

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

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DENR

IN THE NEWS

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Enchanted Kingdom Celebrates Philippine Eagle Week

June 4, 2016, Sta. Rosa, Laguna - The majestic Philippine Eagle took center stage at Enchanted Kingdom, with special activities held to mark the kick-off ceremonies of the Philippine Eagle Week. As the country marks the 18th year of the celebrations, with the theme "Saving Eagles, Protecting Forests, Securing Our Future", the premiere Philippine theme park offered 18% discounts on each Regular Day Pass (RDP) with a free Yabang Pinoy and abaca bracelet distributed on June 3, 4, 5, and 10.

The program of activities that were held at the sprawling theme park is a collaborative effort between Enchanted Kingdom (EK) and Department of Environment and Natural Resources- Biodiversity Management Bureau (DENR-BMB), designed to strengthen public awareness on the significant role of the Philippine Eagle in the forest ecosystem and its importance as a national symbol and unique heritage the future generations must enjoy.

EK Chairman & President Mr. Mario O. Mamon shared that the company is delighted and honored to have the opportunity to host the 18th Philippine Eagle Week ceremonies at its park facilities in Santa Rosa City, Laguna. "It is part of EK's continuing and sincere commitment to support the eagle conservation efforts of both the private and public sectors. This is a fitting follow-up to Enchanted Kingdom's adoption last October 2015 of "Enchanting Kagitingan", a ten-year old eagle under the care of the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) in Davao. This week's activities will also highlight a new partnership with the DENR Biodiversity Management Bureau in their continued efforts to protect and conserve the environment within which this magnificent bird of prey, unique to our country, exists under very challenging conditions."

He adds, "We have lined up a number of unique activities at the park and we hope that through our concerted efforts, we shall continue to build awareness and understanding on the plight of our national bird. These efforts will not only have its positive effects on the conservancy of the Philippine eagle, but more importantly, on the protection and conservation of the environment, something that is of greater impact to all of mankind."

The kick-off ceremony held last June 4 treated park visitors to exciting events such as an Agila-themed costume contest, where costumed participants were entitled to free park entry. Children aged 4 to 10 were able to win exciting freebies and prizes for participating in the Color Me Wild coloring competition held at the Kindermagic area. There were also entertaining performances held to honor the National Bird, with an interactive storytelling session of "Fly Malaya Fly" and a specially choreographed dance number from the EK Circle of Artists. Conservation groups like the DENR-BMB, the UP Institute of Biology and UP-Biodiversity Research Lab competed in the exciting AGILARO Race Challenge using trivia and clues about the eagle, in order to enhance awareness of the need to care for the environment.

Galeria Ni Agila, a photo exhibit that highlights the plight and flight of the Philippine Eagle by showcasing stunning pictures of two actual DENR eagles Leila and Ibarra, was likewise inaugurated at the park's Memorabilia area. The ribbon-cutting ceremonies were led by EK Chairman &

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Enchanted Kingdom celebrates Phil. Eagle week



The kick-off ceremonies for the Philippine Eagle Week were recently held at Enchanted Kingdom, highlighting the need for the private and public sector to work together towards preserving the natural habitat of the endangered national bird. Championing the cause of the Philippine Eagle are, (from left) Dr. Perry S. Ong of the UP-Diliman Biodiversity Research Laboratory Team; Dr. Cynthia Mamon, EK Chief Operating Officer; DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau Director Theresa Mundita Lim; Philippine Eagle Foundation Executive Director Dennis Salvador; Enchanted Kingdom's Princess Victoria and Eldar the Wizard; EK Chairman and President Mario Mamon; and Haribon Foundation Chief Operating Officer Ma. Belinda De La Paz with Haribon Site Area Manager Noel Resurrecion.

President Mr. Mario O. Mamon, and EK Chief Operating Officer Dr. Cynthia R. Mamon, Director Theresa Mundita Lim of the Department of Natural Resources Biodiversity Management Bureau (DENR BMB) and Director Dennis Salvador of the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF).

Director Lim of the DENR-BMB remarked that she welcomes working with Enchanted Kingdom as a venue for the Philippine Eagle Week opening ceremonies and the inauguration of its eagle-themed exhibit at the Memorabilia zone. "As a theme park, EK reaches a different audience that usually comes for the rides and recreational activities. With the kick-off ceremonies and exhibit, the advocacy now has a different reach for its message of conservation, particularly the youth. We are looking forward to pursuing this partnership in helping to raise the level of understanding about caring for the environment with the leaders of the future."

For his part, PEF Chairman Salvador added, "On our 18th year of the Philippine Eagle Week, we would not only like to pay tribute to the Philippine Eagle, but we would also like to highlight that we all need to work together to save the national bird. In this regard, we are very happy that we share the same values with Enchanted Kingdom on love for country and the environment."

There is an urgent need to focus public attention to the plight of the Philippine Eagle, as the mighty Agila is struggling to survive in the wild. While it is proclaimed as the country's National Bird, its habitat has been destroyed by deforestation and it is estimated that only 400 pairs are left, prompting the International Union for Conservation of Nature to classify it as critically endangered.

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DENR warns vs use of fish-aggregating device in Benham Rise

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

✉ @jonlmayuga

WHILE saying the use of fish-aggregating device (FAD) yield more fish, the practice causes overfishing, depletes fish stocks and affects marine ecosystems, the country's top biodiversity official said on Wednesday.

In an interview, Director Theresa Mundita Lim of the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said FAD attracts fish to feed in a particular area, allowing fishermen to catch more fish, but warned that high concentration of fish in one area does not reflect the "real fish density."

"Fish-aggregating devices only attract fish to gather in one area. At first, you will think there are plenty of fish to catch in the area but that population is only artificial. We don't really know whether the area really has plenty of fish or they are the only ones left in that particular ecosystem," Lim told the BUSINESSMIRROR.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) is promoting the use of FAD to increase fish catch, such as in Benham Rise—the country's newest territory—where Pacific bluefin tuna thrives.

The 13-million-hectare underwater plateau is currently undergoing deep-sea exploration by scientists.

Situated in eastern Luzon, just 250 kilometers off Aurora Province, Benham Rise is an important fishing ground in Luzon, but there are reports that foreign fishing vessels also frequent the area, too.

told the BUSINESSMIRROR that it has installed FAD in Benham Rise as early as 2013 and fishermen are now enjoying bountiful harvest in the area.

Sought for her expert opinion, Lim said the use of FAD is not sustainable and may, in fact, create a wrong impression that there are plenty of fish in the area.

"When you use fish-aggregating device, the fish goes in one area. Hence, there are more fish in one area, which commercial fishermen can catch. The problem with some fishing method is that it does not distinguish commercially valuable fish from the ones with important ecosystem functions," Lim added.

Lim said fish caught using fish-aggregating device include small fishes that have no commercial value, like parrotfish and other fish species, but are part of the food chain.

"When you catch small fish and those with important ecosystem functions, you also cause disruption in the food chain that may affect the integrity of the ecosystem in a particular area," she said.

The parrotfish is important in ensuring a healthy marine ecosystem as they feed on algae in coral reefs, the breeding ground and nursery of small fish. If it vanishes, corals become fragile and becomes prone to climate-change effects that lead to coral bleaching, such as in the Snake Island in Hondoy Bay in the province of Palawan.

The official said allowing fish to thrive naturally is the best way to ensure sustainable fisheries. This, she said, is the impetus behind the DENR-BMB's declaration of marine protected areas (MPAs) in various parts of the country.

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Page 2: DENR warns vs use of fish aggregating device in Benham Rise

A recent deep-sea exploration activity in the area revealed that the Benham Bank, its shallowest portion has a dazzling array of soft and hard corals, fish, algae and sponges.

The two-week exploration conducted last month is part of an activity to discover more about the territory's natural wealth, aside from initial theories that it holds huge volume of natural gas and oil, and precious metals, like manganese.

According to Oceana Philippines, a not-for-profit ocean-conservation advocacy group, which took part in the exploration, the expedition team documented a vast mesophotic reef ecosystem where coral reefs were found at depths of up to 150 meters. Scientists believe such deep-sea reefs can serve as a potential refuge for shallow-reef fish that could be affected by climate change.

In earlier interviews, the BFAR

MPAs are declared under the National Integrated Protected Areas System (Nipas) Act to protect and conserve key biodiversity areas—in both land and water.

"Tubbataha Reefs is a key biodiversity area and is a no-take zone. This means that fishing is not allowed in the area," Lim added.

She said many similar sites remain unprotected against destructive fishing methods, like cyanide and dynamite fishing, in areas that are supposed to be conserve and protected because of their importance to marine ecosystem.

Lim said a multidisciplinary, multistakeholders' planning is needed to ensure sustainable management of Benham Rise.

"What we need to is to study Benham Rise and its potential and come up with an integrated marine resource-management plan to ensure sustainable production," she said.

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DIVERSE MARINE LIFE FOUND IN 2016 BENHAM RISE EXPEDITION

Since the United Nations' Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf recognized Benham Rise as the Philippines's newest territory in 2012, our country's territory has increased to 43 million hectares from 30 million hectares.

Early oceanographic explorations since 2006 have shown that Benham Rise can be a significant source of food for Filipino fishermen since the area is known as a migration path of different fish including tuna. Last May 23, the group for the Benham Expedition 2016 sailed on the shallowest portion of the vast seamount, on board the government research vessel MV DA-BFAR.

With the help of Oceana Philippines' remotely operated vehicles and technical diver-videographers, marine scientists from the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and University of the Philippines as well as technical divers from the Philippine Navy and the Philippine Coast Guard, the expedition was able to record a dazzling array of soft and hard corals, fish, algae and sponges.

"We saw terraces of corals as far as the eye could see. It's so exciting to know that we have such a vast and pristine coral reef ecosystem within Philippine territory," says Marianne Pan-Saniano, marine scientist for Oceana Philippines, the Philippine arm of Oceana, an international organization that conducts science-based campaigns and studies focusing on oceans.

According to Margot Stiles, Oceana's director of science and strategy, in all the decades of their experience studying the ocean, this is the first time they have seen a reef such as the Benham Rise. During the exploration, the team documented a vast mesophotic reef ecosystem (a coral ecosystems that shows presence of both light dependent coral and algae, and organisms that can be found in water with low light penetration) with coral reefs found at depths of up to 150 meters. Scientists believe that the deep sea reefs can serve as a potential refuge for shallow reef fishes that could be affected by climate change.

With the use of high tech equipment, the expedition team was able to extensively study the underwater terrain of Benham Bank covering 12 research stations, gathering many hours of video footage that are analyzed daily to compare data with the expedition in 2014 where they were only able to cover five stations and dive for 25 minutes. The group used a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) that took underwater photos and videos for two hours on a daily basis and deployed an equipment called the baited remote underwater video system (BRUVS) that measures fish populations.

"Benham Bank holds tremendous potential for discovering more unique species and outstanding samples of marine resources. Based on the huge success of this expedition, and the inspiring collaboration among the partners, we foresee government and stakeholders working together to protect and sustainably manage this extraordinary natural heritage which is now part of our territory," says lawyer Gloria Estenzo Ramos, vice president for Oceana Philippines.

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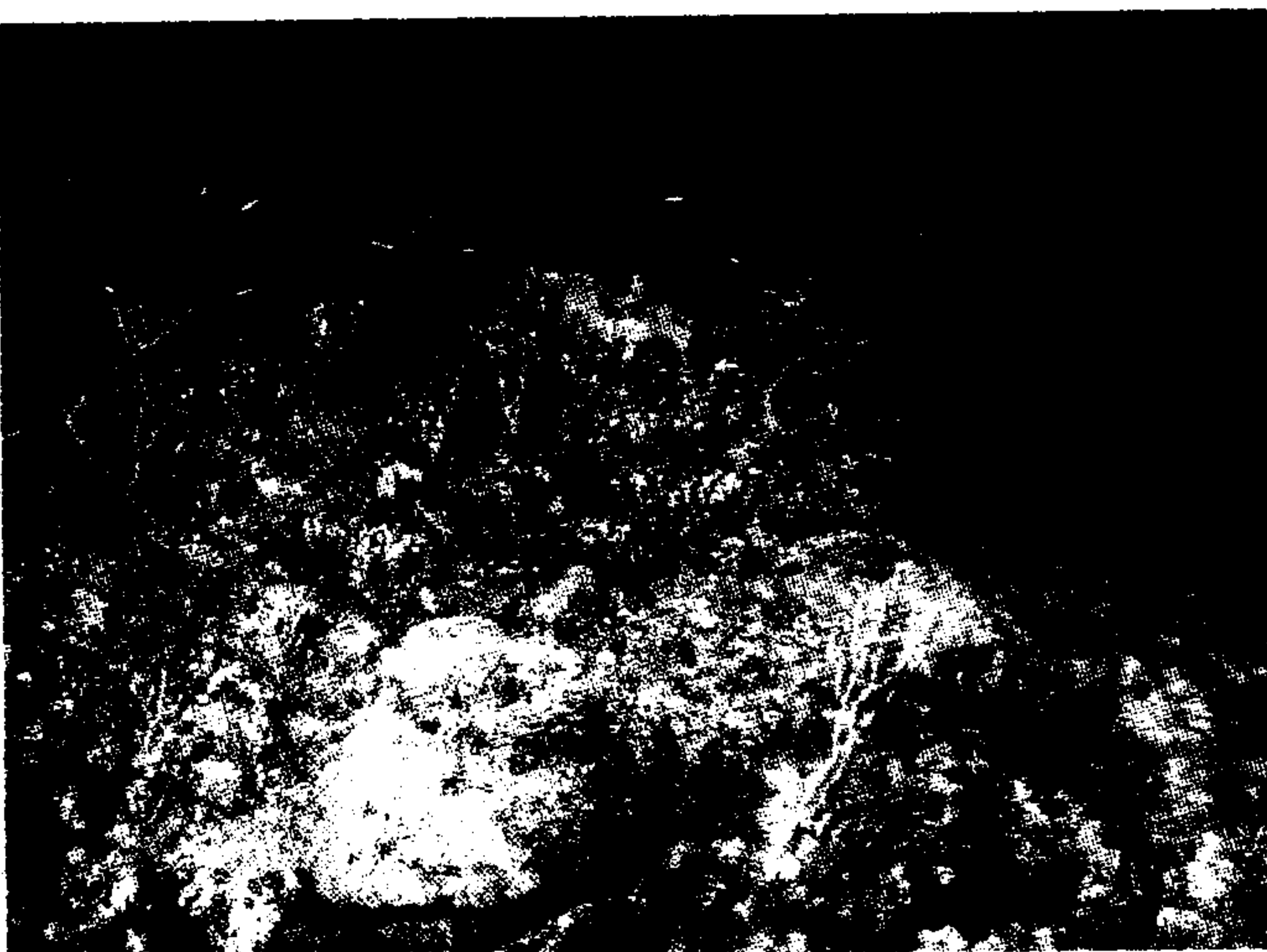
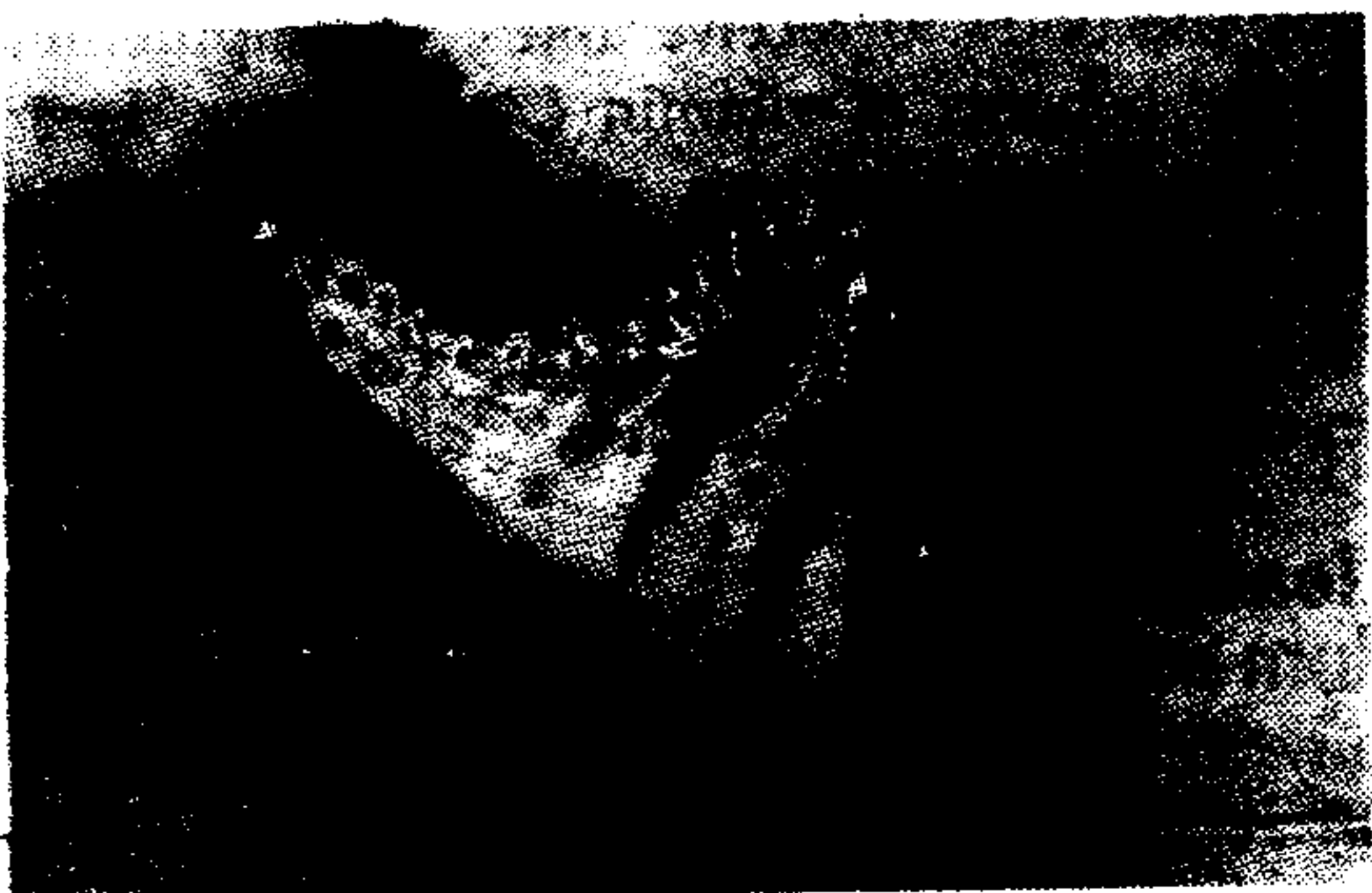
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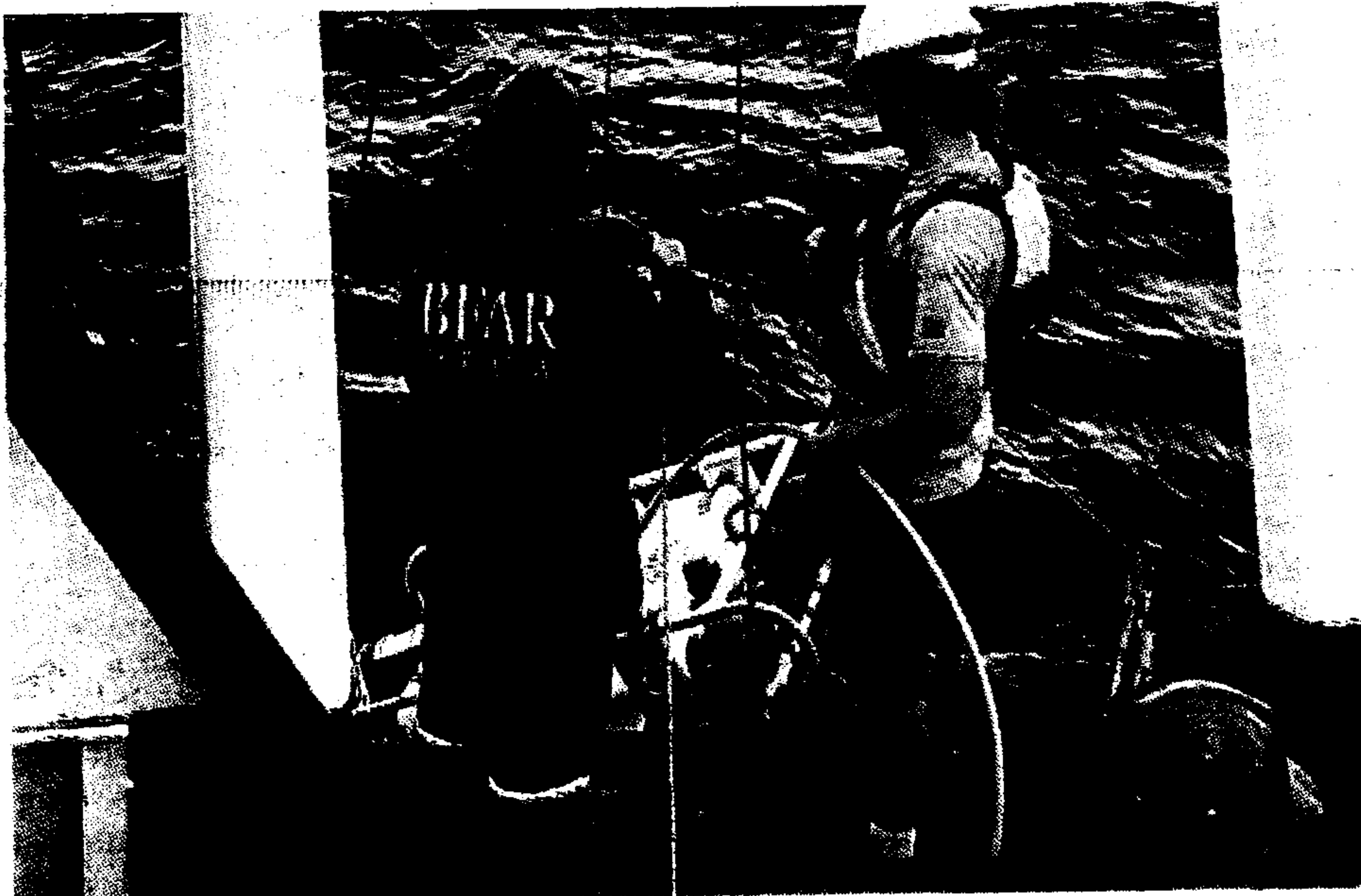
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Diverse Marine life found in 2016 Benham ridge expedition



Marine scientists were able to record a dazzling array of soft and hard corals, fish, algae, and sponges



The group used a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) that took underwater photos and videos for two hours



The team was able to study the terrain of Benham Bank covering 12 research stations

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
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Expedition records diverse marine life in Benham Rise

A dazzling array of soft and hard corals, fish, algae, and sponges comprised some of the biological diversity documented by marine scientists from the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, University of the Philippines, and Oceana during a week-long expedition to Benham Rise in May.

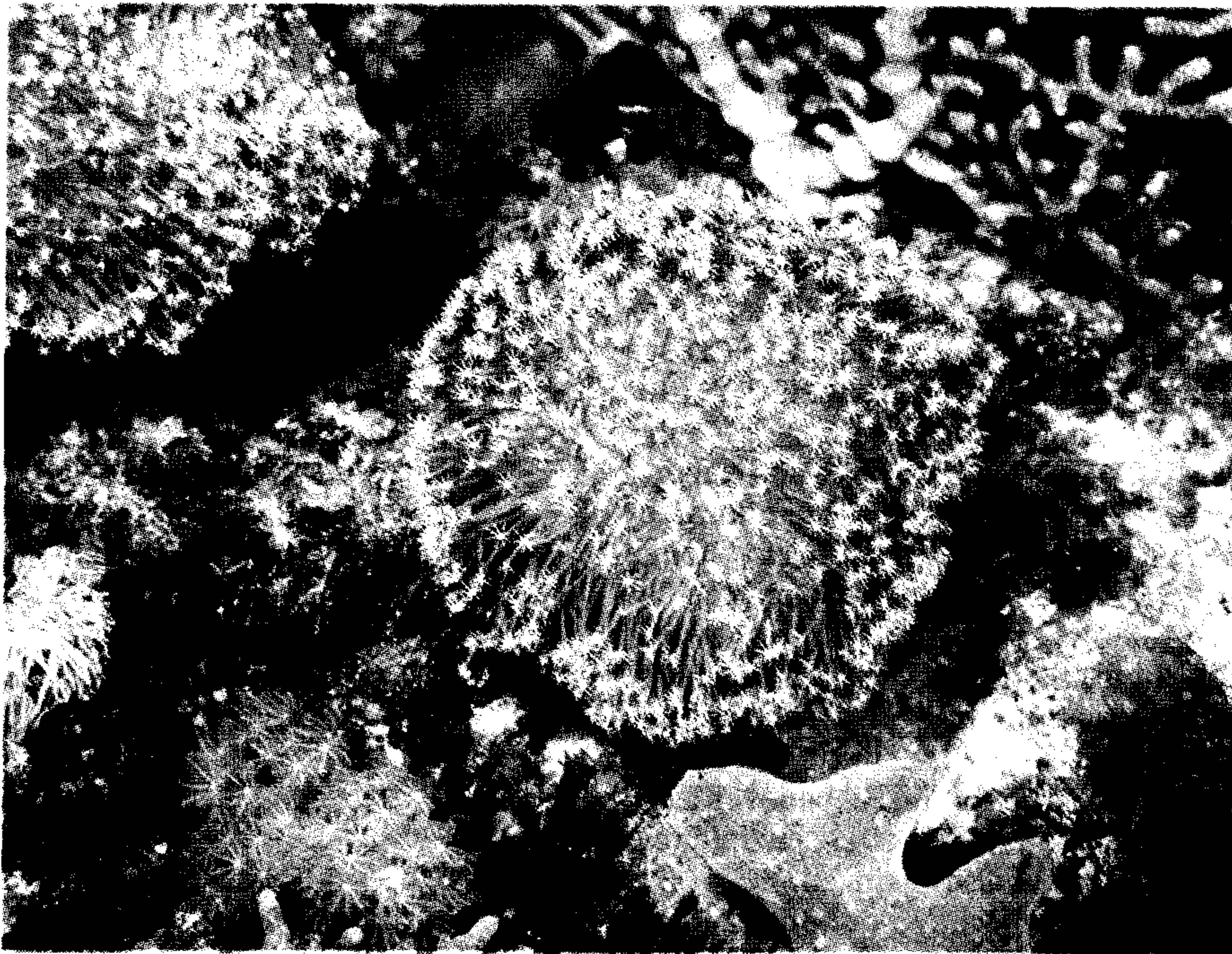
Scientists observed 100-percent coral cover in several sites, with a wide variety of colorful branching and plate corals.

"We saw terraces of corals, as far as the eyes can see. It's so exciting to know that we have such a vast and pristine coral reef ecosystem within Philippine territory," said Marianne Pan-Saniano, marine scientist for Oceana Philippines.

Benham Bank is the shallowest portion of Benham Rise, which includes an outer section recognized by the United Nations' Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf as the Philippines' newest territory in 2012. The vast seamount lies off the eastern coast of Luzon.

During the first science expedition to Benham Bank in 2014, scientists were able to cover five stations and dive for 25 minutes. Two years later, with the aid of cutting edge technology, scientists in the 2016 expedition were able to extensively study the underwater terrain of Benham Bank, covering 12 research stations and analyzing many hours of video footage daily.

On board the government research vessel MV DA-BFAR, the expedition team left for Benham Bank on May 23 and returned on



SEA LIFE - Soft coral belonging to the genus Sarcophyton / Photo by UVP/UNCW ©Oceana

May 31. Fisheries and algae experts, microbiologists, oceanographers, and ecologists from BFAR, UP Marine Science Institute, UP Los Baños School of Environmental Science and Management, and Oceana joined the trip to study the biophysical composition of Benham Bank.

Technical divers from the Philippine Navy and the Philippine Coast Guard assisted the researchers in collecting samples from Benham Bank's seabed.

The expedition team documented a vast mesophotic reef ecosystem - coral reefs found at depths of up to 150 meters. Scientists believe such deep sea reefs can serve as a potential refuge for shallow reef fishes that could be affected by climate change.

"Collectively, among the decades of experience studying the ocean that we have aboard the ship, no one has ever seen reefs like this. Benham is indeed a special place," said Margot Stiles, Oceana's director of science and strategy.

"Benham Bank holds tremendous potential for discovering more unique species and outstanding samples of marine resources. Based on the huge success of this expedition, and the inspiring collaboration among the partners, we foresee government and stakeholders working together to protect and sustainably manage this extraordinary natural heritage which is now part of our territory," said Gloria Estenzo Ramos, vice president for Oceana Philippines.

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DENR to plant 1 million seedlings in Pangasinan

DAGUPAN CITY, Pangasinan – One million seedlings of forest and fruit trees will be planted this month in Pangasinan's 1,184 hectares of forests to replace the trees that got burned due to high temperature this year, an official of Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said.

Celso Salazar, Dagupan City Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) head, said the seedlings set to be planted in forest areas of Labrador, Aguilar, Mangatarem, and Bugallon towns, will cover the forest areas in the province affected by fire from the month of January to the first two weeks of May.

He said the seedlings are from *narra*, mahogany, molave, *bakawan*, mango, acasia and *ilang-ilang*.

The CENRO official encouraged the public to join the DENR in forestry planting from June to August and help replace the trees burned and reduce the effects of climate change.

He also appealed to the public and local community to report any sightings of illegal activities and irresponsible acts to help in protecting and preserving the environment.

He cited among others the illegal cutting of forest trees as well as *bakawan* in riverside, irresponsible garbage disposal and *kaingin* farming. (Franco G. Regala)

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More greenery along traffic-congested major roads

IN RECENT days, the air quality index of Pasay City has gone from bad to worst.

So, its tourism come-on or logo, "Pasay City—A Healthy City," is misleading and quite deceiving.

The concentration of too many vehicles due to traffic congestion at the intersections of Edsa-Taft Avenue, and Gil Puyat Avenue-Taft Avenue,

with fumes emitting from very slow-moving or "trapped" vehicles remain a big problem. Not to mention the provincial bus terminals located along these major thoroughfares that clog the intersections, causing traffic and air pollution in this part of the city.

For temporary relief or remedy—that is, to lessen air pollution—the

Pasay City government should plant more trees and greenery along the center island of Gil Puyat Avenue and on the plant box underneath the LRT along Taft Avenue.

Moreover, the dirty-looking plant box should be repainted anew.

—PEDRO V. REFUERZO JR.,
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Foreign ducks migrate to Mahagnao Volcano Natural Park

Tacloban City, Leyte – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources Region-8 (DENR-8) in Eastern Visayas is closely monitoring the increasing duck population at the Mahagnao Volcano Natural Park (MVNP) in Burauen town.

DENR-8 Regional Director Leonardo Sibbaluca told reporters his men have been observing the increasing population of ducks in the park, wandering in the two lakes – Mahagnao and Malagsum.

Sibbaluca said native wild ducks are part of the bird population in the park but the increasing population of foreign ducks have been observed.

There are three species frequently sighted in the natural park which include Philippine duck, wandering-whistling duck, and mallard duck —

and most of these have migrated to the park from Indonesia and Australia

Sibbaluca said his office has stepped up the watch and protection of the more than 1,000 resident native and migratory wild ducks in the park in coordination with the local governments of the towns of Burauen, MacArthur, and La Paz,

Sibbaluca explained that the rich biodiversity in the park attracts and serves as the habitat of these wild ducks.

Leyte Governor Leopoldo Dominico L. Petilla, in a separate interview, said his office has extended its protection and the preservation of the rich biodiversity in the park.

Petilla said the increasing duck population in the park is an added attraction to the tourists, especially to bird watchers. (Restituto A. Cayubit)

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6 swim for greening of Verde Island Passage

By RHODINA VILLANUEVA

/ES SERVICE

Six Filipino athletes swam together for the protection of Verde Island Passage and highlight the need to conserve Philippine coral reefs, the World Wide Fund for Nature announced ahead of World Environment Day last weekend.

WWF "Hero of the Environment" Ingemar Macarine, Frank Lacson, Betsy Medalla, Julian Valencia, Moi Yamoyam and Miguel Villanueva swam an open-water marathon last May 29 for "Reef Strokes," an event to celebrate Coral Triangle Day.

Verde Island Passage, dubbed as the center of marine biodiversity, is now being affected by climate change and pollution, and also faces a huge threat from mining companies.

"As a swimmer who regularly swims in open water, I am disheartened each time I encounter floating garbage. We swim to remind everyone that we need to act now to protect our marine resources," said Macarine, a lawyer who was named environment hero by WWF-Philippines for his efforts in raising marine conservation awareness.

Macarine is also known as the Pinoy Aquaman who swam 20 kilometers in eight hours. He will be the first Filipino to cross the English Channel in August.

"Open-water swimmers are natural stewards of the sea, it's important for us to inspire more people to swim and protect the beautiful Philippine seas," added coach Medalla, the first to finish the 10-kilometer swim.

Medalla and Valencia are the first Filipinos to swim the Robben Island Channel in Cape Town, South Africa.

On the other hand, Lacson is known as The Legend, regarded as the pioneer and

Father of Triathlon in the Philippines.

Yamoyam is a former member of the Philippine National Triathlon team and has had a number of podium finishes as a triathlete while Villanueva is an open-water swim podium finisher. It is his first time to swim a marathon distance for swimming.

Since 2007, WWF-Philippines has assisted Hamilo Coast, Pico de Loro Beach & Country Club, and Pico Sands Hotel in various environmental programs such as coastal resource management, renewable energy use, solid-waste management and ridge-to-reef conservation.

Hamilo Coast Sustainability head Wesley Caballa said, "Hamilo Coast is located right at the apex of the Verde Island Passage, which boasts of an incredible array of marine species. As an organization with sustainability at the forefront of its operations, we ensure that we take good care of the environment from ridge to reef. Through the help of WWF, several sustainability programs have been incorporated in our development."

The benefits have since cascaded to locals.

Meanwhile, WWF-Philippines president & CEO Joel Palma said, "Coral reefs give millions of people food and livelihood. However, they are threatened by plastic waste, which smothers delicate corals. Climate change effects such as global warming also lead to coral bleaching, turning once-productive reefs into graveyards coated by algae. Reef Strokes shows how our collective 'strokes' will take us to the finish line, which is a world where productive oceans continue to gift Filipinos with food, jobs – even the very air we breathe."



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Palace releases e-book on West Phl Sea history

The Palace communications group has decided to put up in the government portal a historical atlas that will show Filipinos the real story about the country's ownership of the West Philippine Sea.

"This year, we publish the Historical Atlas of the Republic, the first of its kind: charting the historical, political and economic developments of the Philippines from prehistoric times to the present,"

it said, noting that one can "visualize" the country's history through the electronic book.

"This book is available in an e-book format and is downloadable for free through this URL: <https://archive.org/details/historical-atlas-of-the-republic>," the Presidential Communications Development and Strategic Planning Office stated further.

PCDSPO is headed by Palace Undersecretary Manuel Quezon III.

The agency said the online atlas is in line with their mandate to "preserve and curate the institutional memory" of the Office of the President, and thus

By DELON PORCALLA

it has "stood at the forefront of promoting interest and curiosity about the story of the Filipino people."

"The Historical Atlas covers landmarks in Philippine history from the first inhabitants of the archipelago, to the subsequent Spanish colonization of the islands, toward the establishment of an independent Philippine Republic, followed by the dictatorial regime and the restoration of Philippine democracy," an additional post from *gov.ph* read.

"It is useful for summarizing, visualizing and contextualizing Philippine history through a collection of 44 concise, meticulously researched political, demographic, maritime, military and migration maps," it said.

"For more related resources, visit the Presidential Museum and Library and Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines websites. Our social media accounts – Facebook and Tumblr – will likewise be promoting the book and its content," it added.

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MGB asked to name violators of environmental rules

By Ronnel W. Domingo

DETAILS of cases involving mining companies that are allegedly frequently violating rules on environmental should be made public to help bring them to a resolution, according to the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP).

COMP was reacting to a Reuters report that quoted Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) Director Leo L. Jasareno as saying that half of 44 metal miners "frequently violate environmental rules."

When reached for comment, COMP executive vice president Nelia C. Halcon told the INQUIRER she could not talk about this unless details were given.

"I don't want to sound negative with MGB, but the 22 mines the director was talking about should be listed down, violations should be specified as well as their severity, frequency and what MGB did [about their violations]," Halcon said.

"Were the mines ordered closed?" she said. "We are talking about efficiency in regulating and in doing their [MGB's] job."

As far as COMP members—the country's biggest mine operators—were concerned, Halcon said they were following environmental protection measures.

"A number of them have been given awards by the Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association (PMSEA)," she said.

The COMP has reiterated its support for President-elect Rodrigo Duterte in addressing concerns related to the mining industry.

Duterte over the weekend warned big mining companies to stop destroying the environment or else local investors would take over their concessions.

"Working hand in hand with the new

administration will be easy because we know what our responsibilities are and we conduct our business in a transparent manner," Halcon said.

"We pay our taxes promptly and we are part of the Philippine Extractive Transparency Initiative that has reported a 99-percent compliance by participating members in tax payments to government in 2013 as reconciled by an independent validator," she added.

In a statement, the environmentalist group Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (Kalikasan PNE) lauded Duterte's pronouncements to punish destructive big miners.

"We encourage him to expand his scope to cover not only the

worst in Mindanao, but also across Luzon and Visayas as well," said Clemente Bautista, national coordinator of Kalikasan PNE.

"There are so much violations and destruction brought about by corporate mining all over the country yet the Aquino administration had been very lax in penalizing these corporations and prosecuting their erring officials," Bautista said.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Mining as engine of economic growth



Val A. Villanueva

BUSINESSWISE

NO sooner had President-elect Rodrigo R. Duterte stated that irresponsible mining must go that the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) declared its full support to rid the country of reckless miners.

Citing mainly his dismay at "big mining companies," which he said are "spoiling the land and destroying Mindanao," Duterte warned that they had to shape up or face expulsion. He, however, clarified he was not against mining per se, and was for responsible mining that advocates the most rigorous of environmental criteria.

He got full backing from the COMP, which has also been advocating for a "full stop against illegal and irresponsible mining in the country, which poses a threat to the community and the environment."

"This has always been COMP's position, as we continue to find ways to strengthen our programs in social development and management to include indigenous peoples [IPs] and environmental enhancement," the chamber said in a statement.

"We commit to work hand in hand with the incoming administration to help address concerns in our industry so that we may promote true inclusive growth around the country," it added.

The country has the world's second-largest gold reserves. The queue of foreign investors who wish to tap its vast mineral reserves is getting longer, with each one eager to extract gold and other precious metals that lie beneath the ground. At the moment, mining contributes a minuscule percentage to the Philippine economy. Access to the \$1.4-trillion mining sector, which is rich also in copper and nickel, has been elusive, mired since the 1980s in irrelevant local laws, environmental battles and land-rights issues.

For several years now, environmentalists, politicians and media have made it trendy to oppose all forms of mining. Ironically, mining exists because people consume products that are made from by-products of mining. Mining is literally the bedrock of civilization. That the industry's critical future impacts on mankind's quality of life shouldn't be debated at all.

Almost everything that people use—house-

a more efficient and sustainable future for both the industry and the country.

Mining has gone a long way toward this end. In many parts of the world, the mining industry has proven to be a partner of communities in environmental protection and social development. Some call it sustainable mining in which, among other things, the mining company is tasked to redevelop the area and ensure that communities thrive long after the company has extracted the minerals it needs. According to a study made by the Mining Association of British Columbia, "Mining represents the highest value use to which a hectare of land can be utilized."

Antimining groups are forcing their own agenda down the throats of IPs who have been wanting of progress and development to alleviate their sorry plight. For this, I blame the government's lack of political will to enforce the law. How can a provincial ordinance banning mining be superior to the Republic Act that allows responsible mining? In Mindoro there is a moratorium on mining, but not illegal logging, the *kaingin* system (or the slash-and-burn agricultural technique) and negligent solid-waste disposal. In January of this year, for instance, the DENR intercepted a truck full of illegal logs.

Antimining groups just can't accept the cold fact that the world can't do without mining, and that responsible mining is the main driver of economic growth in most developed nations. All the conveniences that we enjoy today are all because of how we have harnessed minerals extracted from the soil: when you ride a bike (iron and aluminum); when you brush your teeth (limestone and fluorite); when you use a computer (gold and some other 34 metals); when you build a house (cement, gypsum, iron); when you cook a meal (iron, aluminum, nickel and steel); when you go rollerblading

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Page 2: Mining as engine of economic growth

hold appliances, computers, farm implements, transport vehicles, mobile phones, beauty and hygiene items, medicines, fertilizers, etc.—is a mineral product or relies upon minerals and metals for production and distribution. In order to maintain the lifestyle and security that a modern society enjoys, the mining industry must continue on a course of healthy production and exploration into the future.

In the Philippines the mining industry has been rocked by strong negative criticisms in recent years. Unwanted fears, real or perceived, have created for the industry an image of an environmental despoiler. Forgotten is the fact that mining has been, is and will continue to be a significant contributor to the country's economic growth. But because mining companies have such a huge impact on local economies, they feel an even larger responsibility to help sustain a high quality of life in their host communities. Modern mining that is conducted responsibly will undoubtedly provide

(limestone); when you wear makeup (mica); when you ride a car (iron, aluminum, chrome, molybdenum, copper and many others); when you set the table (silver, nickel, steel); when you play golf (tungsten, aluminum); when you plug in for power (coal and copper), or charge your mobile phone (nickel, cobalt and lithium); when you get a chest x-ray (uranium), or when a priest drinks wine from the chalice (bronze, copper, silver). While I have yet to see a priest scoop up wine with his hands during Holy Mass, some members of the clergy who claim to be environmentally concerned have been vociferous in their opposition of mining.

Anti-mining groups and individuals who want all mining activities to cease must first stop using all the by-products of mining and the benefits it provides. That is the only time they will make sense.

For comments and suggestions, e-mail me at mvala.v@gmail.com.

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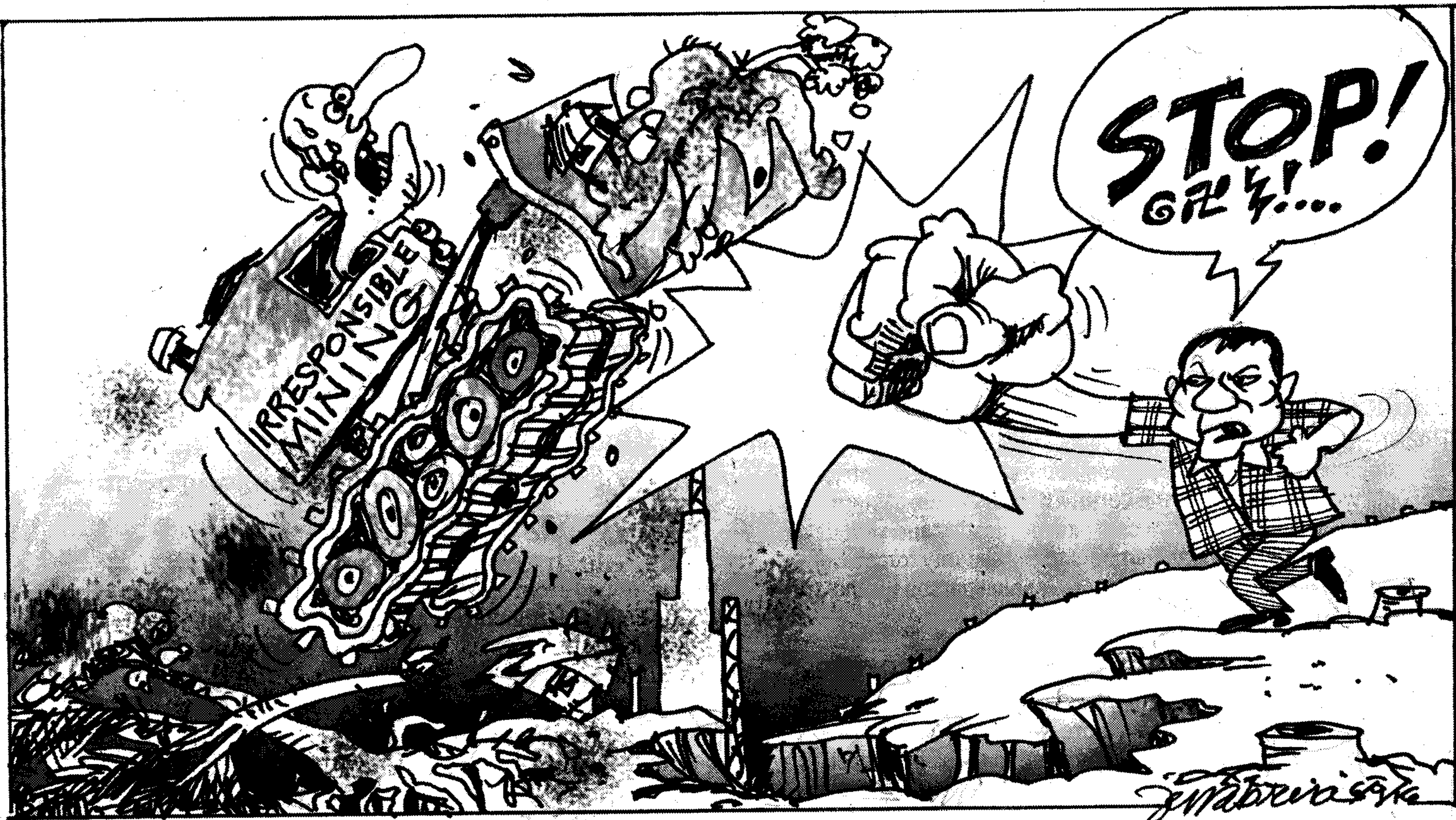
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AT IBA PA

Duterte vs destructive mining lauded

ENVIRONMENTAL activist group Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (Kalikasan PNE) lauded incoming president-elect Rodrigo Duterte's recent pronouncements to punish destructive big miners. "We welcome Mayor Duterte's ultimatum against destructive large-scale mining and encourage him to expand his scope to cover not only the worst in Mindanao, but across Luzon and Visayas as well," said Clemente Bautista, national coordinator of Kalikasan PNE.

"Incoming President Duterte will make history if he demonstrates that these much-reviled big polluters and pillagers no longer have a place in the Philippines. He has the legal and moral authority to shut down violators' large-scale mining operations and kick them out of the

country," he added.

End social injustice by protecting poor from climate change - CCC

THE Climate Change Commission (CCC) on Wednesday reminded local government units (LGUs) that their failure to come up with measures to reduce disaster risks is tantamount to social injustice, because it deprives the poorest and most vulnerable sectors the much-needed protection against the adverse effects of climate change.

"Non-action on climate and disaster risks is a social sin, an injustice to the poor and most vulnerable," CCC vice chair Secretary Emmanuel de Guzman told local executives who attended the two-day Communities for Resilience or CORE Convergence Forum in Cagayan de Oro City.

The forum brought together LGUs around the Bauayan-Malungon, Cagayan de Oro, Davao and

Tagoloan River Basins, with the aim of increasing the capacities of local communities on reducing disaster risk and adapting to climate change.

De Guzman pointed out the sad reality that sectors mired in poverty, such as farmers, fisherfolk and informal settler families living in danger areas, have a higher chance of experiencing the ill effects of climate change due to increased exposure and vulnerability.

He said poor people often live, farm or hold assets in areas more exposed to droughts and floods, which put their homes, crops, livestock and even their own lives at greater risk.

They also have limited safety nets or insurance mechanisms to help them cope with climate change-related shocks like failed harvests linked to changing weather patterns and loss or damage linked to weather extremes, he added.

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BIG MINING FIRMS LAGOT KAY DIGONG

ISA sa mga pinapaboran nating pronouncement ni Incoming President Rodrigo "Digong" Duterte ang kanyang pagtutol sa operasyon ng mga abusadong big mining firms na labis nang nakapipinsala sa kapaligiran at tila ayaw nang tantanan ang likas na yaman ng ating bansa.

Sa ibang bansa kasi, mayroong limitasyon ang operasyon ng isang mining company.

Hindi puwedeng lifetime.

Kung lifetime nga naman ang operasyon ng mining company 'e parang nabili na nila ang likas na yaman ng bansa.

Kahit na sabihin pa nilang nagbabayad sila ng kung ano-anong klase ng 'taxes' hindi rason 'yun para salaulain habambuhay ang kalikasan at likas na yaman ng bansa.

Sa kanyang thanksgiving party sa Davao pinuntirya ni Mayor Digong ang malalaking kompanya ng minahan partikular sa Surigao del Norte. Minsan na rin tayong napunta sa lugar na 'yan at marami tayong katutubo na nakausap at ang hinaing nila ang pang-aabuso ng mga minahan sa kanilang lugar na wala naman silang nakukuhang benepisyo.

Isa pa ang talamak na black-sand mining ng mga dayuhang Intsik sa iba't ibang lugar sa ating bansa.

'Yan din daw ang rason kung bakit hindi niya ibinigay ang posisyon bilang kalihim ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) kay Leoncio Evasco, na kanyang national campaign manager.

Aniya, si Evasco ay dating political detainee noong siya ay naging city administrator.

Imbes si Evasco, mas gusto ni Duterte na ibigay ang posisyon sa isang militar.

Expected na ng incoming president na magrerehistro ng 'resistance' ang mining firms sa militar na kanyang itatalaga bilang DENR secretary.

Pero mukhang pirms ang desisyon ng bagong Pangulo.

At kung hindi siya magluluwag sa desisyong ito, 'yan ay mala-

king hakbang tungo sa isang tunay na pagbabago.

Suportahan ta ka diyan, Mr. President!

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Editorial

*Babala sa
iresponsableng
mining companies*

MARAMING iresponsableng mining companies. Hinuhukay at binubutas ang mga bundok nang walang pakundangan. Walang pakialam kung mawasak man ang mga bundok. Ang mahalaga sa mining companies, makuha sa puso ng bundok ang inaasam nilang mina na magpapayaman sa kanila. Hayaan nang umagos ang putik na nagmula sa bundok at sagasaan ang mga bahay na nasa paanan nito.

Sa isang picture na kuha noong 2012 sa mga kabundukan sa Compostela Valley at ilang bahagi ng Davao Oriental, nakapanghihilakbot ang makikita sapagkat butas-butas na ang mga bundok sa mga nasabing lugar. Masahol pa sa sungkaan ang tuktok ng mga bundok.

Nang manalasa ang bagyong Pablo noong 2012,

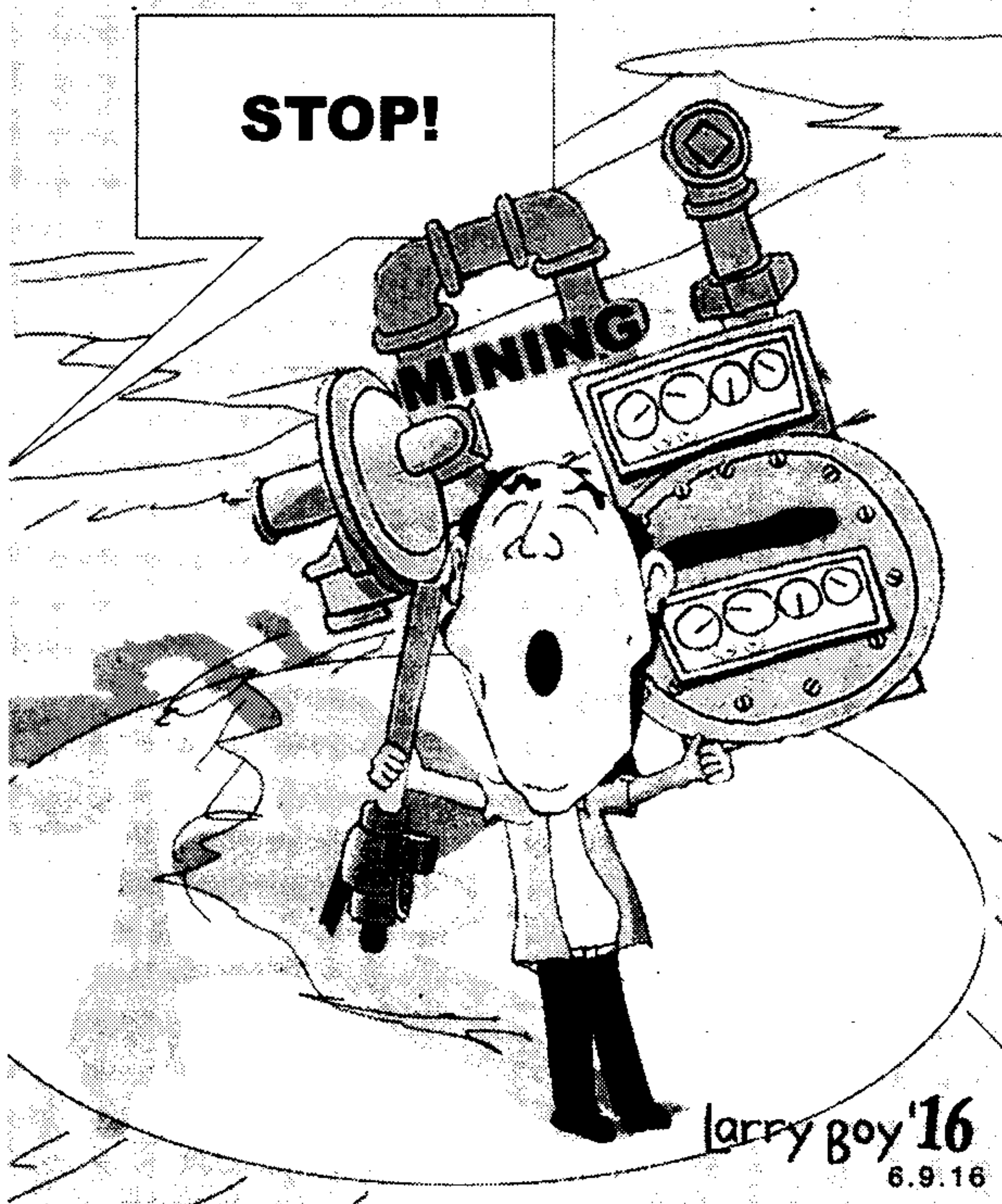
bumigay ang bundok na maraming hukay. Napuno ng tubig ang mga butas at iyon ang naging dahilan para magkaroon ng landslides. Tinangay ng putik ang mga bahay kasama ang mga troso. Nasa 314 katao ang natagpuang patay. Ang pagmimina ang dahilan.

Halos ganito rin ang nangyari sa St. Bernard, Southern Leyte noong Feb. 17, 2006, kung saan naguho ang bundok at tinakpan ang isang barangay. Isang school na may mga bata at guro ang nalibing nang buhay. Ang pagmimina rin ang itinuturong dahilan nang pagkawasak ng bundok. Bumigay ang lupa dahil sa sobrang pagkabutas na ginawa ng mining companies. Lumambot ang lupa at bumulwak ang putik

Sino ang makalilimot sa ginawa ng Marcopper Mining Company sa Marinduque noong Marso 24, 1996. Nasira ang kapaligiran at kalikasan doon. Ang dating buhay na buhay na Boac River ay nalason at namatay dahil sa tailings. Ilan sa mga tao ang nagkasakit sa balat.

Nalalaman nang papasok na bagong administrasyon ang lawak ng pinsala sa kapaligiran at kalikasan nang ginagawang pagmimina sa maraming bahagi ng bansa. Binalaan ni President-elect Rody Duterte ang mining companies na huwag sirain ang kalikasan. Magbago na aniya ang mga kompanyang ito bago pa siya gumawa ng hakbang. Hindi raw niya hahayaang masira ang kapaligiran.

Sana, matutukan ang problemang ito. Itigil na ang iresponsableng pagmimina.



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MARINE TREE PARK CLEANUP – In line with the observance of Month of the Ocean (MOO) 2016, the DENR-NCR facilitated a cleanup activity at Brgy. Tanza Marine Tree Park, Sitio Pulo, Navotas City on May 27, 2016. Participants came from different groups and agencies including volunteers from Barangay Tanza and Navotas City Hall, representatives from the Philippine National Police-Maritime Group, Philippine Coast Guard and students from the Polytechnic University of the Philippines Manila. A total of 142 sacks of garbage were collected in the cleanup drive. The MOO is celebrated annually in the Philippines during the month of May by virtue of Presidential Proclamation 57 issued in 1999. This year marks the 17th year of celebration and the focus is the vital role of the marine environment to food security, with the theme: "Biodiversity for Food SeaCURElty."

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Gov't urged to step up drive versus illegal wildlife trade

By **FREDDIE G. LAZARO**

LAOAG CITY, Ilocos Norte – Senator Loren Legarda has sought the national government to step up its drive against rampant wildlife smuggling in the country.

Legarda, who made the call in connection with the observance of World Environment Day on June 5, is supporting the United Nations' call to fight illegal trade in wildlife, which threatens endemic Philippine species and could lead to biodiversity loss.

The focal theme for World Environment Day 2016 is "Go Wild For Life: Zero Tolerance for the Illegal Wildlife Trade" which, according to the UN, erodes Earth's precious biodiversity,

robbing humans of natural heritage and driving species to the brink of extinction.

Legarda expressed alarm over reports that some areas in southern Philippines are still being used as entry or transshipment points for illegal trade of wildlife species such as exotic birds, cats, seahorses, tortoises, and marine turtles.

According to the Philippine Center for Terrestrial and Aquatic Research (PCTAR), the multibillion-dollar black market continues to flourish globally, with the Philippines serving as a major player particularly in the trade of amphibians and reptiles.

The Philippine forest turtle endemic to Palawan is listed as "critically endangered" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. In June, 2015,

at least 3,900 of these freshwater turtles were recovered from a warehouse in Bataraza town in Palawan, the biggest haul of wildlife in recent years.

Legarda also said that addressing climate change is very important in preserving wildlife species, noting that 30% of species would be at risk of extinction due to the warming climate.

"The Philippines is a mega diverse country, but it is also one of the world's top biodiversity hotspots, with a large number of species either endangered or threatened of extinction. There needs to be stronger convergence among government agencies and local government units and collaboration with the private sector, civil society, and citizens to protect our wildlife species," Legarda said.

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EcoWaste warns vs school garments with zippers containing lead

By MELNIE RAGASA-JIMENA

A TOXIC watchdog yesterday warned the public against the purchase of lead-containing school garments after it uncovered the presence of chemical-containing zippers with colored pull tabs and sliders in low-cost school supplies.

EcoWaste Coalition screened 30 items of green, red, orange and yellow zippers costing between P2 and P20 each sold in retail stores in Divisoria, Manila, and found that four zippers contained high concentration of lead above the regulatory limit of 90 parts per million (ppm).

Equipped with a handheld X-ray fluorescence device, the Quezon City-based group detected high-lead concentration in a yellow "Win" zipper (45,100 ppm lead). A green "Sumo" zipper had 36,900 ppm, an orange "ETC" zipper had 24,500 ppm and a green "Three Star" zipper had 11,600 ppm.

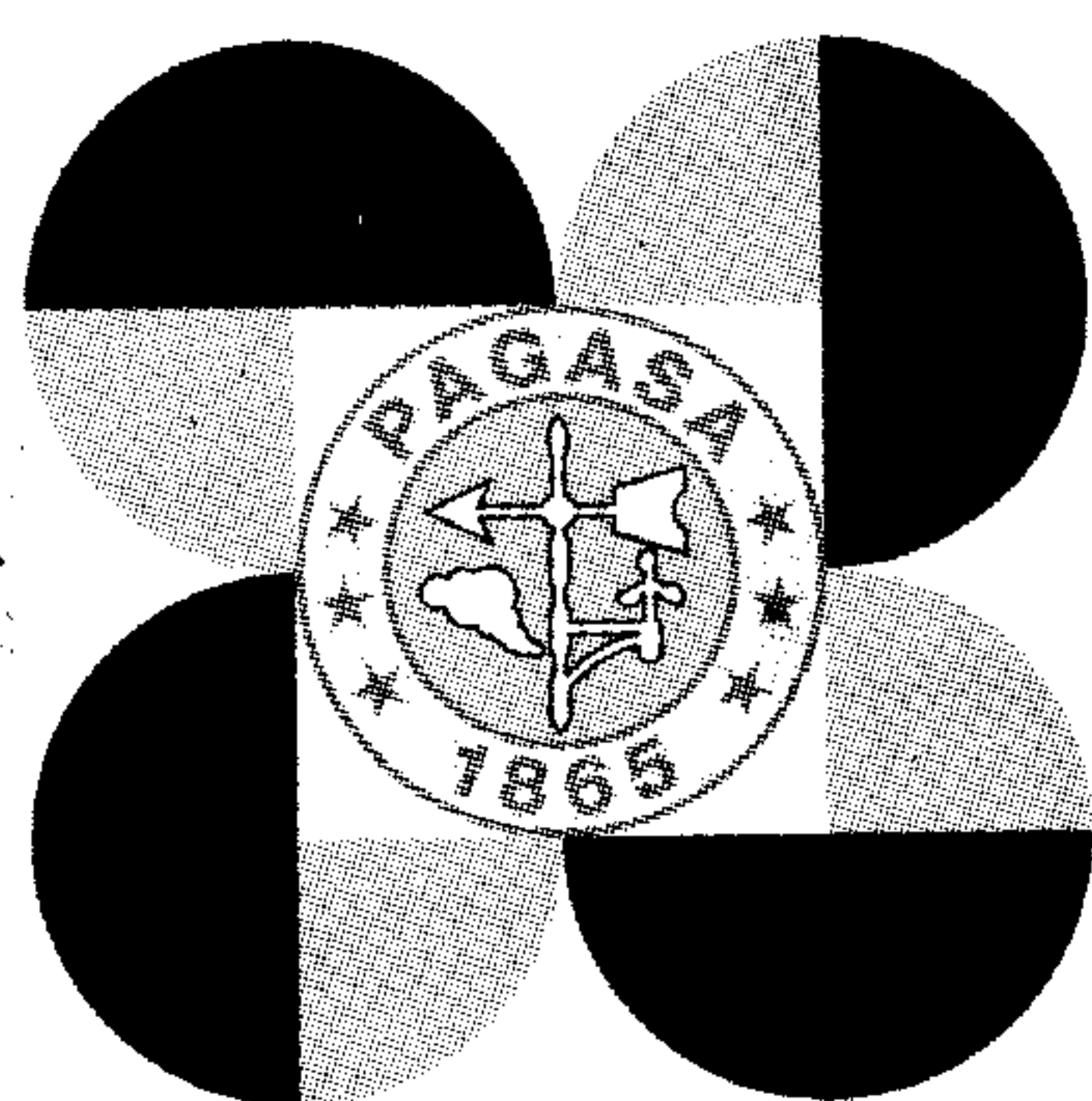
No lead was detected on market leader "YKK" zippers, as well as "Fuji," "FZ," "MG," "MJT" and several generic zippers.

"This is not the first time that we detected elevated levels of lead on colored zippers used to fasten bags and clothes," noted Thony Dizon, coordinator of the EcoWaste Coalition's Project Protect.

With Jun Icbán Legaspi

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Pagasa: La Niña to affect Zambo City



ZAMBOANGA CITY—The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) has issued a La Niña watch, as the country's dry spell winds to a close.

The latest Pagasa advisory stated that El Niño is weakening and "in its decaying stage," and the development of La Niña within the second half of 2016.

"With this current development, La Niña Watch is now in effect," the Pagasa advisory stated.

Maribel Enriquez, chief meteorological officer of the Pagasa-Zamboanga station, said the incoming La Niña spell bodes for stronger rains and more floods in this city, where heavy rainfalls are expected to come in July.

Enriquez said the western part of the country, including this city, will be affected by La Niña because of the southwest monsoon that is set to be experienced from June to October this year.

"Kapag southwest monsoon season, ine-enhance ng mga bagyo na papasok ang southwest monsoon, kaya magkakaroon ng flooding sa

Zamboanga City," Enriquez said.

She said heavy rainfall and flooding are expected to occur during peak rainy season from August to October. At least seven to 12 typhoons are also expected to develop and enter the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) from May to October 2016.

Enriquez also reported that this city is no longer under a dry spell or drought status as of June this year.

Mayor Ma. Isabelle Climaco-Salazar has ordered the City Engineer's Office to undertake de-clogging of drainage and dredging of rivers aimed to prevent flooding and other disasters in the light of the forecasted La Niña.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources has identified eight of this city's 98 barangays as prone to landslides, while 55 barangays as flood-prone areas. **PNA**



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Government ready for La Niña

The government expressed readiness for the effects of La Niña phenomenon as it assured the public that improved systems were in place to deal with disasters usually brought by the rainy season, Malacañang said Tuesday.

Presidential Communications Operations Office Secretary Herminio Coloma Jr. said over dzRB all agencies were prepared with the measures to

combat La Niña but the bigger picture was that the Aquino administration had managed to reduce the risks posed by disasters and climate change in general.

Coloma said that Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation was one of the basic and highest priorities under the Philippine Development Plan.

As for La Niña, Coloma said the government had prepared comprehensive measures for various scenarios especially since the phenomenon might cause heavier rains and more massive floods.

The comprehensive plan or strategy includes agriculture, flood control and disaster risk reduction measures at the

grassroots level, Coloma said.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) has warned the public of the possibility of a La Niña event occurring later this year, after El Niño ends.

La Niña, the opposite of El Niño, is characterized by above normal rainfall, strong

monsoon activity, and the formation of more tropical cyclones.

According to PAGASA, a strong El Niño is usually followed by an equally strong La Niña. Although El Niño is waning, PAGASA said it would continue to cause below normal rainfall and warmer air temperatures in the country in the next several months.

— Aurea Calica

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La Niña parating na

DAPAT umanong maging handa ang mga mamamayan sa paparating na La Niña sa bansa.

Ito ang payo ni Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines-Episcopal Commission on Healthcare executive secretary Father Dan Cancino sa publiko bunsod na rin ng unti-unting nararamdamang pagsapit ng panahon ng tag-ulan sa bansa at posibleng pananalasa ng La Niña.

Ayon kay Cancino, dapat na pag-aralan ng publiko ang nagaganap na pagbabago sa klima ng mundo at paghandaan ang epekto nito upang makaiwas sa kapahamakan.

Aniya, kinakailangan ding maging mapagmatyag ang bawat isa sa mga kaganapan at panukalang dapat sundin ngayong tag-ulan.

Sinabi ng pari na hindi dapat na ipagwalambahala ng samayanang Filipino ang pagsapit ng La Niña at panahon ng tag-ulan dahil na rin sa banta ng dengue, leptospirosis, ubo at si-pon at iba pang mga kalamidad.

"Ngayon ay paparating naman ang ulan, paparating na 'yung lamig, dapat tayong ma-

ging mas mapagmatyag, magbasa kung ano 'yung mga dapat gawin, manood ng weather changes, kung naghanda tayo noong El Niño, dapat ngayong La Niña ay naghahanda rin tayo lalong-lalo na sa health part," aniya pa.

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TUTOK SA LA NIÑA

NAKATUTOK na ang lahat ng mga kinaukulang ahensya sa paghahanda at paghaharap sa banta ng senaryong La Niña.

Ito, ayon kay Press Secretary Sonny Coloma, Jr., ay bahagi ng koordinasyon at mga paghahanda ng concerned agencies para sa papasok na tag-ulan at La Niña sa bansa.

Kabaligtaran aniya ito ng El Niño na kung saan dumanas ang bansa simula noong Agosto 2015 ng tagtuyot.

Ang La Niña phenomenon naman ay tuloy-tuloy na pag-ulan at inaasahang malalaking baha ang magiging kasunod ng malakas na pag-ulan.

MACS BORJA
at **KRIS JOSE**

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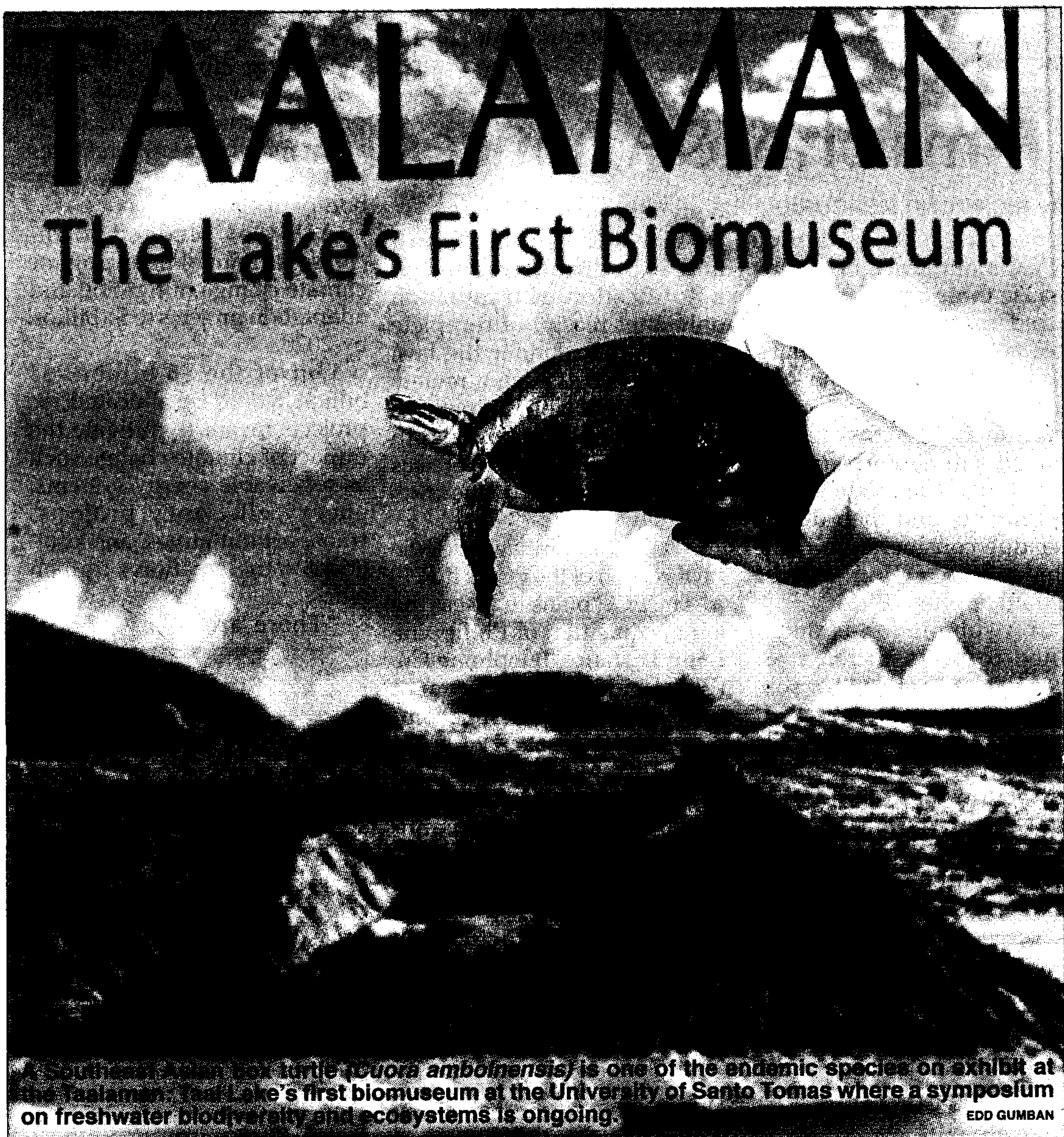
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PAINTINGS FOR A CAUSE – Visitors look at masterpieces by members of the Artists Guild in La Union (AGLAUN) who are holding an exhibit-for-a-cause to support the celebration of Environment Month at CSI Mall in San Fernando City, La Union on June 5, 2016. AGLAUN President Rene Niro said the event is being held to educate kids as part of the observance of World Environment Month in exposing masterpieces of some paintings, sketches and education. “The paints are also being sold to benefit select indigent kids to learn painting and drawings,” said Niro. Subjects of the paintings include tigers and butterflies, flowers as well as waterfalls. (Erwin G. Beleo)



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Less plastic to protect oceans – Loren

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ
and MARVIN SY

In celebration of World Oceans Day Wednesday, Sen. Loren Legarda called on the international community to unite and reverse the damage to the world's marine habitat brought by human activity.

"We have relied so much on the oceans for our existence – for food, for employment, for energy and for recreation. However, rapid population growth along with unsustainable marine practices such as overfishing, waste dumping, oil spills, among others, have seriously damaged marine habitats and life in the sea over the years," Legarda said.

According to Legarda, this year's World Oceans Day calls for the prevention of plastic pollution in the ocean and promotes the use of reusable bags over disposable plastic bags.

"Plastic can choke and poison marine species and damage marine ecosystems. Ultimately, it can affect us humans through the seafood that we eat. Thus, we must take this challenge seriously. The effective implementation of the Ecological Solid Waste

Management Law is vital in this campaign," said Legarda, principal author of the ESWM Law or Republic Act 9003.

Earlier, Legarda called for an end to the illegal wildlife trade in the country in time for World Environment Day last Sunday.

Legarda expressed alarm that reports of the illegal trade of wildlife in the country, particularly in the southern Philippines, which is being used as entry or transshipment point by the unscrupulous traders.

In a statement, Legarda aired her support to the United Nations' call to fight illegal trade in wildlife, which she said threatens endemic Philippine species and could lead to biodiversity loss.

The focal theme for World Environment Day 2016 was "Go Wild For Life: Zero Tolerance for the Illegal Wildlife Trade," which, according to the UN, erodes Earth's precious biodiversity, robbing us of our natural heritage and driving species to the brink of extinction.

Among the popular wildlife species sought after by smugglers are exotic birds, cats, seahorses, tortoises and marine turtles.

According to the Philippine Center for Terrestrial and Aquatic Research, the multibillion-dollar black market continues to flourish globally, with the Philippines becoming a major player particularly in the trade of amphibians and reptiles.

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Thanksgiving bash leaves 16 tons of trash in Crocodile Park

By YAS D. OCAMPO

DAVAO CITY – The City Environment and Natural Resources Office (ENRO) here is rethinking its protocols on the collection of trash at events such as last weekend's "One Love, One Nation" thanksgiving event at the Crocodile Park.

This, after the ENRO learned that as much as 16 tons of garbage were hauled from the site which was attended by an 500,000 from as early as 6 a.m. Saturday to 1 a.m. the following day.

Voluntary garbage drops were actually placed at strategic areas of the park but heavy downpour after the speech of President-elect Rodrigo R. Duterte had attendees, volunteers and law enforcers seeking for cover while leaving the trash behind.

ENRO chief Elisa Madrazo said that her office deployed at least 60 street sweepers from the department's army of city cleaners and around 80 trash bins.

Madrazo said that the organizers asked for the agency's presence from the start of the event.

"But let's see how we can work on

events like that next time," she said.

The service personnel from the ENRO are usually in the frontlines of such events like the annual Araw ng Dabaw in March and the Kadayawan Festival in August, in a bid to keep streets clean despite the volume of people who come to these events.

On ordinary days, the city's solid waste management ordinance is also among the strongest legislations enforced by a local government such as Davao City.

Garbage is only collected from homes 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. with homeowners obliged not to throw trash before this period.

The city's solid waste management ordinance also requires homeowners and establishments to throw only residual trash, with organic trash left at home for composting.

Fines range from ₱300, including a seminar held at the ENRO's office at the People's Park, to ₱1,000 and 10 days of community services.

Repeat offenders of up to the fourth time are fined ₱5,000 or six months imprisonment.

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SEC finds green energy firm trading shares illegally

BAGUIO CITY—A renewable energy firm based here has been stripped of its corporate license after the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) ruled that it was illegally selling securities to finance its biofuel manufacturing project.

In a notification sent to the city government, the SEC said Philbio Renewable Energy Resources Corp. (Philbio) had misrepresented itself when it invited people to buy company shares valued at P250,000 to P500,000 for a 180-percent daily return on investments once it starts operating a biodiesel processing plant to be put up in Sablan town in Benguet province.

Not licensed

In a ruling it issued on April 27, the SEC said that Philbio was not licensed to offer nor sell securities. The firm was given time to apply for a secondary license to sell securities following a complaint filed in 2009. But Philbio had not complied, according to the ruling that was posted on the SEC website.

Personnel from SEC's enforcement and prosecution department and its Baguio extension office posed as interested investors twice to monitor and gather evidence on Philbio's unlicensed transactions.

Philbio had been securing investments through two web portals, the SEC said.

Nonpolluting

The shift to green energy has been given a boost by a recent statement made by President Aquino supporting the increased use of nonpolluting sources of electricity over power sources running on fossil fuels.

Mr. Aquino's statement came months after he represented the Philippines at the climate change summit in Paris during which many countries gave commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by unprecedented levels. *Inquirer Northern Luzon*

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GOING GREEN: Businesswoman Gladys de Vera and members of the Baguio City Council wave to pedestrians as a solar-powered bus cruises along Harrison Road during a demonstration yesterday. The 20-passenger bus, which has a maximum speed of 35 kilometers per hour, is being offered to the city as an alternate vehicle to reduce smoke emission.

ANDY ZAPATA JR.