

*STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE*

DATE : 17 JUN 2016

DAY : Friday

# **DENR**

## **IN THE NEWS**

# PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### 'Hot' logs find cool use as school chairs

SAN PEDRO CITY—Students of a newly opened public school in Batangas province attended classes this week using chairs made from trees felled by illegal loggers in Southern Tagalog.

San Juan Senior High School (SJSHS) in the coastal town of San Juan in Batangas received 358 chairs from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Calabarzon

(Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) region.

These were made out of 15,000 board feet of illegally cut lumber that the government seized through various operations in the provinces of Laguna and Quezon.

Under Executive Order No. 23 issued in 2011, public schools are priority recipients of lumber and other products that the government seize from illegal logging operations.

In a telephone interview on Thursday, Eleazar Alaira, Laguna environment officer, said the chairs donated to SJSHS in Barangay Lipahan were made from lauan and batino wood and taken from the DENR's stockpile of products that were abandoned or were no longer needed as evidence in court cases.

The DENR in Laguna had seized logs and lumber worth P4.6 million from 2011 to 2015, records showed. Most of these came from Real and Pagbilao towns in Quezon and were abandoned or intercepted by authorities in Laguna.

Alaira said Laguna remains a transshipment point of illegal loggers to Metro Manila.

Noel Pasco, San Juan environmental officer, said each armchair costs P700.

Without the new chairs, said school principal Zenaida delos Santos, "we might need to borrow (plastic) chairs or our students would stand up in class."

*Maricar Cinco, Inquirer Southern Luzon*



**A STUDENT carries an armchair, made of illegal logs, on the first day of school at San Juan Senior High School in Batangas.**

GAUDENCIO DELA CRUZ/CONTRIBUTOR



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# The Standard

DEFINING THE NEWS

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**



**Mechanized nursery.** Environment and Natural Resources Undersecretary Jonas Leones and University of the Philippines president Alfredo Pascual (right and 2nd from right, respectively) lead the groundbreaking rites for the construction of a mechanized seedling nursery on a three-hectare land provided by the UP Los Baños in Laguna. The facility is designed to produce at least 15 million high-quality tree seedlings annually for the National Greening Program. With them are (from left) DENR-Region 4A Director Reynulfo Juan, UPLB Chancellor Fernando Sanchez, Jr. UPLB-CFNR Dean Willie Abasolo and Asean Center for Biodiversity Executive Director Roberto Oliva.



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## New nursery in Laguna to boost NGP

By ELLALYN B. DE VERA

**A** P27.5-million state-of-the-art forest nursery with the capacity to produce up to 30 million tree seedlings a year to be used in the expanded National Greening Program (NGP) will soon be established in Laguna.

An agreement was signed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the University of the Philippines-Los Baños (UPLB) for the construction of the Modern Mechanized Forest Nursery, which is expected to be completed within the year.

The agreement was in line with the implementation of a five-year project called "Integrated Research and Development Grant for High Value Forest Crops" that aims to produce high quality seeds to be used for the NGP.

NGP is the flagship reforestation program of the Aquino administration that aims to cover 1.5 million hectares of denuded forestland by the end of 2016.

The program was extended until 2028 by virtue of an executive order issued by President Aquino to cover the remaining 7.1 million hectares of unproductive, denuded and degraded forestlands nationwide, which can contribute to environment-related risks such as soil erosion, landslides and flooding.

UP President Alfredo Pascual and DENR Undersecretary Jonas Leones led the groundbreaking rites last week for the construction of the forest nursery, pursuant to a memorandum of agreement (MOA) earlier signed by Pascual and DENR Secretary Ramon Paje.

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**

## New forest nursery to rise at UP Los Baños

A NEW state-of-the-art forest nursery with the capacity to produce up to 30 million tree seedlings a year will soon rise at UP Los Baños, Laguna.

UP President Alfredo Pascual and Department of Environment and Natural Resources Undersecretary Jonas Léones led the groundbreaking rites for the construction of the nursery last week.

The project, worth P27.5-million, is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year.

The DENR had earlier signed an agreement with UP-Los Baños

for the construction of a modern mechanized forest nursery in line with the implementation of a five-year project called "Integrated Research and Development Grant for High Value Forest Crops" that aims to produce high quality seeds to be used in the government's National Greening Program (NGP).

The NGP is the flagship reforestation program of the Aquino administration that aims to cover 1.5 million hectares of denuded forestland by the end of 2016. The program was extended until 2028 by virtue of an executive

order issued by President Aquino last November.

The expanded NGP covers the remaining 7.1 million hectares of unproductive, denuded and degraded forestlands nationwide, which can contribute to environment-related risks such as soil erosion, landslides, and flooding.

Under the memorandum of agreement signed by Pascual and DENR Secretary Ramon Paje, the DENR will fund the construction and operation of the mechanized nursery on a three-hectare area within the UPLB compound. —

**Angela Lopez de Leon**





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## DENR lauds EDC reforestation manual

By RHODINA VILLANUEVA

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has lauded the Energy Development Corp. (EDC) for coming up with a reference manual on forest restoration, saying it could be a useful tool for the reforestation projects of the government including the National Greening Program (NGP).

The three-part module titled "A Field Manual on Forest Restoration Using Indigenous Species" provides the technical procedures in implementing forest restoration projects from site-species matching, production of planting materials, plantation establishment, maintenance and protection.

"Through the reforestation manual, we hope that more people in our partner agencies will learn new and innovative approaches on planting trees that will continue the NGP's success," DENR Secretary Ramon Paje said.

NGP, which is mainly implemented by the DENR, is the flagship reforestation program of the Aquino administration that seeks to cover 1.5 million hectares with trees by the end of 2016.

However, President Aquino issued in November last year Executive Order No. 193 creating the expanded NGP that aims to reforest "all remaining unproductive, denuded and degraded forestlands" by 2028.

"The manual is not only relevant but also timely in the light of President Aquino's directive to extend the implementation of the National Greening Program beyond 2016 to cover all the remaining degraded areas of the country," Paje added.

EDC, the largest producer of geothermal energy in the country, has been a partner of the DENR since 2011 in the implementation of the company's own reforestation program called BINHI.

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## Tribal lands in W. Visayas mapped

ILOILO CITY — For the first time, a technical map has identified and defined lands of native tribes or indigenous peoples in Western Visayas region. The technical ancestral domain map is a collaboration between DENR-6 and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP-6).

“This is the first-of-its-kind map in the region. It shows ancestral domain boundaries of the different native groups in Western Visayas,” said Jim Sampulna, regional director of Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR-6).

Sampulna explained that the technical ancestral domain map clearly identifies forestlands and reservation areas of different groups of indigenous peoples (IPs) existing mainly on Panay Island.

These IPs include the Atis (Aetas) and the Panay Bukidnon or Sulodnon, found in settlements in the provinces of Aklan, Antique, Capiz, and Iloilo.

“When asked about the boundary of a certain location, IPs would usually point to a river or a boulder. We translated that information to a technical map,” explained Raul Lorilla, chief of DENR-6 in Iloilo province.

The technical map will make it easier to determine whether or not government projects fall within or outside ancestral domain areas. When a government project falls within an ancestral domain, there is a need to secure the Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) forms. (Tara Yap)



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# Eastern Samar gov stop



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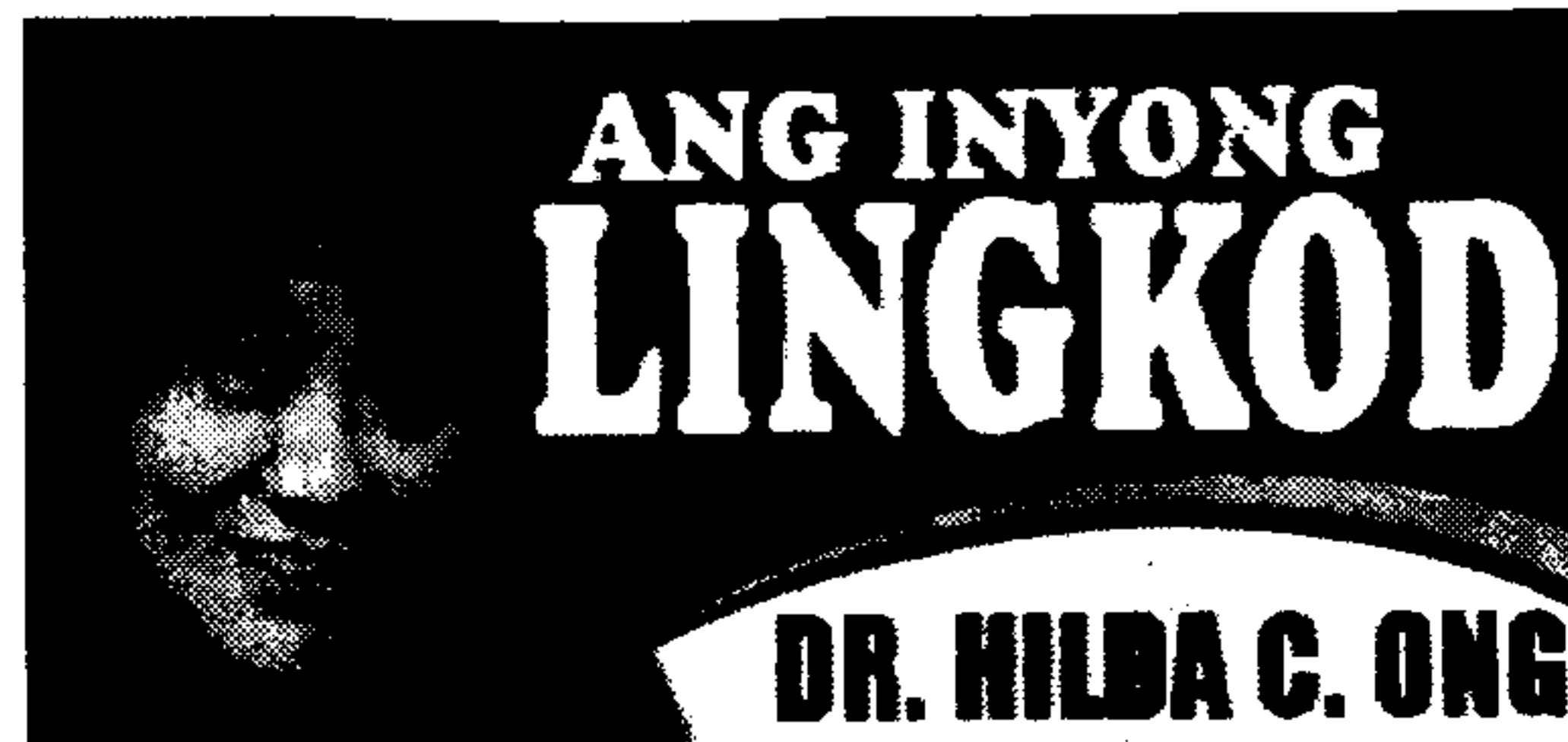
Naglabas ng pinakabagong panuntunan ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) kaugnay ng Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) application ng mga bagong kumpanyang papasok sa mining business.

Sa nilagdaang Memorandum Circular No. 006 series of 2016 ni outgoing DENR Secretary Ramon J.P. Paje, ipinag-utos na simula noong May 14, 2016 ang tatanggaping ECC application lamang ng Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) ay 'yung mga business entity o korporasyon na nakasaad sa Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) at Financial or Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA) na inilabas at kinilala ng pamahalaan.

Sasaklaw ang bagong regulasyon sa lahat ng mga bagong aplikasyon para sa ECC na may kinalaman sa Sand and Gravel o ng Industrial Sand and Gravel na may kaukulang kapahintulutan buhat sa Provincial Mining Regulatory Board (PMRB) o ng nakasasakop na regional office ng Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB).

Ipinaliwanag ni Secretary Paje na ang bagong patakaran ay sang-ayon sa umiiral na Presidential Decree No. 1586 (Environmental Impact Statement System) at ng Republic Act No. 7942 (Philippine Mining Act). "Inilabas ito upang lalong masiguro at matiyak ang transparency at accountability sa mining sector" dagdag pa ng kalihim.

Sa opisyal na tala ng Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), mayroong 77



DR. HILDA C. ONG

### MAY BAGONG REGULASYON ANG DENR SA ECC APPLICATION NG MINING SECTOR

quarrying establishments sa bansa noong 2012 na kumakatawan sa 24.3% ng kabuuang mining industry. Noong 2013 nga ay nasa 429 thousand metric tons ang produksyon ng sand and gravel sa bansa na katumbas ng Php33.3 billion na kita at nakapag-ambag ng halagang Php1.5 billion bilang direct taxes sa pamahalaan.

Ang nakukuhang sand and gravel ay ginagamit sa road construction, inihahalo sa asphalt, at mahalagang sangkap sa paggawa ng concrete blocks, bricks, at pipes. Sa buong mundo, batay sa estima ng United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) nasa 59 billion tonnes ang namimina kada taon.

Habang gumaganda ang mga daan na ating dinaraanan at namamangha tayo sa mga nagtatayugang mga gusali, may malaking epekto sa kalikasan ang hindi maaayos na "extraction" ng sand and gravel, kabilang diyan ang paglalim ng mga ilog at dagat; pagkasira ng biodiversity; soil erosion; pagbabago ng water flows, flood regulation at marine currents; at pagkawala ng natural protection buhat sa storm surge, pagbaha at tagtuyot.

Lumabas sa pag-aaral ng geologist na si Estelle

Chaussard ng State University of New York at political scientist na si Sarah Kerosky ng University of California na tulubog ang maraming lugar sa Hilagang Luzon kung magpapatuloy ang malawakang sand and gravel mining. Tinatayang ang mga lugar na gaya ng Lingayen at Dagupan (Pangasinan), San Marcelino at Masinloc (Zambales), Candon City, Santa Maria, at Santa Lucia (Ilocos Sur) at Balanga (Bataan) ay mabababad sa tubig sa loob ng 30 hanggang 50 taon o maaaring 70 taon pa depende sa rami ng nawalang sand at gravel.

Magandang hakbang ang ginawang ito ng DENR upang matiyak na mga kumpanyang mayroon lamang kakayahang teknikal at ligal ang siyang makakapagaplay ng ECC.



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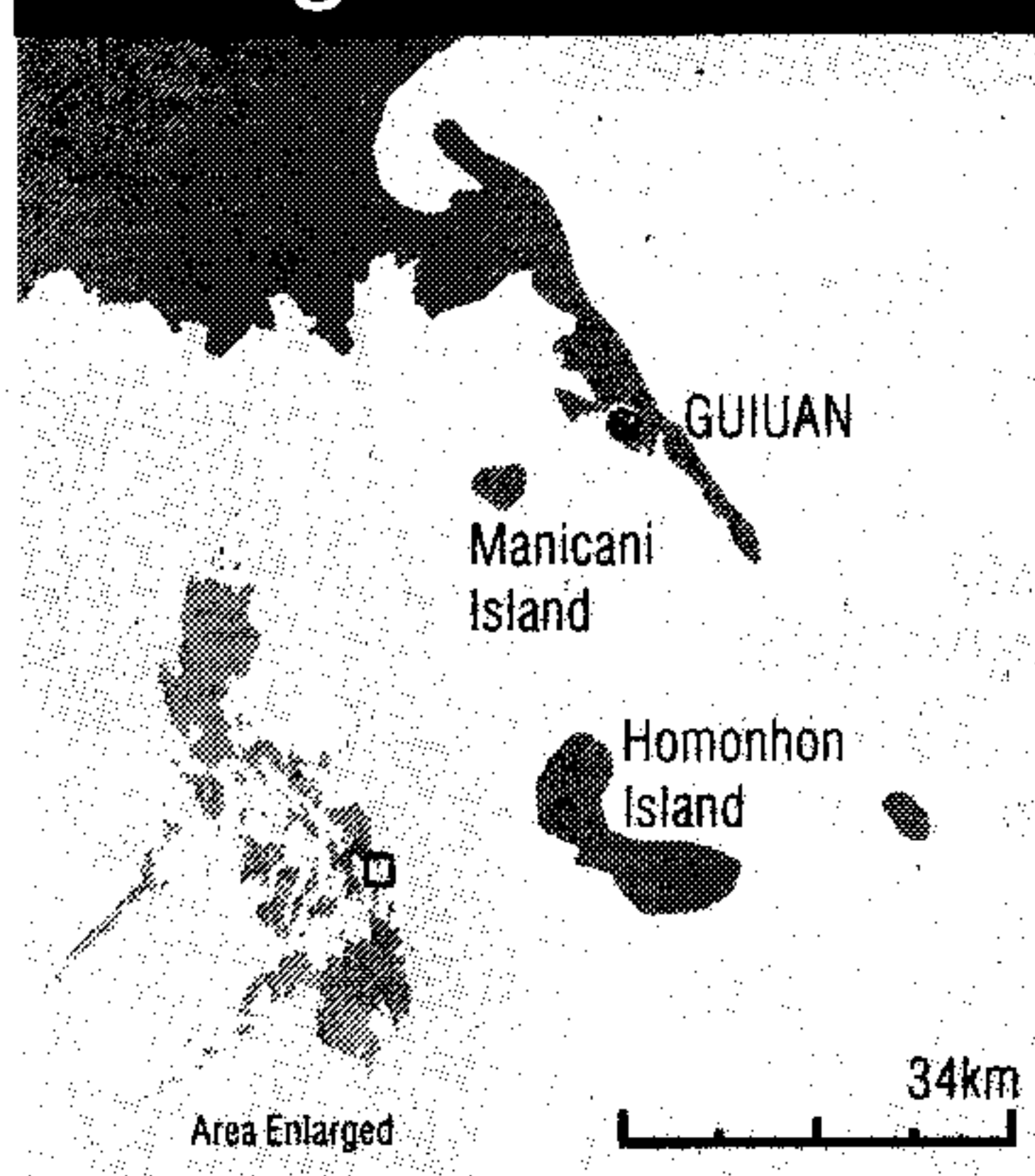
## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

By Joey A. Gabieta  
*Inquirer Visayas*

**TACLOBAN CITY**—The governor of Eastern Samar, one of the country's poorest provinces, has asked three mining companies to cease operations that are being blamed for peace and order problems.

In separate letters, Gov. Conrado Nicart ordered the three mining firms—Hinatuan Mining Corp. (HMC), Emir Resources Corp. (ERC) and Cambayas Mining Corp. (CMC)—to immediately cease their operations upon receipt of the governor's letter.

### Mining areas



The letter for HMC was dated May 17 while those for ERC and CMC were dated May 31.

Jose Bayani Baylon, vice president of Nickel Asia, the mother company of HMC, dismissed the claim of the governor that mining operations

were the cause of peace and order problems in Manicani.

"The fact that one, two, five or 20 people protest...does not equate to a peace and order problem," Baylon said.

HMC operates a nickel mine on Manicani Island while ERC and CMC extract chromite in the historic island of Homonhon, where Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan first landed in the country in 1521.

Both islands are within the territory of Guiuan town, 154 kilometers away from this city.

CMC was given a mining permit in 2009 while ERC got its permit in 2010.

HMC was given a permit to extract nickel ore deposits on Oct. 28, 1992, but suspended operations in 1993 when the demand for nickel declined.

In 2002, the Department of



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) suspended HMC's operation following a complaint for alleged human rights and environmental violations.

In 2014, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), an attached agency of the DENR, issued an order allowing HMC to transport a million metric tons of nickel ore in its stockpile in Manicani.

In June 2015, HMC started to haul some 52,000 metric tons of nickel ore from its stockpile. Another 52,000 MT was removed by HMC in May.

The hauling of the ore was opposed by residents who feared it would lead to resumption of mining by HMC.

In his letter to HMC, Nicart, who won a third term in the May 9 elections, cited "unrest"

among residents of Manicani as a reason for his order.

Nicart was referring to anti-mining protests by residents, who organized themselves into a group called Save Manicani Movement.

Baylon said the hauling of ore from HMC stockpile started in May and was "in compliance with an MGB order and no untoward incident has happened."

Nicart's move, however, was supported by a Church-based antimining group, the Philippine Misereor.

The group said it appreciated the decisiveness of the provincial government against HMC and its decision to listen to communities that hosted mining operations.

Nicart told ERC and CMC in the letters that they violated an

ordinance in the province that prohibited large-scale mining.

"To maintain peace and order in this province, I hereby order your company to stop further loading (of ore) effective upon receipt of the letter," Nicart said in his letters.

Christopher Coles, provincial legal officer, said the mining firms faced a fine of P50,000 and their officers imprisonment of at least a year should they defy the governor's order.

Nenita Coquiao, acting head of MGB Eastern Visayas, said her office received copies of the governor's letters on June 13.

But she said the letters were "addressed to these mining companies, not to us (MGB)."

"We will just wait for the action of these mining companies," she said.



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## SUV slams into tree; 2 killed

By LIEZLE BASA INIGO

URDANETA CITY, Pangasinan — The old trees that stand right in the middle of the national road have long posed danger to motorists. Last Tuesday night, a barangay chairman in Isabela and his 21-year-old companion were killed when the Mitsubishi Montero they were in slammed into a tree in Barangay Catablan, here.

Superintendent Jeff Fanged, chief of

police, said Barangay Chairman Aureliano Baracao, 52, of Malibago, Echague, Isabela, was driving along MacArthur Highway in Barangay Catablan at 10:15 p.m., when he slammed into a tree in the middle of the road.

He, along with Kenneth Justin Mariano, was killed in the accident.

Other occupants of the vehicle — Violeta Baracao, the barangay chairman's wife; Elizabeth Bayan, 52; Teodora Maria Cortez, 47; Amara Jane Cortez, 20;

and Niko Cortez, 13 — were injured.

Meanwhile, Engr. Narchito Arpilleda, spokesperson of DPWH, said they had long been requesting a permit from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to cut the trees that have become a road obstruction, but to no avail.

The cutting of trees along the national road in Pangasinan was also held in abeyance due to provincial resolution 269-2014.



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### Public schools sites legalized in Antipolo

THE Department of Education (DepEd) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) have signed a memorandum of agreement legalizing public school sites in the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape in Antipolo, Rizal.

Alberto Muyot, DepEd under-secretary for legal and legislative affairs, said the agreement is necessary to legitimize the schools' occupation of the area.

The DepEd Antipolo City Schools Division, together with the DENR Community Environment and Resources Office in Antipolo, identified 14 public school sites within the URMPL across "nine sitios" in the city.

Muyot said these schools do not own their respective sites,

"thereby limiting the use and development of their respective areas." He said the location of the schools is crucial since the URMPL is among the country's more important protected areas.

Together with DepEd's Task Force for School Sites Titling and the city government of Antipolo, a joint inspection of the schools was conducted.

The agreement established the schools' boundaries, segregating the occupied areas and the portions which cannot be built upon based on DENR's hazard assessment.

Geo-tagging and hazard mapping was also conducted to ensure the schools are not located within geo-hazard prone areas.

The agreement is for 20 years,

subject to renewal or pre-termination, as deemed necessary by DepEd and DENR.

The 14 public schools located within the URMPL are the Antipolo National High School - Canumay Extension, Antipolo National High School- Kaysakat Extension, Apia Elementary School, Binayoyo Elementary School, Calawis National High School, Calawis National High School - Apia Extension, Canumay Elementary School, Kaysakat Elementary School, Libis Elementary School, Maximo L. Gatlabayan Memorial National High School, Old Boso - Boso Elementary School, San Joseph Elementary School, San Ysiro Elementary School and Upper Kilingan Elementary School.

-- Angela Lopez de Leon



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**HEALTHY, HOMEGROWN** There are nutritious alternatives to junk food, as shown by students from Sto. Cristo Elementary School in Barangay Bago Bantay, Quezon City, during the “Healthy Baon, Healthy Bata, Healthy Eskwela” activity of EcoWaste Coalition.

LYN RILLON



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Friday, June 17, 2016

## Badjaos to be tapped for coastal protection

By YAS D. OCAMPO

**D**AVAO CITY – Incoming agriculture secretary Emmanuel Piñol revealed a plan to empower indigenous Badjaos to be part of the protection of the seas, as part of a massive Department of Agriculture-led program in improving the country's coastlines.

In an interview at the Grand Regal Hotel Thursday, Piñol said that Mindanao State University graduate Roben Abdella, a Badjao who graduated Magna Cum Laude this year, would lead the program that would hire Badjaos for the Bantay Dagat program.

The Badjaos would be paid

to look after the seas and asked to monitor cleanliness along the coastlines, among others.

"Ang hiling ko lang, yung mga anak nila ay pag-aralin sana as a precondition to their employment," (I just wish that the hired Badjaos send their children to school)," Piñol said.

Piñol said that incoming president Rodrigo R. Duterte has approved a plan to award ₱10 million to coastal communities that implement programs protecting their communities.

The award will go to communities that have a marine protected area, has no illegal fishing, observes off season ban, and has no trash along coastal waters.



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# COA to DENR execs: Pay for demolished building

By RHODINA VILLANUEVA

**The Commission on Audit (COA) has told Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) officials to pay for the anomalous demolition of a building in 2014.**

In an audit observation memorandum dated March 14, the COA audit team assigned to the DENR said the agency's officials responsible for the demolition without getting approval for the construction of a new building should pay for the structure, which was last valued at P20.4 million in 1997.

The Foreign-Assisted and Special Projects Office (FASPO) building once stood beside the main building in the DENR compound in Quezon City.

The memorandum was addressed to DENR Secretary Ramon Paje, Undersecretary for administration Ernesto Adobo Jr., Assistant Secretary for administration and finance Corazon Davis, Assistant Secretary for FASPO Service Rommel Abesamis, Director Angelito Fontanilla of the financial management service and accounting division chief Dina Nillosan.

## Paper trail

The DENR and Department of Public Works and Highways's Quezon City First Engineering District (QCFED) signed a memorandum of agreement on Dec. 9,

2013 to repair and renovate the FASPO building for P5 million.

The DENR paid the QCFED P1.6 million on Oct. 23, 2013, or about two months before they signed the MOA. However, instead of renovating, the DPWH through its contractor demolished the building in January 2014.

The COA said the DENR should "immediately demand" that the QCFED refund the P1.6 million and impose appropriate sanctions on DENR officials and employees responsible for the improper implementation of the MOA with the QCFED.

State auditors also ordered the QCFED to return the P1.6 million since the money was "not used for the purpose (renovation) and not properly accounted for."

The COA had called the DENR's attention to the anomaly in an earlier memorandum dated April 15, 2015.

## Blame game

Adobo, in replying to the COA's allegation, said within two weeks after the agreement was signed, Paje issued a special order on Dec. 20, 2013 authorizing Abesamis deal with the

DPWH "to construct/renovate the FASPO building."

Paje also told Abesamis to report directly to him, bypassing Undersecretary Manuel Gerochi, who was in charge of policy, planning and foreign-assisted programs, Adobo said.

Abesamis wrote QCFED's district engineer Roseller Tolentino on Dec. 19, 2013 to inform him of the modification of the MOA to "construction of FASPO building to reflect the true nature of work undertaken."

The COA, however, pointed out Abesamis wrote the letter a day before he was authorized by Paje to transact with the DPWH.

Abesamis accepted the inspection report from Tolentino dated May 20, 2014 that the project was "100 percent completed" when it was only demolished, the COA said.

"It appears that Abesamis modified the (agreement) without the proper coordination with the DENR officials concerned," state auditors said.

The COA said the DENR should have cancelled the agreement for the renovation of the FASPO building, then entered into a new agreement for the construction.



# BusinessMirror

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# Groups: Geothermal expansion project threatens Negros Oriental's Mt. Talinis

By JONATHAN MAYUGA @jonlmayuga

**C**AUSE-ORIENTED groups in Negros Oriental are up in arms against the reported expansion activities being undertaken by the Energy Development Corp.'s Southern Negros Geothermal Project (EDC-SNGP) in Mount Talinis.

Notwithstanding the consent of concerned government agencies, the groups said the expansion activities threaten the old growth forests within the 23,565-hectare Mount Talinis range.

The group also chided officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for allegedly showing its bias for the proponent of the "destructive" project.

The area targeted for clearing represents the remaining 1 percent of Negros Oriental's virgin forest, Zeph Repollo, coordinator of 350 Pilipinas, a national grassroots climate action network, told the BUSINESSMIRROR in an interview.

"In their proposal to the DENR, they intend to use 30 hectares,

but the permit they are seeking covers 5,000 hectares. This is the remaining forest in Negros Oriental. We consider it our last frontier," Repollo says.

Early last year, the EDC-SNGP allegedly felled a total of 576 trees, most of which are century-old trees within its geothermal plant.

"We learned only about this recently. After we learned from communities that they are again starting to clear more areas, we decided to call the attention of the DENR," Repollo said.

She lamented, however, that instead of meeting with the complainants, officials of the DENR from the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) office in Manila and Negros province allegedly went directly to meet with of-

ficials of EDC-SNGP. She suspects that the ongoing expansion activities, like the previous expansion that resulted in the felling of 576 trees, is being conducted without the benefit of an environmental compliance certificate (ECC), which, she said, should have been enough to stop the ongoing expansion project.

"The destruction right before our own eyes is not permissible by any ECC or [any] permits. At whatever level of EDC's operation that brought our trees down must already be stopped. We do not believe that we have to sacrifice our natural forest for geothermal energy when we know for a fact that it is not the only source of renewable energy in the province," she added.

Mount Talinis, Repollo explained, provides water security to 16 towns and cities in the province. "There are watersheds in Mount Talinis, which we need to survive because it is our water source. Besides, there are communities that will be displaced by the expansion project," Repollo said, adding that more century-old trees will soon be cut down if the DENR fails to step into the picture.

350 Pilipinas's campaign to stop the expansion of the geothermal project in Negros is supported by 350 Negros, Save Mount Talinis Movement and Fardec Inc., which



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Groups: Geothermal expansion project threatens  
Negros Oriental's Mt. Talinis

brought the issue to the DENR-EMB in April. The Kalikasan-People's Network for the Environment, a network of environmental groups, also issued a solidarity statement in support of the campaign to protect Mount Talinis.

Also known as Cuernos de Negros, Mount Talinis is a complex volcano. At about 1,903 meters above sea level, it's the second-highest mountain on Negros Island, next to another active volcano, Mount Kanlaon.

The EDC-SNGP generates 192.5 megawatts. Mount Talinis is near the Balinsasayao Twin Lakes Natural Park (BTLNP), a national park established on November 21, 2000, by Proclamation 414.

It is a most visited park of which the twin crater lakes of Balinsasayao and Danao are located. Together with Lake Kabalin-an, a smaller lake, the three lakes within the Guintabon Caldera are the most visited sites in the province.

Mount Talinis has a rich biodiversity but is also threatened by illegal-logging activities.

The lakes around Mount Talinis contain freshwater shrimp, snails, carp and tilapia, and its forest is home to endemic and rare wildlife, including the critically endangered tarictic hornbills, Philippine spotted deers, Visayan warty pigs, Philippine tube-nosed fruit bats and Negros bleeding hearts.

**“**The destruction right before our own eyes is not permissible by any ECC or [any] permits. At whatever level of EDC's operation that brought our trees down must already be stopped. We do not believe that we have to sacrifice our natural forest for geothermal energy when we know for a fact that it is not the only source of renewable energy in the province.”—REPOLLO



THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS  
SINCE 1900

# MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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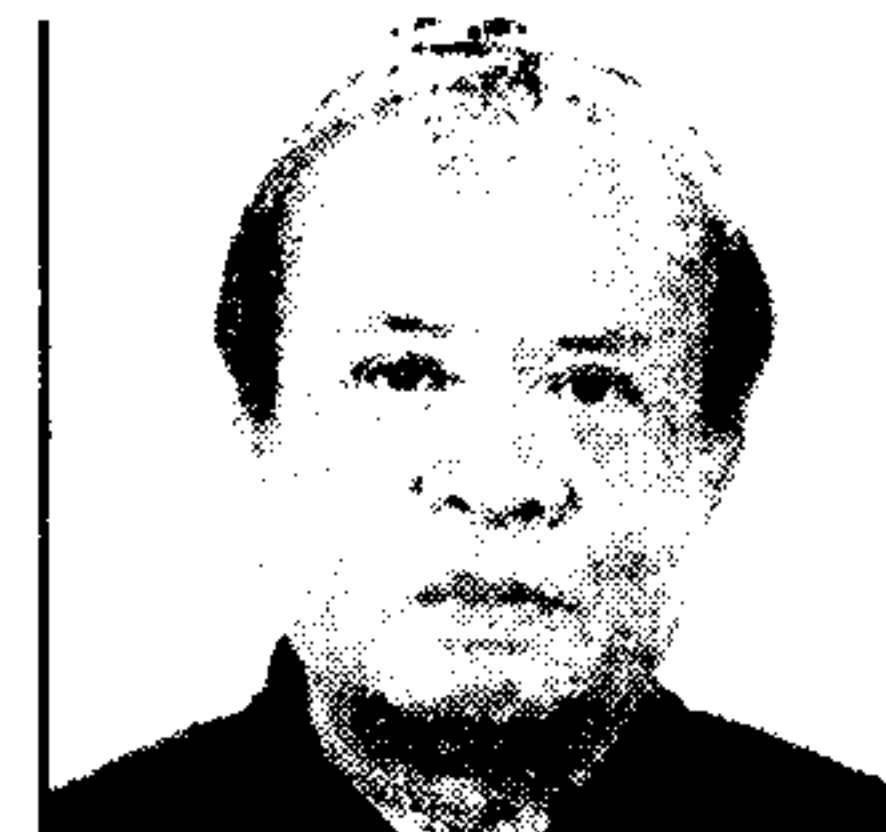
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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### MERRY-GO-ROUND

## *Quo vadis* NAIA?



By **FLORO MERCENE**

**T**HE new location for an alternate Ninoy Aquino International Airport is being tossed around like a basketball.

Among the sites being considered are Clark, Sangley, Laguna Lake, and Manila Bay.

President of diversified conglomerate San Miguel Corp. Ramon Ang has once again revived his proposal to build the new Manila Airport on Manila Bay at an estimated cost of \$13 billion.

After failing to convince the Aquino administration of his proposal, Ang said he is resubmitting his bid to the incoming administration of President-elect Rodrigo Duterte.

Ang is probably banking on Duterte's vaunted decisiveness to forcefully address any issue and Ang hopes that the

hard-hitting Mayor of Davao would look at his proposal with a fresh appreciation of the facts.

But this early, Ang's renewed attempt is thwarted by the feisty Senator Cynthia Villar, who wants nothing of his airport to be located anywhere in the famous Bay.

Recall that on March 16, 2012, Villar filed a petition for Writ of Kalikasan before the Supreme Court along with majority of Las Piñas residents and succeeded in stopping the project after the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) said an airport in the middle of the Bay would disrupt seaborne traffic.

A known advocate of environmental protection, Villar said the reclamation of Manila Bay would destroy the Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Eco-Tourism Area (LPPCHEA).

The lady senator also cited the 2002

ruling of the Supreme Court, which struck down the Public Estates Authority (PEA)-Amari deal as unconstitutional. The ruling stated that private companies cannot own reclaimed lands.

"Attracting tourists and investors should not be proposed at the expense of the Constitutionally guaranteed rights of citizens for a safe and secure environment to live in," Villar said.

LPPCHEA is a declared critical habitat and a protected area by virtue of Presidential Proclamation No. 1412 and 1412-A in 2007. It is the first critical habitat to be declared in the country.

Five other sites on the list are: the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park; Tubbataha Reefs National Marine Park, Palawan; Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary; Naujan Lake National Park, Mindoro; and the Olango Island Wildlife Sanctuary in Cebu.



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WATER SUPPLY

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## Water supply woes till July for 120K south Metro homes

By Kristine Felisse Mangunay,  
Ronnell Domingo  
and Carizza Ibañez

FOR THE past several days, Maria Llorá Osite has been forced to buy “gallons and gallons of mineral water just to take a bath.”

“Can you believe how much I’m spending now?” said the 63-year-old Osite, who had also resorted to using disposable spoons, forks and plates as taps in her neighborhood in Barangay Putatan, Muntinlupa City, went dry.

Osite is among the thousands of residents coping with the on-and-off service from Maynilad Water Services Inc. Around 120,000 households in Muntinlupa, Las Piñas City, and Parañaque City, as well as in Cavite City, Imus, Novellea, Rosario and Bacoor in Cavite province have been affected since June 10, according to the utility firm.

In a statement, Maynilad issued an apology and explained that “we were constrained to further reduce production of our treatment plant (in Putatan) in our effort to maintain water quality despite the worsening quality of raw water from Laguna Lake and ongoing rehabilitation works in our facility.”

Mitigation measures—like rationing—would be in place “until our treatment facility returns to normal levels of production in July,” the utility firm said.

The shortage has gotten worse over the last few days. “Before, even if there was a service interruption every day, the supply would come back quickly. But now we have to wait much longer,” said Osite.

“And when the water finally comes back, you need to wait for 30 more minutes because what usually comes out first from the tap is rust-colored water. You just can’t use it,” said Elisa Sobrevida, 25, who lives nearby.

### Washing priorities

Because neighbors open their faucets almost at the same time to stock up on water, everyone ends up getting a mere trickle. “If we are lucky enough to fill up a pail, I have to prioritize the kids who need a bath, the dirty dishes, the laundry,” she said. Sometimes, the used water is recycled either for flushing the toilet or watering the plants.

On Wednesday, however, Sobrevida learned that a neighbor had access to a deep well and was selling water at P3 per container. “We took the offer since the faucet was useless the whole day.”

“We pay properly, so (Maynilad) should fix their services,” Osite said. “They should do something quickly about this.”

“We apologize for the incon-



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WATER SUPPLY

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



**DRY SPELL** The dirty dishes pile up before Maria Lloras Osite, just one of the Muntinlupa City residents waiting for a drop from their faucets. CARIZZA IBANEZ

venience this situation has caused," Maynilad said, adding that the intermittent service was due to the reduced output from its treatment plant in Putatan, Muntinlupa.

"(To) mitigate the effect of the facility's intermittent output," Maynilad has been deploying 39 tankers to the affected areas since June 10, the utility firm said. Nine more tankers will be deployed and two stationary water tanks will be installed to "accommodate more requests for rationing."

"Maynilad is also implementing valve adjustments to better manage supply in the distribution system, so that we can return to the scheduled supply window for Muntinlupa, Parañaque and Cavite at the soonest possible time," it said.

### High manganese levels

"Also, with the onset of the rainy season, we expect the quality of water from the lake to improve and our production to increase," it said. "Please bear with us as we facilitate rehabilitation works in our treatment facility."

In late April, Maynilad said

the raw water processed for the southern part of Metro Manila showed high levels of manganese, but assured customers that the supply that was being distributed was still within the parameters set by the Philippine National Standards for Drinking Water (PNSDW).

The firm then traced the problem to Laguna de Bay as customers complained about the discolored water coming from their taps. Since the onset of the El Niño phenomenon in the last quarter of 2015, the lake's water level has steadily decreased while the high summer temperatures "further exacerbated" the water quality, the company said.

In an INQUIRER interview on Thursday, Jennifer Rufo, head of stakeholder communications at Maynilad, clarified that the issue concerning manganese in the raw water from the Laguna de Bay was a matter of discoloration and not sufficiency in supply.

Rufo said the presence of manganese in the lake caused "temporary discoloration" in the water supply in southern Metro Manila in April. But she said this was resolved in less than 48 hours, mainly through adjustments in the operations of Maynilad's treatment facility and flushing of pipelines in the affected areas.

"In the letter that we sent to our affected customers, we clearly stated that except for the discoloration, our water supply is still within the parameters set by the PNSDW," Rufo said. "We wish to assure them that we are constantly monitoring the characteristics of the water in Laguna Lake, and we have the necessary technologies in place to continue producing water that meets the PNSDW."



# BusinessWorld

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## La Niña action plan scheduled for completion this month

**By Janina C. Lim** *Reporter*

A DRAFT of a national action blueprint to lay out measures that the agriculture industry regulators can adopt in preparation for the incoming La Niña is set to be completed by the end of the month.

The action plan will be the result of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Department of Agriculture's (DA) collaborated discussion during the two-day National La Niña Action Planning Workshop conducted on June 8.

"We hope that this collaborative exercise will result in an effective National La Niña Action Plan for the agriculture sector and promote even stronger efforts to mobilize early warning, early action, early recovery and rehabilitation resources," said FAO Representative in the Philippines José Luis Fernández in an FAO statement.

Mr. Fernández also expressed hopes that the guidelines will bring about "timely and appropriate interventions" to be given out so as to increase affected farmers' and fisherfolks' resilience against possible La Nina-induced damage.

Over 60 DA technical experts representing nine regions participated in the action planning. FAO provided technical support in the conduct of vulnerability assessments, identification of priority interventions and

financial planning.

According to Christopher V. Morales, chief agriculturist and officer-in-charge of the Office of the Director of the DA Field Operations Service, the collaboration stemmed from the identification of specific municipalities that are most at-risk in each region based on historical data.

Mr. Morales added that the team also identified the types of interventions to be applied from across the entire Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) chain.

"In some areas, we are looking into early planting or focusing on promoting other crop varieties that can withstand unfavorable weather conditions or those that can be harvested more quickly to provide farming communities with income and food even before La Niña hits," Mr. Morales added.

Funding requirements to support as many communities as early as possible are still under discussion, according to Mr. Morales.

Last month, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) has activated La Niña Watch, issuing a warning of more rainfall in the eastern side of the country.

PAGASA also cited possible flooding in low lying agricultural lands, extensive damage to standing crops, increase in pest and disease and coastal erosion due to strong waves and coastal flooding, among others as effects expected from La Niña.



## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# Gov't sets La Niña action plan

THE La Nina action plan being crafted by Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Department of Agriculture (DA) has identified areas most at risk of this weather phenomenon. Initial recommendations of the action plan, the first draft of which would be completed by the end of June, include early planting or shifting to crops that can withstand harsh weather conditions.

In a statement, FAO said experts from this United Nations agency and the DA convened recently a National La Niña Action Planning Workshop on how to cushion the agriculture sector from the effects of this phenomenon.

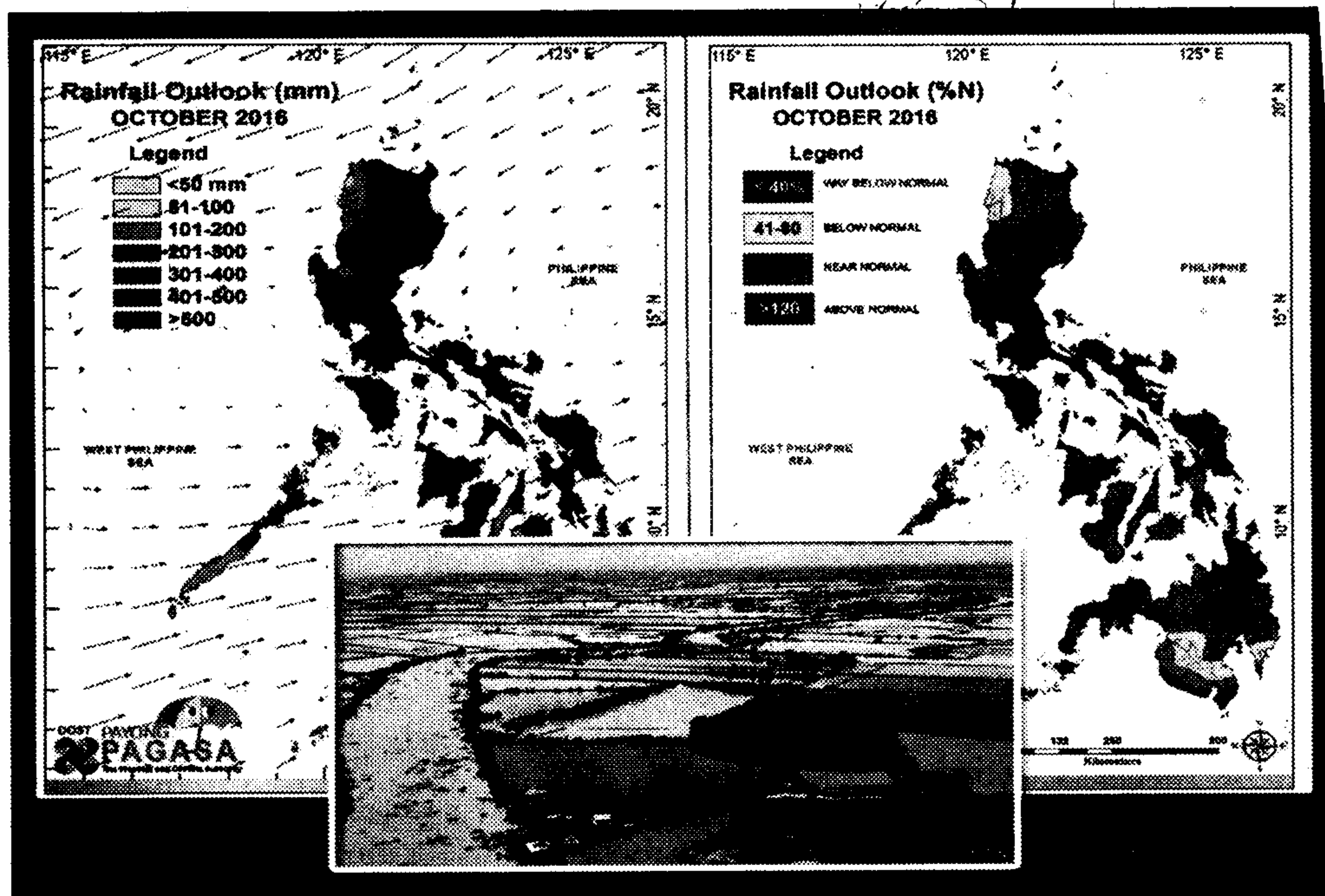
"We have just experienced one of the strongest El Niño episodes in history and hopefully learned important lessons on preparedness and response. Supporting the government in reducing risks to agricultural livelihoods and food security and planning for immediate recovery as these relate to La Niña is a priority," said Jose Luis Fernandez, FAO representative in the Philippines.

Christopher Morales of the DA Field Operations Service said the workshop was able to identify the specific municipalities that are most at-risk in each region based on historical data, as well as the types of interventions to put on the ground, across the entire Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) chain. This includes preparedness, response, immediate recovery and rehabilitation.

Morales did not specify which areas these are but according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration,

more rainfall is to be expected in the eastern side of the Philippines as an effect of La Niña.

Current forecasts indicate that this may affect Quezon Province and Bicol Region in Luzon; Samar and Leyte provinces in the Visayas; Davao Oriental and Compostela Valley provinces and the CARAGA Region



La Niña is associated with anomalies in rainfall, temperature and tropical cyclone activities. Images (from PAGASA) show rainfall pattern for the month of October, the onset of La Niña.

in Mindanao.

"In some areas, we are looking into early planting or focusing on promoting other crop varieties that can withstand unfavourable weather conditions or those that can be harvested more quickly to provide farming communities with income and food even before Niña hits. We are also studying the associated funding requirements to support as many communities as early as possible," Morales added.

PAGASA also earlier activated La Niña Watch and warned of possible flooding in low lying agricultural lands, extensive damage to standing crops, increase in pest and disease and coastal erosion due to strong waves and coastal flooding, among others.

FAO said that over 60 technical experts from DA, representing nine regions of the country, participated in the action planning and conduct of vulnerability assessments,

identification of priority interventions and financial planning.

In 2015, FAO also assisted DA in the formulation of a National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan for Agriculture and Fisheries. The final report, which is due to be published this year, will help guide the mainstreaming of DRRM and Climate Change Adaptation into national and local policies and plans.

Emmanuel Piñol, incoming DA secretary, said he is targeting an additional one million hectares of land dedicated for rice as well as an assistance fund worth P30 billion to recover from the damages brought by the El Niño phenomenon will be given immediate priorities.

Piñol also said he would push for he replanting of 600,000 hectares of coconut over the next six years so that the country would regain its status as the number one producer in the world.



THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS  
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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### SWIMMING AGAINST THE CURRENT

# Less noticed, but equally game-changing



By **DR. JESUS P. ESTANISLAO**

**D**IPOLOG Boulevard and its redevelopment is for everyone to see. It has been signaling this basic truth: that a governance and transformation program is not all about words; it also delivers actual, easy-to-see results. Moreover, some of these results have the potential of changing even the future character of the city.

Under the governance program of Dipolog, there is an equally important project that also has a potential for eventually changing the city. This other project is the development of the current Cogon Eco-Park into the Dipolog Outdoor Adventure Zone. It may be less visible than the Dipolog Boulevard initiative, but it is possibly as game-changing as the latter.

The Outdoor Adventure Zone project does complement very nicely the Boulevard initiative. The former uses and takes advantage of an eco-park, and develops it into a facility that equally promotes a healthy, physically active lifestyle. Facilities for a bike trail, a

hiking trail, and for an army adventure course have already been constructed and completed. These facilities in a mountain or "nature preserve" area of the city provide an alternative to those facilities in the boulevard, which is by the sea.

The total development of the Outdoor Adventure Zone is much less expensive. While the Boulevard has been budgeted with a ₱500 million development cost, that for the Outdoor Adventure Zone is much smaller at just below ₱100 million, or a fifth smaller. One difference, however: the zone project is less visible and has thus far attracted less interest from sources of external funding. The City is expected to put in as high as 90% of the development cost of this second project (compared with only 48% for the boulevard project).

However, the zone would win resounding plaudits from those already very concerned about nature preserve conservation. While the nature preserve zone will be used – with appropriate facilities put in for various outdoor physical activities such as biking, hiking, horseback riding, and army adventure course

training, the nature preserve will remain a "green area" within city limits. This is an essential area that would allow the "lungs of the city" to have fresh air to breathe. Consistent with the city's promotion of a healthy lifestyle, a program to attract bikers, hikers, and horseback riders into the outdoor adventure zone will provide a few alternative options for eco-tourists as well as for residents of Dipolog to engage in nature-dependent sports activities. Moreover, Dipolog would have a distinct character as a fully developed sports-tourism destination, with sports facilities by the sea as well as in the forest.

A few more visitors have already visited the Cogon Eco-Park, which is still in the process of development. Only 280 visited the eco-park in 2014. This had risen during the first half of 2015 to 531, still a very small number, but one that is bound to increase dramatically, once word spreads that facilities for nature exploring (hiking, biking, and horseback riding) are available in the city which is fast developing itself into becoming the "Center for Outdoor Sports in Southern Philippines."



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### STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## Climate change commission starts review of energy policy covering coal-fired plants

THE Climate Change Commission (CCC) has given itself six months or until the end of the year to craft an energy development framework that would include harmonizing the policies and regulations of government agencies covering new and existing coal-fired power plants.

In a statement, the commission said it had started on June 16 the “task of reviewing the government’s energy policy that is expected to reshape the country’s power development plans and replace coal with renewable sources of energy.”

The move is an offshoot of a resolution issued by the commission in May, in which it urged the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Energy (DoE) to “initiate and coordinate discussions” over coal power plants to arrive at a low carbon development plan for the energy sector.

“A comprehensive review of the government’s energy policy involves a whole-of-nation approach to achieve a low-carbon development pathway and national goals and targets for climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster risk reduction and sustainable development,” the commission said.

Between now and 2019, a number of coal-fired power plants are expected to start operating in the

country’s main island groups, the biggest concentration of which will be in Mindanao, which has long suffered from rotating power interruptions because of inadequate power supply.

Secretary Emmanuel De Guzman, vice-chairman of the commission, said his agency “strongly believes” that “transitioning away from coal is a cost-effective path to a low-carbon economy for the Philippines.”

He said the policy review was crucial in fulfilling the country’s commitments under the Paris climate accord to keep global temperature rise below 1.5 degrees Celsius and avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

“With time running out to address climate change and prevent the worst effects of rising temperatures, countries must act fast and more decisively to cut down their respective greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in order to keep global temperature rise to below 1.5°C,” Mr. De Guzman said at the launch of the national energy policy review at the Kalayaan Hall in Malacañang.

The commission, which is under the Office of the President, is the government’s lead policy-making body “mandated to coordinate, monitor and evaluate state programs and ensure mainstreaming of climate change in national, local and sectoral development plans toward a climate-

resilient and climate-smart Philippines.”

The DENR, DoE and the National Economic and Development Authority were also called on to participate in the review.

“One sure way to defuse the ‘ticking time bomb’ of global warming is to shift away from fossil fuels to renewable energy,” Mr. De Guzman said, adding that this was the main thrust of the resolution issued by the commission and “signed by no less than the President.”

He said that the commission would facilitate at least three meetings of its advisory board, serving as steering committee, as well as “three sub-national business summits; 10 round-table discussions; and 10 technical working group meetings throughout the six months of the policy review process.”

The Philippines pledged a conditional 70% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030 relative to a business-as-usual scenario for 2000-2030, which it said would come from the energy, transport, waste, forestry and industry sectors.

As a member of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the country supported the adoption of the Paris Agreement at the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of the Parties in Paris, France in December 2015. — **Victor V. Saulon**



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## A challenging task for Duterte

IVES SERVICE

A PIONEERING research on the marine fisheries and climate change in India was conducted in 2008 by the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute. It indicated that the success of pelagic fisheries depends on a delicate balance between the physical oceanographic factors that trigger the occurrence of alternating El Niño and La Niña phenomena, on the one hand, and the effects of fishing on the standing stock biomass (SSB), on the other. This could belie the contention that the decline in SSB and the corresponding catch is solely due to overfishing caused by high fishing efforts or the number of fishers.

The Philippine marine fish catch for both commercial and municipal fisheries reached its peak in 2010, during a moderate El Niño, at 2.4 million metric tons. But the catch declined significantly to 2.17 million MT (or by 10 percent) in 2011 mainly due to a moderate La Niña. It must be noted that almost 70 percent of the catch were composed of small pelagic fish such as the Indian sardine (*tamban*), anchovy (*dilis*), round scad (*galunggong*), Indian mackerel (*alumahan*); and of large pelagic fish such as skipjack (*gulyasan*), yellowfin tuna (*bariles/ bankulis*), and frigate tuna (*tulingan*).

These pelagic fish are interrelated through a food web whose foundation is the plankton (phytoplankton and zooplankton). The blooms of plankton during El Niño coincide with the abundant catch of small pelagic fish that feed on plankton; the large pelagic fish prey on the small pelagic fish.

During La Niña in 2011-2014, there were less plankton blooms, which coincided with the leveling

off in fish catch; thereafter, it was expected that the change from the weak La Niña in 2014 to the strong El Niño in 2015-2016 would lead to increasing catch. But the catch declined by 6-7 percent, based on the first-quarter pelagic fish-catch data in 2014, 2015 and 2016, mainly due to overfishing.

The blog titled "The big freeze of 2017 and 2018" by Jan Theart (8/22/15) states that every major El Niño has been followed by a deep La Niña within two years. Hence, the change from strong El Niño in 2015-2016 to strong La Niña in 2016-2017 would cause less plankton blooms leading to a decrease in SSB and the corresponding catch. It is the municipal fishers who will continue to experience decreasing catch, while the commercial fishers could still enjoy slight increasing catch by venturing into distant offshore fishing grounds that are still abundant with fish.

As of 2002, there were 16,497 commercial fishers and 1.37 million municipal fishers, but the latter significantly increased to 1.6 million in 2012 mainly due to the migration of poor and landless farmers to coastal areas adjoining the vast expanse of marine water where the fisheries are open-access.

The Duterte administration in its first two years will have to deal with the tremendous challenge of mitigating the negative impact of and adapting to a strong La Niña, particularly in coastal communities where fisherfolk register the highest poverty incidence (39.2 percent compared to the 38.3 percent among farmers).

—EDMUNDO ENDEREZ,  
eenderez@gmail.com



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### Climate change panel reviews energy policy

THE Climate Change Commission (CCC) yesterday started reviewing the government's energy policy which is expected to reshape the country's power development plans and replace coal with renewable sources of energy.

The CCC, together with other key government agencies, has until the end of the year craft a framework development on energy.

The Commission is under the Office of the President and is the lead policy-making body of the government mandated to coordinate, monitor and evaluate state programs and ensure mainstreaming of climate change in national, local and sectoral development

plans toward a climate-resilient and climate-smart Philippines.

A comprehensive review of the government's energy policy involves an approach to achieve a low-carbon development pathway and national goals and targets for climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster risk reduction and sustainable development, the CCC said.

CCC vice chair Secretary Emmanuel De Guzman said the policy review is vital to fulfill the country's commitments under the Paris climate agreement to keep global temperature below 1.5 degrees Celsius and avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

"With time running out to address climate change and prevent the worst effects of rising temperatures, countries must act fast and more decisively to cut down their respective greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in order to keep global temperature rise to below 1.5C," De Guzman said.

"One sure way to defuse the 'ticking time bomb' of global warming is to shift away from fossil fuels to renewable energy (RE), which is the main thrust of the most recent resolution issued by the Climate Change Commission and signed by no less than the President," he added. — **Angela Lopez de Leon**



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## Climate change body launches PH energy policy review

BY JAMES KONSTANTIN GALVEZ  
REPORTER

**THE** Philippine government on Thursday launched a review of the country's energy policy in an effort to reshape power development plans and replace coal with renewable sources of energy.

In accordance with Commission Resolution No.2016-001 it issued last month, the Climate Change Commission (CCC), together with key government agencies, was given six months or until the end of the year to conduct a national review and craft a development framework for energy.

CCC is under the Office of the President and is the lead climate policy-making body of the government. It is mandated to coordinate, monitor and evaluate state programs and ensure mainstreaming of climate change in national, local and sectoral development plans toward a climate-resilient and climate-smart Philippines.

A comprehensive review of the government's energy policy involves a whole-of-nation approach to achieve a low-carbon development pathway and national goals and targets for climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster risk reduction and sustainable development, the commission said.

CCC Vice Chairman Secretary

Emmanuel de Guzman said the policy review is vital to fulfilling the country's commitments under the Paris climate agreement to keep global temperature rise below 1.5 degrees Celsius and avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

"With time running out to address climate change and prevent the worst effects of rising temperatures, countries must act faster and more decisively to cut down their respective greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in order to keep global temperature rise to below 1.5C," de Guzman said at the launch of the National Energy Policy Review held at the Kalayaan Hall in Malacañang.

"One sure way to defuse the 'tickling time bomb' of global warming is to shift away from fossil fuels to renewable energy (RE), which is the main thrust of the most recent resolution issued by the Climate Change Commission and signed by no less than the President," he added.

The CCC resolution calls for the development of a clear

policy on coal-fired power plants, which are the biggest sources of man-made carbon emissions, accounting for about 35 percent of global GHG emissions.

Aside from the CCC, other agencies called to participate in the energy policy review are the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Department of Energy, and the National Economic and Development Authority.

De Guzman said the CCC strongly believes that "transitioning away from coal is a cost-effective path to a low-carbon economy for the Philippines."

### Meetings planned

To ensure the success of the undertaking, de Guzman said the CCC would facilitate at least three meetings of the CCC Advisory Board, serving as Steering Committee; three sub-national business summits; 10 roundtable discussions; and 10 technical working group meetings throughout the six months of the policy review process.

He said the CCC and other key government agencies aim to develop concrete measures that will lay the groundwork for clearer procedures to move the Philippines away from coal, and speed up the development of RE like solar, wind, geothermal and hydroelectric.

"Our worthy task will allow us to fulfill our responsibilities,

as public servants, to serve and protect our people from this global threat, and will inspire us, as human beings, with greater capability to sustain humanity," de Guzman stressed.

De Guzman said that while the Philippines is not a major emitter of GHG, it cannot allow its economy to grow with the ways that triggers the climate crisis, which affects the country and other vulnerable nations.

"Let us send a message to the world that if a small country like ours could make a big difference, what more can be achieved with economic superpowers doing their share to ensure a low-emission and climate-resilient future," he pointed out.

"We cannot let humanity live in a world fraught with dangers to life and well-being," he added.

The CCC official said that bending the global warming curve to below 1.5C is a moral imperative, as it would result in saving the lives and livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people, upholding the human rights of the poor and the vulnerable, and ensuring the integrity of our ecosystems.

"Through a whole-of-nation approach for our energy policy review, I am confident that government agencies will work together to harmonize policies and regulations in accordance with the low carbon development pathway," de Guzman said.



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



**FAILON**

THE Quezon City Prosecutor's Office junked the libel case filed by the president of a resort in Boracay against broadcaster Ted Failon and a barangay chairwoman in Boracay for lack of evidence.

In a resolution, Assis-

### Court junks Boracay resort owner's libel case against Ted Failon, bgy chair

tant City Prosecutor Albert Angelo Villalon said there is insufficient evidence to support a case of libel against respondents Failon, whose real name is Mario Teodoro Failon-Etong, and Maylynn Aguirre Graf, chairwoman of Barangay Motag, Boracay Island and officer of Boracay Foundation.

The case stemmed from the complaints of Crisostomo Aquino, president of Boracay West Cove Management Philippines Inc., who claimed the respondents uttered foul language and malicious imputations against

him and that of the Boracay West Cove during the March 28, 2015 episode of Failon's TV program "Failon Ngayon."

Aquino said during the program, Failon uttered "Talagang walang laban si Aquino kung tutuusin dahil maging ang kanyang pinanghahawakang FlagT o forest land use agreement for tourism purposes permit mula sa DENR ay kanse-lado na rin simula Set-yembre 2014."

Failon also said in the program that despite the numerous violations and notice of violations from the government and the cancellation of its FlagT, the complainant's resort continue to operate.

Graf, on the other hand, stated when she was interviewed by Failon that "Hindi mo alam kung saan kumukuhang lakas ng loob. I'm sure meron. Meron siyang (referring to Aquino) pinagkukuhanan ng lakas ng loob, hindi naman ikaw gagawa basta ng wala kang back-up."

The complainant insisted their statements

were malicious and defamatory.

In his counter-affidavit, Failon said he gave a fair and true report on the Boracay West Cove issue and the statements he made in the episode were supported by documents.

Graf, meanwhile, said the subject matter in episode is impressed with public interest, thus it is considered as privileged communication and there is no malice since that she merely expressed the opinion to the question propounded by Failon.

In dismissing the case, Villalon explained the episode evidently covered matters involving public interest considering the environmental effects of alleged violation of government regulations by resorts such as the Boracay West Cove.

"Without relying on mere speculations cannot determine the presence of malice on the part of the respondents. The undersigned also finds that there is no actual malice on the part of respondent Graf," the resolution stated.

**Cory Martinez**





# Balita

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### PAGTUTULUNG-TULONG UPANG MATAMO ANG ISANG MUNDONG NAKAIIWAS SA PAGLALAHONG NG MGA LUPANG TANIMAN

**G**INUGUNITA sa mundo ang World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought (WDCDD) tuwing Hunyo 17. Upang isulong ang kamulatan ng publiko sa mga usaping may kaugnayan sa pandaigdigang pagtutulungan laban sa desertification o pagiging disyerto ng dating taniman at sa epekto ng tagtuyot sa mga apektadong bansa. Isa itong pambihirang okasyon upang paalalahanan ang lahat na maaaring epektibong talakayin ang tungkol sa desertification, na posible itong masolusyunan sa pamamagitan ng pinaigting na pakikibahagi ng mga komunidad at pakikipagtulungan sa lahat ng antas.

Ang tema ngayong 2016 ay "Inclusive Cooperation for Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN)," at may slogan na, "Protect Earth. Restore Land. Engage People," para ipanawagan ang agarang pagkilos upang mapigilan ang pagkawala ng mga lupain at matamo ang land degradation-neutral world sa konteksto ng napapanatiling kaunlaran. Hinihikayat ng WDCDD ang pinakamahuhusay na hakbangin sa mga bansa upang makatulong sa pagbabawas sa matinding problema sa pagiging disyerto ng mga lupain dahil sa matinding tagtuyot.

Inilalarawan ng United Nations ang LDN bilang "a state whereby the amount and quality of land resources, necessary to support ecosystem functions and services and enhance food security, remains stable or increases within specified temporal and spatial scales and ecosystems." Una itong ipinanukala sa COP10 noong 2011, at kalaunan ay napagkasunduan ang hangarin para sa LDN sa Rio+20 noong 2012. Ito ang puntirya para sa Goal 15 ng UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): "Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss."

Nakatuon ang WDCDD sa kahalagahan ng pinag-isang kooperasyon at binalangkas na pagbabago sa pagpapaunlad ng lipunan, ekonomiya at kalikasan upang maibalik sa dati o maisaayos ang mga nawalang lupain at makapag-ambag sa pagsasakatuparan sa SDGs. Wala nang mas malaking usapin kaysa lupa na labis na makaaapekto sa bawat mamamayan sa mundo, dahil mula sa pagkain hanggang sa kasuotan at tirahan, ang lahat ay nagmumula sa lupa.

Isang pandaigdigang pangyayari na banta sa 1.2 bilyong katao sa 168 bansa, ang desertification ay ang pagkawala ng orihinal na lagay ng lupa na kapag sinabayan ng tagtuyot, ay tuluyan nang nawawalan ng silbi ang dating matabang lupa, at naglalahong na ang yamang tubig, gayundin ang pagiging akma nito sa pagtatanim at maging ang hayop, dahil sa pag-iiba-iba ng klima at pagbabago sa mga aktibidad ng tao, gaya ng malawakang pagtatanim, pag-abuso sa kagubatan para sa petrolyo at troso, pagkakalbo ng mga puno at damuhan, at maling irigasyon.

Mahigit 12 milyong produktibong ektarya ang nangakatiwangwang na lang ngayon at hindi mapakinabangan dahil sa desertification at tagtuyot, na matinding banta sa seguridad ng tao sa pamamagitan ng pagkakait ng pagkain, tubig, kabuhayan at maging tahanan, ayon sa ulat ng UN. Inirerekomenda ang pagpapasigla sa kagubatan, muling pagtatanim ng mga puno, at pangangasiwa sa tubig upang maibsan o mabaligtad ang epekto ng desertification. Hinihimok ang mga bansa na papagyamaning uli ang mga nakatiwangwang na lupa upang matiyak ang seguridad sa pagkain at tuluy-tuloy na epektibong mapangasiwaan ang mga lupa upang mapaigting ang pagbangon ng mga komunidad at ng kalikasan. Ang mga gawain ng tao, gaya ng pagkakalbo sa kagubatan at pagsusunog sa bahaging gagawing taniman ay maaaring mapigilan ng epektibong pagsasaka. Natataya na ang pagtaas ng temperatura at naaaksiyunan na rin ito. Ang mga usapin sa paglalahong ng taniman ay makikinabang sa mga programang nakatuon sa komprehensibong paggamit at pagpapalano sa lupa, sa agrikulturang hindi nakasisira sa kalikasan, sa pangangalaga sa biodiversity, at sa pagkontrol sa epekto ng climate change.



THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS  
SINCE 1900

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### INFORMATION

# Working to achieve land degradation- neutral world



**W**ORLD Day to Combat Desertification and Drought (WDCDD) is observed worldwide every year on June 17 to promote public awareness of issues relating to international cooperation to combat desertification and the effects of drought in affected countries. It is a unique occasion to remind everybody that desertification can be effectively tackled, that solutions are possible, through strengthened community participation and cooperation at all levels.

The 2016 theme is "Inclusive Cooperation for Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN)," with the slogan, "Protect Earth. Restore Land. Engage People," calling for urgent action to reverse land degradation and achieve land degradation-neutral world in the context of sustainable development. WDCDD is encouraging best practices in countries to help reduce the magnitude of the problem of desertification and drought.

The United Nations defines LDN as "a state whereby the amount and quality of land resources, necessary to support ecosystem functions and services and enhance food security, remains stable or increases within specified temporal and spatial scales and ecosystems." It was first proposed at COP10 in 2011, and subsequently a goal for LDN was agreed at Rio+20 in 2012. It is a target for Goal 15 of UN Sustainable Development

Goals (SDGs): "Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss."

WDCDD focuses on importance of inclusive cooperation and structural change in socio-economic and envi-

ronmental development to restore and rehabilitate degraded land and contribute towards achieving the SDGs. No bigger issue than land touches every citizen of the world, from food to clothes to shelter, all stems from land resources.

A global phenomenon threatening 1.2 billion people in 168 countries, desertification is a cycle of land degradation which, when exacerbated by drought, turns once fertile soil into sterile land, and loses their bodies of water as well as vegetation and wildlife, as a consequence of climate variability and change and human activities such as intensive farming, forest exploitation for fuel and timber, overgrazing, and poor irrigation practice.

Over 12 million productive hectares are transformed into wasteland because of desertification and drought, which also threaten human security by depriving people of food, access to water, livelihood, and even their homes, according to a UN report. Reforestation, tree regeneration, and water management are recommended to mitigate or reverse the effects of desertification. Nations are urged to recover degraded land to remain food secure as well as sustainably manage land to raise community and ecosystem resilience. Human factors such as overgrazing and clear-cutting land can be controlled by sound farming and grazing practices. Rising temperatures can be predicted and dealt with proactively. Land degradation issues benefit from programs focusing on comprehensive land use and planning, environment friendly agriculture, biodiversity conservation, and climate change adaptation and mitigation.



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## Experts discuss lessons from Pinatubo eruption

By PIA LEE-BRAGO

Twenty-five years after the second largest volcanic eruption of the 20th century, experts, analysts and government officials gathered for a lecture on the preparation and monitoring prior to the eruption of Mount Pinatubo, its lasting impact and lessons learned from the experience.

Private sector representatives and members of the academe also attended the public lecture at the Carnegie Institution for Science on "25 years ago at Pinatubo: the forecast, climax and aftermath of a giant eruption" by Chris Newhall and Renato Solidum.

Newhall, a career volca-

nologist from the United States Geological Survey, described the setting prior to the eruption in which a team of volcanologists from the USGS and Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) made pre-eruption preparations that included safety studies, hazard map estimates, alert level reminders and unrest trend monitoring.

Ambassador to Washington Jose Cuisia Jr. emphasized in his remarks the importance of such collaboration in saving hundreds of lives and property from destruction.

"Thankfully, prior to the eruption, the collaboration

between Phivolcs and USGS resulted in intensive studies of the volcano's past eruption history, timely forecasts and accurate predictions, thus prompting the evacuation of 75,000 people living in the lowlands around Mount Pinatubo and of the 15,000 American servicemen and their dependents from Clark Airbase before the June 15 eruption," he said.

The Mount Pinatubo eruption was considered the largest eruption to affect a densely populated area in the 20th century.

Solidum, Phivolcs director,

emphasized how the eruption's pyroclastic flows, secondary explosions and widespread and extensive ash/tephra fall caused not only the loss of lives but also a great loss of livelihood for affected communities.

The loss of arable and habitable land, collapse of bridges, destruction of roads, flooding and isolation of communities and burial of settlement and agricultural areas were some of the major challenges that the government and communities had to face in rebuilding their lives after the disaster.

He also reiterated the im-

portance of local and national government collaboration, availability of modern scientific information, use of documentaries and community-based information campaigns and continued monitoring of post eruption processes as the important lessons learned from the Pinatubo experience.

Cuisia emphasized the need to collaborate in studying natural hazards and that information sharing would reduce disaster risks.

"Twenty-five years later, local communities have rebuilt their lives from the very lahar that took away what

they had," he said of how Filipinos showed resilience and *pagkakapit-bisig* in pursuing rehabilitation and reconstruction programs. Lahar was eventually quarried and sold as construction material. It is also used as material for handicrafts or souvenirs.

The Philippine embassy set up a booth at the lobby of the Carnegie Institution for Science during the lecture to showcase the sample products derived from Mount Pinatubo ashes.

Mount Pinatubo is now also a popular eco-tourism destination for climbing, hiking and kayaking.



# BusinessWorld

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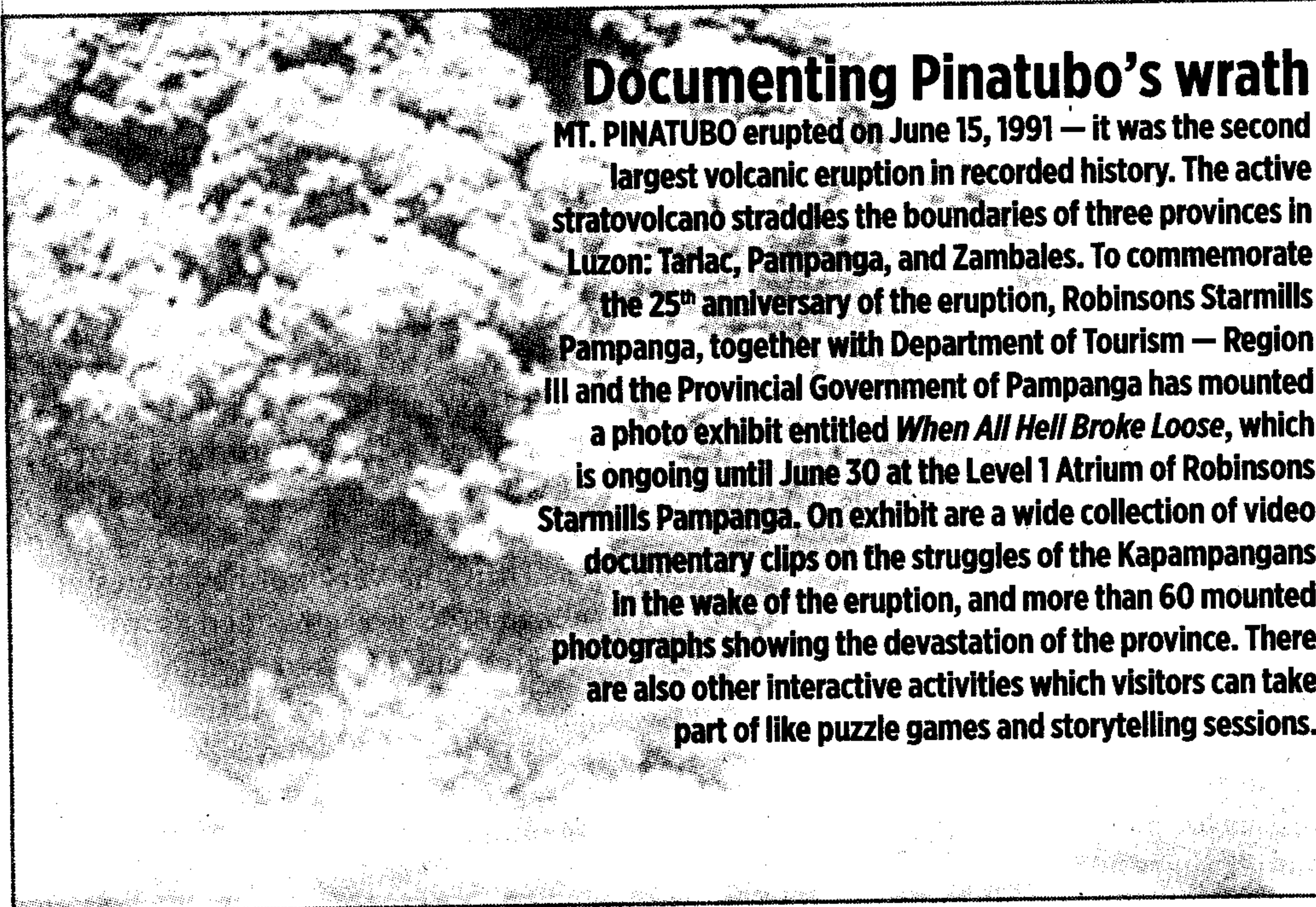
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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



### Documenting Pinatubo's wrath

MT. PINATUBO erupted on June 15, 1991 — it was the second largest volcanic eruption in recorded history. The active stratovolcano straddles the boundaries of three provinces in Luzon: Tarlac, Pampanga, and Zambales. To commemorate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the eruption, Robinsons Starmills Pampanga, together with Department of Tourism — Region III and the Provincial Government of Pampanga has mounted a photo exhibit entitled *When All Hell Broke Loose*, which is ongoing until June 30 at the Level 1 Atrium of Robinsons Starmills Pampanga. On exhibit are a wide collection of video documentary clips on the struggles of the Kapampangans in the wake of the eruption, and more than 60 mounted photographs showing the devastation of the province. There are also other interactive activities which visitors can take part of like puzzle games and storytelling sessions.

USGS (U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY)





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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### Asean fiasco

**I**T WAS meant to be a showcase of regional amity, celebrating a quarter-century of dialogue between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. But the special meeting of foreign ministers in the Chinese city of Kunming ended in disarray and rancor, when a joint message with a strong statement on the South China Sea issue was released, then denied and retracted within hours.

#### EDITORIAL

Singapore-based analyst Ian Storey called the incident a “diplomatic fiasco”—but it was also a sign, the clearest one yet, that Chinese dominance in the region has split the Asean bloc, and prevented it from speaking in one voice. This inability has worrying implications for the peaceful and calibrated resolution of the various maritime and territorial conflicts in the South China Sea.

The joint statement of the Asean ministers was released by the Malaysian foreign ministry late Tuesday. It included the following passage: “We expressed our serious concerns over recent and ongoing developments, which have eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions and which may have the potential to undermine peace, security and stability in the South China Sea.” The statement did not mention any country in particular, but it was clear that the reference was to “recent and ongoing developments” undertaken by China, including the reclamation of land in disputed reefs and the installation of military facilities in the Spratlys and the Paracels.

Within hours, the Malaysian foreign ministry felt compelled to recall the statement, saying “there are urgent amendments to be made.” The spokesperson of the Indonesian foreign ministry characterized the initial statement as a mere “media guideline” and not an official message or communiqué. And a spokesperson for the Chinese foreign ministry denied that a statement was even in the program. “This meeting was a closed-door meeting and from the beginning there was no preparation to make a joint statement.”

But the Straits Times of Singapore reported that two of China’s closest allies in Asean had objected to the prepared statement. “It is understood ... that the statement had been blocked because Laos and Cambodia—both reliant on China for investment and aid—had objected to it.”

Regional experts saw China’s increasingly visible hand in the picture. Said Southeast Asia expert Carl Thayer: “China obviously objected to the wording of the joint statement. This led to the Asean secretariat’s decision to rescind the earlier release.”

Tellingly, only Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi showed up at the scheduled news conference at the close of the special ministers’ meeting. While it is true that the meeting had run long and that some Asean foreign ministers had had to leave, Wang could have been joined by any of the remaining ministers, or even by the Asean secretary-general. A summit to mark 25 years of dialogue should have ended with a display of that dialogue in action.

Instead, and despite the excuse of “urgent amendments,” the ministers failed to issue a joint communiqué.

This is unfortunate. It brings sharply back to mind the turmoil of the 2012 foreign ministers’ meeting in Phnom Penh, when host Cambodia heeded China’s admonitions and for the first time in its history Asean failed to issue the traditional joint statement at the end of an annual meeting.

It also brings us yet more proof that China has successfully split Asean on the South China Sea issue, preventing it from offering a unified position. This has serious consequences.

For the Asean claimant countries, and especially for both the Philippines and Vietnam, the two countries which have pursued their claims most vigorously, the lack of a united Asean means that one viable solution has moved even further beyond reach. In 2002, China reached an agreement with Asean to negotiate a Code of Conduct for the resolution of disputes in the region. A decade and a half after that Declaration on the Conduct of Parties was sealed, the Code remains a figment of the diplomatic imagination.