digital manipulation will be allowed; enhancements may only be limited to cropping, enhanced lenses, as well as color and digital retouching.

# BusinessWorld

**INCREASE YOUR BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE**

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### 'Selfie for Biodiversity and Livelihood 2016' photo contest launched

THE DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources' Biodiversity Management Bureau (DENR-BMB), in cooperation with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, mounts its annual photo contest for the third time, dubbed as "Selfie for Biodiversity and Livelihood 2016" in commemoration of the International Day for Biological Diversity (IDBD) on May 22.

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No digital manipulation will be allowed; enhancements may only be limited to cropping, enhanced lenses, as well as color and digital retouching. Entries found to have been digitally-manipulated using Photoshop or other photo editing software will automatically be disqualified.

Submission of entries is from April 28 to noon of May 15 only. All entries should be sent via Instagram or Facebook using the hashtag #selfieforbiodiversity.

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## Learning from 'Pedring' tragedy, Bulo Dam rehab now underway

By **FREDDIE C. VELEZ**

DONA REMEDIOS TRINIDAD, Bulacan — Timely and a step ahead the worst consequences climate change may pose in the future, the Bulo Small Reservoir Irrigation Project in San Miguel town, which will ensure irrigation in farms of thousands of Bulakeño farmers, is now underway.

Governor Wilhelmino M. Sy-Alvarado said the project is a result of lessons learned from the past and brings together the provincial government and the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) in an endeavor that will help secure the livelihood of farmers as well as their safety from life-threatening floods.

It will be recalled that in September, 2011, a total of 610 families were evacuated from 12 barangays of San Miguel town that had been submerged in up to 5 feet of flood-water because a portion of the Bulo Dam in Barangay Malusak collapsed at the height of typhoon Pedring's onslaught.

Last Saturday, Alvarado and NIA Region 3 Manager Virgilio Ilao inspected the 2.8-kilometer southside trails of the irrigation reservoir and drainage infrastructure project in Barangay Malibay, San Miguel.

Engr. Ilao assured the governor that the earth fill construction of the dam will start this year upon the approval of the design and bidding of the project.

The project that will feature the construction of the 31.50 meters storage earth fill dam with a crest length of 141 meters, will serve as the catch basin area of the water coming from the mountains of Sierra Madre during rainy season to prevent flash floods at downstream of Bulo River.

The project will also feature the construction of 4.80 km lateral canals, the 6-km and 4.2-km south and north main canal and the construction of the overflowing bridge.

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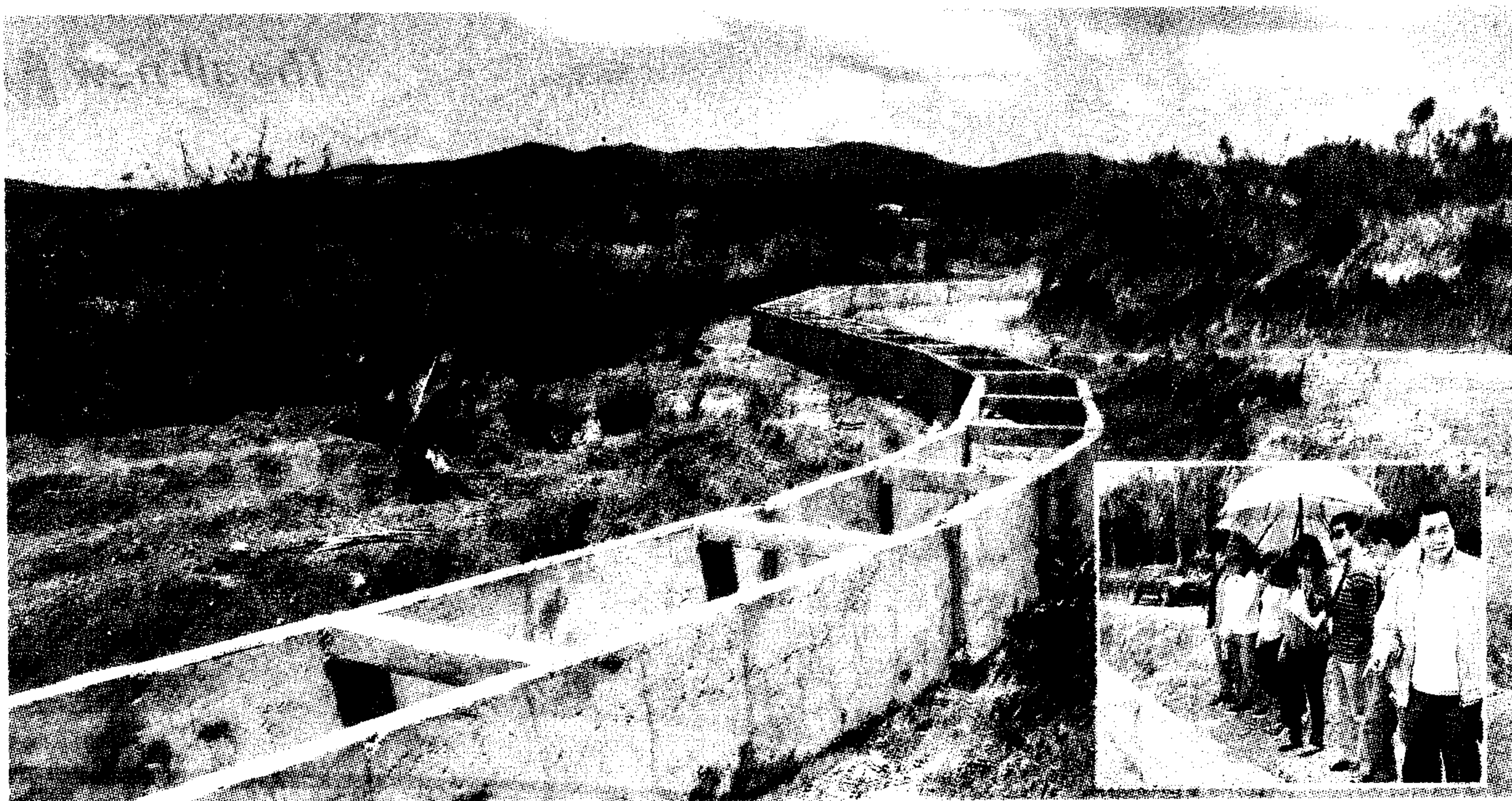
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*Learning from 'Redring' tragedy, . . . . .*



**MAJOR IRRIGATION** — Bulacan Gov. Wilhelmino M. Sy-Alvarado (inset, right), together with Engr. Virgilio Ilao of the National Irrigation Administration Region 3, inspects last weekend the 2.8-km south canal of the Bulo Small Reservoir Irrigation Project that will benefit thousands of farmers of Dona Remedios Trinidad and San Miguel towns. (Freddie C. Velez)

# Daily Tribune

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**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**

## RP's mining industry to boom further — FNI

Investors in mining industry will continue to flock in the Philippines because of the huge potential of the country's minerals despite the red tape and intervention from local government units (LGUs), a leading nickel firm with over \$100 million investments in the country said.

Global Ferronickel Holdings Inc. (FNI) said the importance of minerals being mined in the country is what investors think when they invest in the country regardless of the red tape and irritating LGU intervention.

"I would like to think that foreign investors would still continue to be interested because of the importance of mining to the world," Dante Bravo, the firm's president, explained to the *Daily Tribune*.

Without elaborating, the official said investors are willing to bear the brunt of issues hounding the local mining industry as margins in the business overcome the negative sentiments.

Bravo said the revenues from mining can provide the much needed fund for the country's basic needs so the

government should not set aside the contribution of mining in the domestic economy.

"Everybody is demanding for growth and therefore, when growth is achieved, then there is more demand for housing, automobiles, electronics, infrastructure, military hardware. All of these require insatiable demand for metals," the official added.

FNI, one of the two listed mining firms operating in Claver, Surigao del Norte, is one of the biggest nickel-mining firms in the country. It is also one of the most obedient to government regulations.

It exports mainly almost all the metals it extract from its over 4,000-hectare mining site in the town. Last year, it earned more than \$23.6 million despite the severe drop in nickel price in the world market.

The mining official said there is no sign that demand for metals, particularly nickel, would drop due to growing business of all industries that use nickel. According to Wikipedia, nickel is widely used in coin, kitchen ware, medical

equipment and automobile parts production.

"If we lower population, bring all economies to contract, stop creating wealth, then demand for metals would drop or be negligible," he said.

Bravo said mining is one of the riskiest and most capital-intensive businesses in the world. Majority of mining investments will go to equipment, mine development, mine facilities and exploration.

The most delicate part is exploration as this is the stage where the investor would know if they can extract the metal they are eyeing for. "If the exploration turns out negative, nothing can be recovered from the exploration cost," he added.

The very high investments needed coupled with LGUs' unnecessary interference, threats from rebels, demanding indigenous people, difficult terrains, unsecured working environment and national government's intervention make the operations of mining firms in the country very expensive, according to sources.

**Ed Velasco**

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS  
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## Cardona farmers hit by El Niño see more trouble on the horizon

By NEL B. ANDRADE

**C**ARDONA, Rizal — The long dry spell affecting many parts of the country has delivered a big blow to rice farmers in this part of the province, but after surviving El Niño, the challenge of La Niña and the consequences posed by the operation of a giant water concessionaire stare them down.

During a visit last weekend to a rice field, here, Benjamin Patito, a 66-year-old farmer lamented how he and 50 other rice farmers in this town and neighboring Morong had been adversely affected by El Niño.

Patito said a huge portion of the rice fields beside the hill has already been dried-up as the only means of irrigation — a stream and a river — have

barely sufficient water to reach their plantations.

He led this reporter to a spot on his ricefield that had been completely dried-up.

“We harvested our palay as early as March even though it is not fit to be harvested yet since we fear that prolonging the harvest time may only result in great losses since there might not be rain coming in the next few weeks or months,” Patito said in Filipino.

His fellow members in the Pulong Munti Association of Farmers in Cardona and Morong (PMAFCC) said some of their ricefields — the ones lying along the lakeshore of Laguna de Bay had survived.

However, they have to use pumps to bring in the water from the lake.

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Cardona Farmers hit by El Niño see more  
trouble on the horizon



**GRAZE LAND**—A rice farmer in Cardona, Rizal allows animals to graze on his field which is now a grass land. Farmers had to prematurely harvest their 'palay' last March because there is no more water to irrigate their fields. (Nel B. Andrade)

#### MM comes first

But apart from El Niño, these farmers sense bigger trouble on the horizon.

Farmers like Patito are worried about the project of a large water concessionaire that reportedly entails the seeping of water from Laguna de Bay for distribution to Metro Manila.

Last week, the PMAFCC met with barangay officials and representatives of the water concessionaire, which announced the start of its project to lay huge pipes in the country's largest fresh

water lake to be the source of Metro Manila's tap water.

Patito said this is bad news not just for fisherfolk who depend on lake but also for farmers whose source of irrigation for their plantations is Laguna de Bay.

#### La Niña

The farmers hope the next president will have a more inclusive and holistic program for Laguna Lake that will not leave them and their livelihood out of the equation especially since after

the ongoing dry spell, La Niña looms later this year.

Unusually frequent rains brought about by La Niña is expected to flood their ricefields beyond control, said Patito. He cited instances in the past when flood water ruined their produce.

He said the problem with the farmlands in this town is that during extreme rainy conditions, the absence of the passage way holds the water in their ricefields with no way of for it to get out. Government, he said, has failed to address this.

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## Tap calamity funds vs El Niño – DILG

By **CZARINA NICOLE O. ONG**

Local government units (LGUs) are allowed to use their local calamity funds in order to mitigate the negative effects of the El Niño weather phenomenon.

This was clarified yesterday by Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Mel Senen Sarmiento, citing Section 21 of Republic Act 10121 which provides that LGUs have to set aside not less than five percent of their yearly budget for

a local calamity fund or what is now known as the local disaster risk reduction management fund (LDRRMF) in their yearly budgets.

The LDRRMF shall cover 30 percent lump sum allocation for quick response fund, or standby fund for relief and recovery programs.

Meanwhile, there should be 70 percent allocation for disaster prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response, rehabilitation, and recovery.

Aside from the local DRRM fund,

Sarmiento said that LGUs may also access the ₱19-billion national calamity fund, a lump sum fund appropriated under the General Appropriations Act (GAA) to cover aid, relief, and rehabilitation services to areas affected by man-made and natural calamities like the El Niño.

Sarmiento's announcement comes on the heels of the separate declarations of 39 LGUs of being under a state of calamity because of the dry spell and extreme weather conditions.

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# DSWD gets P842 M for El Niño programs

By JESS DIAZ

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) released yesterday P842.5 million to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to assist families affected by El Niño.

"The funds are for the purchase of family food

packs for prepositioning and disaster augmentation, cash or food-for-work programs, shelter assistance and additional relief supplies," Budget Secretary Florencio Abad said.

Abad said the fund release was the second aug-

mentation of DSWD's quick response fund for this year. On April 1, DBM augmented the DSWD's QRF with P662.5 million.

Of the nearly P2-billion QRF allotment the DSWD received this year, the agency

has obligated P1.516 billion as of April 19, Abad said.

He said QRF represents pre-disaster or standby funds for agencies to immediately assist areas stricken by disasters and calamities.

Aside from the DSWD,

Abad said agencies with QRFs include the Departments of Public Works and Highways, National Defense (Office of the Secretary and Office of the Civil Defense), Education and Agriculture.

These agencies may re-

quest for augmentation of their QRF when it gets depleted, Abad said.

He said quick response funds are sourced from the P19-billion appropriation in the national budget for disaster risk reduction and management.

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

## P842M set for quick response vs El Niño

THE national government has released P842.5 million to augment the Quick Response Funds (QRF) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), to be used for the implementation of El Niño mitigation activities.

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) yesterday said that the funds will be used for the implementation of programs for El Niño, including the purchase of family food packs for prepositioning and disaster augmentation, cash or food for work programs, shelter assistance, and additional relief supplies.

The QRF is a built-in budgetary allocation that represent pre-disaster or standby funds for agencies in order to

immediately assist areas stricken by disasters and calamities.

Aside from DSWD, the agencies that have built-in QRFs include the Department of Public Works and Highways, Department of National Defense - Office of the Secretary and Office of the Civil Defense, Department of Education, and Department of Agriculture.

When the QRF gets depleted, the agency may request for augmentation subject to the approval of the DBM.

The budget department said the funds were charged against the 2016 National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (NDRRM) Funds in the national budget.

The General Appropriations Act (GAA)

of 2016 appropriated the amount of P19 billion as NDRRM Funds, which may be used as an additional funding source for the QRF of agencies when the fund balance has reached a critical level.

This is the second augmentation of DSWD's QRF for 2016, according to the DBM.

Last April 1, the budget agency augmented the QRF of DSWD in the amount of P662.5 million.

The DSWD has P1.325 billion built-in appropriation for QRF under the 2016 GAA.

Of the total P1.988 billion allotment it received this year, P1.516 billion has been obligated by the agency.

Its QRF balance as of April 19 is P471.9 million.

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### Abaca exports rise to \$114M as demand surges

THE total value of the Philippines' abaca exports rose 3.1 percent to \$114 million in 2015 from \$111 million in 2014 due to increased demand for raw fiber and pulp, according to the Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority (PhilFIDA).

PhilFIDA said earnings from abaca raw fiber registered the biggest improvement last year with \$19.3 million, up 36.7 percent from the previous year's \$14.1 million, followed by abaca pulp that grew 11.7 percent to \$79.4 million in 2015 from \$71.1 million in 2014.

The agency noted the growth in exports of raw abaca fiber and pulp offset the declines in other products.

The biggest decline was in fibercrafts which fell 67.3 percent to \$3.8 million last year from \$11.6 million the prior year. Fabrics also tumbled 53 percent to \$867,000 from \$1.8 million. Abaca cordage dropped 10.1 percent to \$11.4 million in 2015 from \$12.7 million in 2014.

PhilFIDA said from the total exports of 96,079 raw abaca fiber bales of 125 kilograms, most of the orders came from the United Kingdom with 46,540 bales equivalent to 48.44 percent.

Other importers of raw abaca fiber were Japan with 38,773 bales (40.35 percent); Spain, 3,840 bales (3.99 percent); and China, 3,295 bales (3.43 percent).

PhilFIDA data also showed that from the 22,199.908 metric tons (MT) of abaca pulp exported, Germany got 8,630.594 MT accounting for 38.9 percent of the total. This is followed by United Kingdom, 6,385.420 MT (28.8 percent); Japan, 2,870.576 MT (12.9



Abaca raw fiber registered the biggest growth in export of 36.7 percent.

percent); and France, 1,437.759 MT (6.5 percent).

The agency said of the 4,458.3 MT of abaca cordage exports, 3,028.5 MT or 67.9 percent was purchased by the United States, followed by Canada, 218.3 MT (4.9 percent); Singapore, 211 MT (4.7 percent); and United Kingdom, 201.9 MT (4.5 percent).

PhilFIDA reported the country produced a total of 469,326.5 abaca bales in 2015, majority of which came from Bicol and Davao regions.

# The Manila Times

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## PH urged to make use of 'green jobs' law

BY VOLTAIRE PALAÑA  
REPORTER

**T**HE Philippines can harness huge economic potential by generating "green jobs," or jobs that contribute substantially to the preservation and restoration of the environment and natural resources, after President Benigno Aquino 3rd signed late last week the Philippine Green Jobs Act, the bill's chief sponsor said.

Under Republic Act 10771, 'green jobs' specifically refers to jobs that help "protect ecosystems and biodiversity; reduce energy, materials and water consumption through high-efficiency strategies; de-carbonize the economy; and minimize or altogether avoid generation of all forms of waste and pollution."

It covers industries that hire professionals including solar PV system

designers and installers, engineers and technicians of turbines; energy- and resource-efficiency consultants; sanitation and waste management experts; biodiversity and ecology fieldworkers; forest guards; river clean-up crew; organic farmers and recycling plant workers, among others, and grants incentives for companies to create 'green jobs.'

"With passing of this law we can

preserve our natural resources and we can help to provide decent jobs to our people," said Sen. Sonny Angara, acting chairman of the Senate labor committee and the sponsor of the measure.

The lawmaker cited a study by the International Renewable Energy Agency, which showed that in some countries, especially in Asia, green jobs already account for a significant portion of the workforce—totaling 7.7 million green jobs worldwide in 2014.

"Green jobs are the future of the world of work. Eventually, green economies will be the norm. A green jobs boom could happen here in the Philippines. We might as well start the transition now," Angara said.

He also lauded the President and his colleagues in both houses of Congress for supporting the passage of this vital legislation that addresses both employment and environmen-

tal issues of the country.

Among the incentives business enterprises may enjoy under the recently enacted Green Jobs law include a special deduction from the taxable income equivalent to 50 percent of the total expenses for skills training and research and development expenses, and tax- and duty-free importation of capital equipment.

RA 10771 also states that green jobs must be decent jobs that respect the rights of workers, pay fair and adequate wages, provide safe working conditions and social protection for families, and promote social dialogue and workers' right to organize.

"This law incentivizes employment opportunities in 'green' and eco-friendly industries. More importantly, a green job must be kind not only to the environment, but to the workers as well," Angara added.

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## EVAP hopes for 'green president'

THE Electric Vehicle Association of the Philippines (EVAP) hopes that the next president is a "green President" who will support an environment-friendly movement and best practices in the country.

In a statement, EVAP President Rommel Juan said that the EVAP board and its members may have different candidates in mind, and that the organization has not yet decided on who it will support and endorse publicly as a group.

"However, we all share the

same sentiment: we will support a green President to sit in Malacañang," Juan said.

In December last year, the Philippines committed to a 70 percent reduction in its greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 in the Paris COP 21 Agreement.

In order to achieve this goal, the EVAP president said that the modernization of the public transport system and the promotion of alternative-fuel vehicles should be addressed.

"And a President who is strong-willed and shares our ad-

vocacies of pushing for a greener environment will get our nod," Juan said.

In addition, Juan said the e-vehicle industry needs the Alternative Fuel Vehicle Incentives Bill to be passed into law to lower the costs of manufacturing electric vehicles, which would in turn boost their competitiveness in the market.

"We therefore invite all of the Presidential aspirants to present their Green Agenda to us so we can find out who will

be the Green President that will take us to the greener future that will benefit our children and our children's children," Juan said.

At present, e-vehicles are used for mass transport in areas of Makati, Muntinlupa, Filinvest City Alabang, Las Piñas, De La Salle University, Ateneo University, University of the Philippines, and in provincial locations such as in Cebu, Naga, Palawan, Boracay, Iloilo and Bacolod.

KRISTYN NIKA M. LAZO