

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

DATE : 19 JUN 2016

DAY : Sunday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

19 JUN 2016

DATE

B2-1

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

BusinessMirror

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Saving eagles, protecting forests



THE rescued juvenile Philippine Eagle from Aurora province. DENR-STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

✉@jonlmayuga

First of two parts

ON June 1 a juvenile Philippine Eagle (*Pithecophaga jefferyi*) was rescued within a protected area in Aurora, a province in the eastern part of Central Luzon.

Incidentally, the rescue took place days before the 18th year celebration of the Philippine Eagle Week, which is being annually observed from June 4 to 10 by virtue of Presidential Proclamation 79.

This year's theme, "Saving Eagles, Protecting Forests, Securing Our Future," underscored anew the need to protect the forest, the home to the Philippine Eagle and other wildlife.

Also known as the "monkey-eating Eagle," the Philippine Eagle is the largest of all birds of prey in the world and has been declared as a national symbol. On July 4, 1995, it was declared by then-President Fidel V. Ramos as the national bird of the Philippines.

Critically endangered

THE Philippine eagle, however, is currently on the list of "Critically Endangered" on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species. This means it is still in the brink of extinction.

The number of the Philippine Eagles in

the wild remains unknown. Experts believe the number has rapidly decreased along with the country's vast forest cover. This is aggravated by the fact that hunting, for food and trophy, and illegal wildlife trade, continues to be a major problem.

Director Theresa Mundita S. Lim of the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said slightly over around 400 pairs of the rare eagles are left in the wild.

"Not more than 500 pairs are left in the wild. That is just an estimate. We are expanding our monitoring in search of nesting sites as part of our ongoing program to protect them in the wild," she said.

Lim said the rescued eagle from Aurora would be released back into the wild as soon as the DENR-BMB's veterinarian completes the screening.

The eagle, she said, is "old enough" and may have already imprinted in the area where it was caught.

"We just have to identify the exact area for its release," Lim said.

Hunting: A serious threat

HUNTING remains as one of the most serious threats to the existence of the Philippine Eagle, even in protected areas where they are supposed to be protected against hunters.

According to DENR officials in Central Luzon, the rescued juvenile eagle was caught in a snare, locally called *silo*, set up by local hunters within the Aurora Memorial National Park (AMNP), believed to be home to at least a pair of the Philippine Eagle.

Hunting is a prohibited act under at least two environmental laws—the Wildlife Act and National Integrated Protected Areas System (Nipas) Act, which specifically prohibits hunting within a protected area.

A protected area by virtue of Proclamation 220, the AMNP covers an area of 5,676 hectares, stretching over 50 kilometers along the Bongabon-Baler Road. Established in 1937, the park was dedicated to former First Lady Aurora Aragon Quezon.

Known for its rich biodiversity being part of the Sierra Madre mountain range, AMNP remains highly vulnerable to destructive human activities like most protected areas.

Besides the Philippine Eagle, AMNP is home to amphibians, reptiles and birds, including falcons and hawks. It is also home to the Luzon-water restart, a small, Old World

flycatcher restricted to rapidly deteriorating riverine habitat in the Philippines.

Sightings of Philippine Eagle were previously reported in the Sierra Madre mountain part of Aurora.

Increased awareness

THE capture and subsequent rescue of the juvenile eagle confirms the existence of at least a pair of the rare bird of prey breeding in the region, said Fred Sadueste, chief of the wildlife enforcement division of the DENR in Central Luzon.

Eugene Nace, a farmer who rescued the eagle, turned it over to DENR Aurora, the DENR Central Luzon said in a news statement issued on June 4.

Joey Blanco, the DENR provincial chief in Aurora, said the eagle sustained no serious injuries because the snare, which was intended for monkeys, only caught its claws.

Sadueste said the proper course of action taken by the rescuer is a good sign and proof that the DENR's information, education and communication campaign continues to increase the level of awareness of the people in Aurora and other parts of Central Luzon.

Nevertheless, he said the training of wildlife-enforcement officers would continue as they eye to deputize more residents to ensure the protection of wildlife in the Sierra Madre and in the rest of Central Luzon.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

*Saving eagles,
protecting forests*

Environment month

FRANCISCO MILLA JR., regional director of DENR in Central Luzon, said the rescue of the Philippine Eagle is very timely, since June is the month the DENR and the country are celebrating the Environment Month, with the theme "Go Wild for Life, Combat Biodiversity Loss."

This underscores the zero tolerance for illegal-wildlife trade and the importance of protecting and conserving biodiversity, he added. "We must conserve and protect our wildlife, especially the Philippine Eagle, which is our very own pride. Their population is now dwindling, and they are placed at the 'critically endangered' status, meaning their kind is nearing extinction," Milla explained.

Enhancing protection

NEW sightings of Philippine Eagle, including the rescue of juveniles being injured or trapped outside protected areas, is proof that the campaign to save the critically endangered species from extinction is gaining ground, Lim said.

However, she said it also calls for a more intensified campaign to enhance the protection and conservation beyond protected areas, particularly those known to be home to the rare bird of prey. The protected-area management system established under Nipas, Lim said, is one way of enhancing the protection of threatened wildlife species.

Since there is proof of sightings outside declared protected areas, Lim said the DENR is looking at declaring more areas as "critical habitat" for the Philippine Eagle.

This is currently being seriously considered for Mount Mangan, where the juvenile Philippine Eagle could have come from. Eventually, Mount Mangan can become the eagle's territory where it could eventually find a mate and breed.

"Most of the eagles being shot and injured by hunters happen outside protected areas. That is why we have buffer zones for every protected area, where communities are supposed to protect them," Lim said. He added that buffer zones would give wildlife an idea that there is danger beyond.

However, a juvenile eagle, after six months, becomes independent and needs to find its own territory away from its parents. This explains why juvenile eagles are exposed to risks of being shot or captured outside protected areas, Lim pointed out. *To be continued*

P2

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900

MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

19 JUN 2016

DATE

16
PAGE

UPPER HALF

✓
LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Protection of the country's national bird urged

By **RESTITUTO A. CAYUBIT**

TACLOBAN CITY, Leyte — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources' regional office in Eastern Visayas (DENR-8) is urging intensified protection of the Philippine national bird as the agency celebrates Philippine Environment Month and Philippine Eagle week this month.

This year's celebration is themed, "Saving Eagles, Protecting Forests, Securing our Future, Stop the Killing!"

"While we are proud that one of

the largest, most powerful eagles in the world is our Philippine Eagle, it is unfortunate that its presence is very rare. That is why we're urging everyone to help protect them and their natural habitat — the forests," said DENR-8 Regional Director Leonardo Sibbaluca.

Sibbaluca said one related activity was an on-site awareness raising activity held in Barangay Catmon in Silago, Southern Leyte where several sightings of the National Bird has been reported.

A lecture and open forum with local

residents sought to secure support in the conservation and protection of forest areas in Silago, Southern Leyte.

One of the largest of its kind in the world, the Philippine eagle stands one-meter tall and has a broad wingspan extending up to two meters long.

Sibbaluca said that the Philippine Eagle can be found in the islands of Luzon, Samar, Leyte, and Mindanao. He added that the bird feeds on lemurs, snakes, monkeys and bats.

He claims that aside from being a solitary and fiercely territorial bird, what makes the bird unique and interesting is its behavior towards its mate. "A Philippine Eagle keeps only one mate during its lifetime. If its mate is nowhere to be found, it won't stop looking for its mate and will not look for another," Sibbaluca said.

The DENR-8 director also informed reporters that the Philippine Eagle (*Pithecopaga jefferyi*), belongs to the top three largest and most powerful eagles in the world. While it is a giant raptor endemic to the Philippines, it is unfortunate that it is considered a critically-endangered vertebrate species, he added.

Sibbaluca said the Philippine Eagle Week is celebrated every June 4-10 of the year by virtue of Proclamation No. 79 signed by President Joseph Ejercito Estrada on February 24, 1999.

Abante

UNA SA BALITA

June 19, 2016

DATE

5

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

89 sinkholes natisod sa W. Visayas

Walumpu't siyam na sinkholes ang natagpuan ng Western Visayas Mines and Geosciences Bureau ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa bayan ng Buenavista, Guimaras Island matapos ang isinagawang preliminary geohazard mapping and assessment program.

Sa kanilang pagsusuri, ang ilang sinkhole ay may lawak na isang kilometro at nasa 50 metro ang lalim habang ang iba naman ay makikita lamang kapag ginamitan ng ground penetrating radar.

Labimpitong barangay sa Buenavista ang napaulat na may sinkholes na

mapanganib sa mga residente dahil anumang oras ay maaaring gumuho ang lupa na kinatitirikan ng mga bahay at mga gusali.

Kamakailan ay may napaulat na may mga taong nahulog sa mga nabuong sinkhole sa Kabankalan City sa Negros Occidental at may hayop ding namatay matapos mahulog sa butas.

Paliwanag ng mga eksperto, ang sinkholes ay nabubuo kapag ang mga pundasyon na bato o limestone rocks sa ilalim ng lupa ay natutunaw sa madalas na pagdaloy ng tubig na nagreresulta sa pagguho ng lupa. (Lhean Angeles)

19 JUN 2016

DATE

A-2

PAGE

UPPER HALF

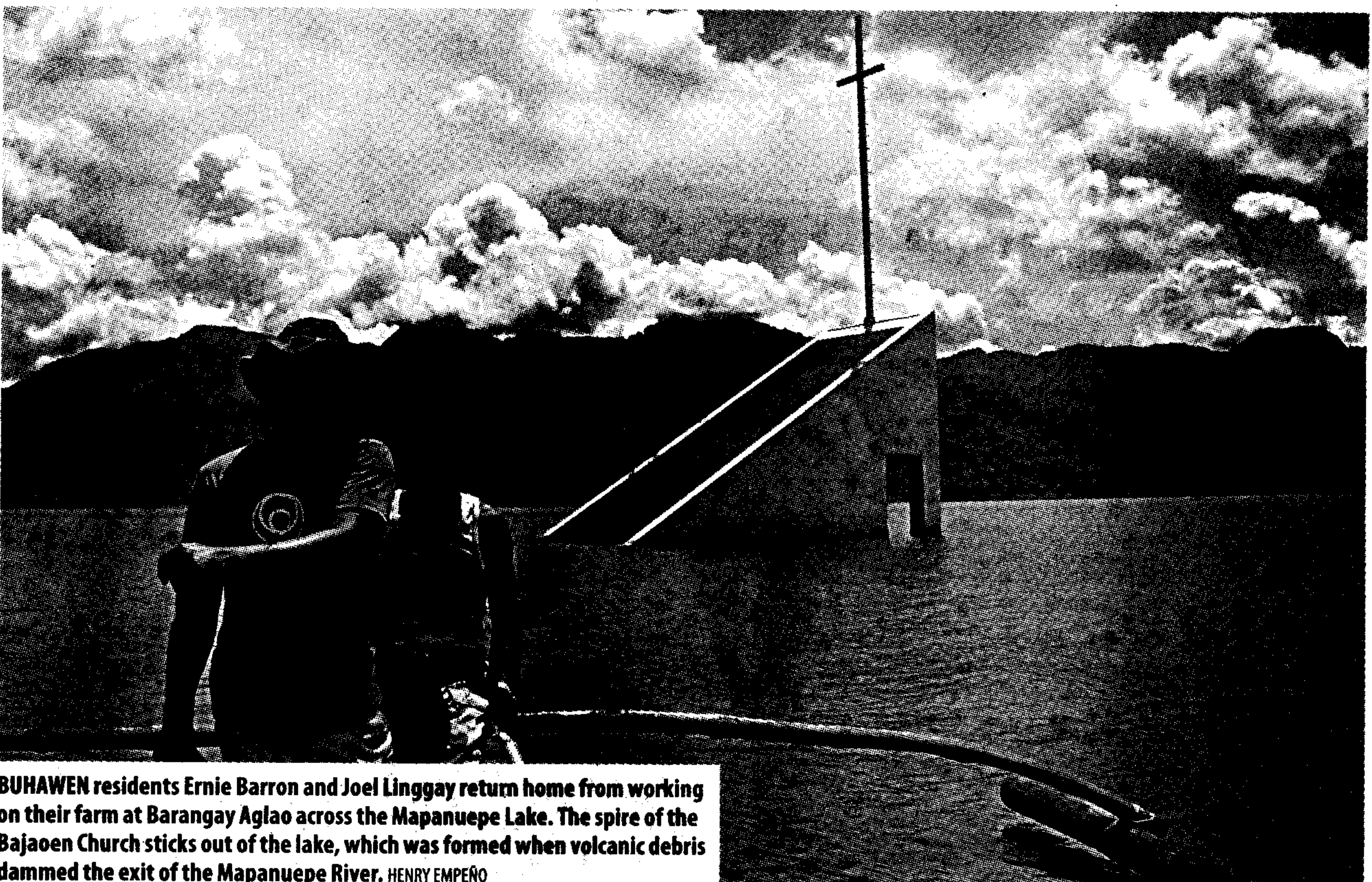
LOWER HALF

BusinessMirror

P1

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

'Lost' village of Buhawen overcomes Pinatubo tragedy



BUHAWEN residents Ernie Barron and Joel Linggay return home from working on their farm at Barangay Aglao across the Mapanuepe Lake. The spire of the Bajaoen Church sticks out of the lake, which was formed when volcanic debris dammed the exit of the Mapanuepe River. HENRY EMPENO

By HENRY EMPENO

Correspondent

BUHAWEN, San Marcelino, Zambales—All that remains now of the old village of Buhawen is the spire of the Bajaoen church, a giant stairway of white concrete topped by a rusty-colored iron cross that sticks out of the calm Mapanuepe Lake.

If you looked closely enough, you can see faintly part of the church's nave under the deep green water, but the other features of the once-bustling village seem to have been permanently erased from view when it was entombed in watery lahar after the Mount Pinatubo eruption 25 years ago.

"Wala na. That's all you can see," boatman Ernie Barron gestured at the spire, as we crossed the

Mapanuepe Lake one recent Saturday. He said there were some people who tried to take underwater pictures, but failed to get good results because the water was murky.

Facing the church steeple, one can see in the distance the scarred remains of Cullen Peak, where mining companies dug out gold-bearing ore two decades ago. Nearer the lake were a series of dams supposed to contain the mine tailings and prevent them from spilling into the village.

Buhawen, one of the 18 barangays of San Marcelino, was a thriving community of farmers and miners, and home to the Benguet-Dizon gold and copper mines, when Mount Pinatubo erupted in June 1991.

The village, about 25 kilometers deep into the mountains of San Marcelino, was among the upland communities heavily damaged by ash, sand and other volcanic debris spewed by Pinatubo.

But it was only during the ensuing rainy season that Buhawen really fell. As rains washed down the volcanic materials from the surrounding slopes, the debris dammed the Mapanuepe River downstream and soon flooded the Mapanuepe Valley, where the villages of Buhawen and Aglao were located.

Despite the heavy odds, residents here have not only survived the Pinatubo eruption; they have prevailed.

Today, a new Buhawen stands at Sitio Pili, growing back at the old hillside site where miners were allotted their living quarters by Benguet Corp., which then operated the Dizon mines.

BusinessMirror

DATE

A-2

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

LOST VILLAGE OF BUHAWEN

Retaining the order at the old corporate village, Buhawen now looks like a model community with a gated entrance, an orderly row of houses mostly surrounded by small flower gardens, and paved roads lined on the sides by painted stones. At the village plaza, happy-looking children played tag that rainy Saturday, sheltered by the roof of the covered basketball court.

"Maybe because we're a resilient lot," said Mylene, a store owner, who offered to cook our lunch of boiled rice and dry pork *adobo* during our visit. She said the old folks—mostly

of Ilocano stock that intermarried with native Zambals and some members of the Aeta tribe—experienced a lot of hardship, "but they're used to the hard life so they adapted well."

Mylene was born at the new Buhawen after the eruption, but she can recall the stories her parents and other relatives told about the evacuation and their subsequent return to Pili when it was already safe.

She learned that, after the eruption, the Buhawen residents took on odd jobs—mostly serving as laborers in construction sites in town, planting and harvesting rice in lowland barangays. In between jobs, they cleared their old lots in Pili, scraping 1 to 3 feet of Pinatubo sand off their property, until it was again habitable.

With a new home, the residents of Buhawen said life soon returned to normal.

That Saturday when we visited Pili, Ernie Barron and Joel Linggay had just returned from plowing their farm in Aglao across the lake. That is where most of the farms are, Ernie said, because Pili is a hilly area and permits little farming.

Most of the local farmers grow palay, vegetables and root crops, like sweet camote and cassava, which they sell at the town market.

Aside from farming, Buhawen residents now mostly earn their livelihood from working out of town. Her husband, for example, works at the Hanjin shipyard in Subic town. Some have found work in Manila, and not a few "more fortunate" residents have secured well-paying jobs abroad, mostly in the Middle East, Mylene said.

Still others earned their keep by engaging in black-sand mining, using magnets *mano-a-mano* to separate magnetite from the tons and tons of sand deposited by Pinatubo eruption on the Santo Tomas River. This activity, however, was only possible during the rainy season, when the strong river current churned the sand, making it easy to separate the light volcanic deposits from the heavier magnetite.

Then lately, Mylene added, more and more locals have turned their attention to what was apparently the Buhawen residents' first love—gold mining.

As a mining community, Buhawen was famous for its mineral deposits that included gold, silver, copper and chromite.

In the heyday of the Benguet-Dizon mining concession, it was estimated that at least 500 hectares of the mountain in Buhawen, specifically its three sitios of Naban, Tikis and Sayasay, have been exploited by the mining firms.

That time, the employees were paid about P15 per hour, making them one of the highest-paid workers in the province, said Edward Barron, 41, whose father worked as all-around equipment operator at the Benguet mines.

After Benguet Corp. ceased operations in 1997, some locals scavenged for silver-copper concentrates at the old mine sites, Edward said. "But later on, we learned from Igorot natives who were miners here about small-scale mining and, since then, we have been mining on our own."

As of now, Edward said about 40 percent of the menfolk in Buhawen engage in this rediscovered passion—digging for gold.

"Those who are not into farming, and those who have no permanent jobs, naturally turn to mining," Edward noted.

Small-scale mining in Buhawen seems to be an easier alternative for local menfolk, most of whom are children of former workers at the Benguet mines or former miners themselves.

Along the road to Camalca, another Buhawen sitio farther east of Ipil, are the easily recognizable entrances to small mine shafts, most of them shored by timber and barred with makeshift gates made of tree branches.

These lead down to small one-man tunnels from where the brown-colored gold-bearing rocks are pried out.

In front of these entrances are parked the motor scooters of miners, the choice means of transportation that allows them easy movement along the dirt road. Also seen are some small trucks that collect sacks of gold rocks from the small mine sites and bring them to makeshift mills that grind the rocks to bring out the gold inside.

Small-scale mining is hard work, and bereft of any scientific survey, it is mostly depended on luck, said Noel Antonio, 39, one of the locals digging along the Camalca road.

"*Tsamba-tsamba lang* [We operate on pure luck]," Noel said. "Often-times, we make an average of P250 to P300 a day, but there are times when we earn less than P50 a week."

Tunneling for gold is also a dangerous occupation, said Vilmer Caceres, a 56-year-old former Benguet worker who was a tunnel worker for 20 years.

At Camalca, Vilmer has his own tunnel, but he advises against digging too deep.

"*Delikado ang mahabang tunnel dito kasi malambot ang lupa*," he said. "*Mahaba na iyong 20 meters*."

At a makeshift ore mill in Pili, Hermie Dagun, 39, was washing the crushed ore with water to remove the mud-like detritus and allow the heavier gold-bearing grains to settle.

Hermie, the son of another former mine worker, also works with a gang to mine gold-bearing rocks in Camalca, and here they pay the mill owner P500 to crush their 15 sacks of rocks they have collected.

The 15 sacks take about two hours to grind, but with just a few sacks done, Hermie already had some grains to show, although the small shiny grains hardly looked like the gold everyone at Buhawen seemed to be crazy about.

But the small grains of gold, upon reaching a weight of 1 gram, would fetch him P1,000, Hermie said.

19 JUN 2016

DATE

B2-4

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

BusinessMirror

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Borongan diocese lauds mine-closure order

A CHURCH official in Eastern Samar has commended the provincial government's mine-closure order for at least three mining companies.

In separate letters, Eastern Samar Gov. Conrado Nicart has ordered three mining companies to stop their mining operations in Manicani and Homonhon islands due to peace and order problems.

Copies of the letters were obtained by the civil-society network Philippine Misereor Partnership Inc. (PMPI). In the letter to Hinatuan Mining Corp. (HMC), the lone mining company on Manicani Island in Guiuan town, the governor said "previous similar situation occurred before involving the community and your company, which resulted in the loss of life and [caused] bodily harm."

"Governor Nicart may be referring to an unfortunate event in May 2001, when protesting locals clashed with the security forces

of HMC, causing the death of a protester and injuring others," PMPI National Coordinator Yolly Esguerra said.

Esguerra added that the current situation in Manicani is not very far from the circumstances of May 2001. "Since the attempts of HMC to dock barges and start loading operations in September 2014, the situation in Manicani changed from peaceful to volatile," she lamented.

Esguerra also warned: "It could get worse anytime and it is a good thing the provincial leadership had the courage to intervene and simmer the situation down."

In the letter to Cambayas Mining and Emir Corp., the two companies involved in extracting minerals in Homonhon, Nicart also cited a 2003 provincial ordinance that



BORONGAN clergy CBCPNEWS

imposed an "indefinite moratorium" on large-scale mining activities in the province.

"As you can see, the incoming president [Rodrigo Duterte], as [outgoing] mayor of Davao City, is one of those who supported local autonomy, especially in the case of imposing mining bans," Esguerra added.

"With this, we are optimistic that he will not question the decision of Eastern Samar Governor Nicart, and probably of other local government officials in the future, to implement their ordinance that only aims to protect

their constituency and the environment," she said. Fr. Juderick Calumpiano, social action director of Borongan diocese, said mining has been destroying the province's environment and caused divisions in communities.

"It is putting first the interests of the people and the protection of the islands and the home islands against further destruction and divisions," Calumpiano said. Even Pope Francis, he said, is calling for a paradigm shift among mining companies whose interests are different from the communities affected by their operation. **CBCPNews**

19 JUN 2016

DATE

A-23

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Church groups ask Digong: Protect environment

By Annelle Tayao-Juego

MEMBERS of a Catholic movement called on incoming President Rodrigo Duterte to prioritize environmental protection, in line with Pope Francis' encyclical "Laudato Si" that urged all Catholics to "care for our common home."

Speaking on Saturday at the celebration of the encyclical's first anniversary at the University of Santo

Tomas, leaders of groups participating in the Global Catholic Climate Movement Pilipinas urged Duterte to "make the cause of environment a benchmark of his leadership."

"We have written a letter to Duterte [asking him] to declare our island ecosystem a no-mining zone," said Yolanda Esguerra, national coordinator of Philippine Misereor Partnership Inc., a network of nongovernment organizations and faith-based groups.

"Talks on the environment should be taken seriously, especially when it comes to mining because we've seen how much destruction it brings," Esguerra said.

Fr. Edwin Gariguez, executive secretary of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines' National Secretariat for Social Action, expressed hope that the incoming administration would "push for renewable energy and review the existing contracts of

coal-fired power plants and coal-mining companies."

Another group, the Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines, urged Duterte to focus on the country's waters, which it said have also been polluted by mining and quarrying activities.

They said Duterte could adopt harsher penalties for those who violate environmental laws, similar to his unrelenting war on crime.

19 JUN 2016

DATE

Page 1 Story

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

①

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

#Journeyto30 *Nature's wrath*

By EPI FABONAN III

First, the birds. They flew in large swarms away from Mount Pinatubo, a volcano that had been dormant for five centuries. Some Aeta residents at the foot of the mountain reported seeing "a stampede of thousands of animals" that hurried to safety when they sensed the impending catastrophe. Then came the earthquakes, which the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) called "harmonic

Turn to Page 3

Nature's From Page 1

tremors" and were felt longer than usual. The volcano also began emitting ash plumes, caused by small phreatic eruptions, which fell on towns closest it.

On June 10, 1991, the US government began evacuating some 14,500 personnel and their dependents from Clark Air Base, which was located 15 kilometers from the volcano. Military vehicles transported the personnel to Subic Bay Naval Base, where navy ships awaited to bring them stateside. Philippine authorities also began evacuating some 12,000 residents living within a 30-km radius danger zone, including Aeta residents from the slopes of Pinatubo.

Then, without warning, came the monstrous explosion followed by the gigantic columns of ash and smoke from the volcano's crater that quickly billowed for miles in the sky.

Pinatubo was finally awake

The eruption on June 12, during the country's 93rd Independence Day, was Pinatubo's first major eruption. But it wasn't the last and the most explosive. In the days that followed, it unleashed nature's wrath in the form of ash, sulfur gas and pyroclastic material that roared down the slopes of Pinatubo. Eyewitnesses reported seeing boulders the size of cars falling from the mountain.

Three days later, on June 15, Pinatubo's climactic and most powerful eruption happened. Volcanologists pegged the eruption at Level 6 in the Volcanic Explosivity Index — the second highest level. The climactic eruption ejected five cubic kms. of pyroclastic material and 20 million tons of sulfur dioxide. The explosion created a massive ash cloud that rose 35 kilometers. Reporters said the sky was so dark it was "like the night."

Such was the force of the eruption that ash clouds were able to reach as far as the Indian Ocean and were enough to cool the Earth's temperature by half a degree.

The cataclysm was a nightmare for Philippine authorities as they struggled to evacuate thousands of residents in the affected areas and provide basic needs. Some residents refused to leave their homes even at gunpoint, unaware of the imminent danger from the volcano.

To make matters worse, Typhoon Diding formed in the Pacific Ocean off Samar and moved northwest, bringing rain to Luzon and causing ash from Pinatubo to turn into massive mudflows called lahar.

A total of 847 people died in the catastrophe, many of whom were buried in houses that collapsed under the heavy weight of the wet ash on the roofs. Others were killed by lahar that inundated homes along major rivers that flowed from the volcano.



19 JUN 2016

DATE

Page 1 Story

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

2

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

NATURE'S
WRATH

Evacuees swelled to 329,000 families, who were resettled in Pampanga, Bulacan, Tarlac and Metro Manila. Respiratory ailments, diarrhea and measles also became widespread among evacuees, particularly children.

A government post-assessment of the damage showed the startling cost of the cataclysm: Damage to agriculture, infrastructure and personal property totalled at least P10.1 billion in 1991 and another P1.9 billion in 1992. Region III lost a total of P454 million in business in 1991, with manufacturing as the most affected sector.

Pinatubo's monumental impact placed a heavy burden on the Cory Aquino administration, which was still recovering from the 1990 Luzon earthquake and a series of bloody coup d'états in 1989. The Pinatubo eruption was its last major challenge.

To consolidate government and private sector response to the disaster, Aquino signed Memorandum Order 369 on June 26, creating Task Force Mount Pinatubo. The government response harnessed bayanihan as its rehabilitation, reconstruction and development strategy. It formed Kabisig programs, participated in by various local and foreign aid agencies both from the government and private sectors. The Kabisig programs created alternative livelihood, built new communities, distributed aid and took care of affected families.

The success of the Kabisig programs proved that the Cory Aquino administration was up to the challenge. Indeed, with a nation working hand-in-hand in the face of disaster, a nation can endure and triumph over even a monstrous hail of ash and stone.

Today, there are barely any signs of the cataclysm that rocked Central Luzon. In the wake of the destruction, it left the region with an abundance of mineral resources that is now a major source of livelihood. It's amazing how nature's wrath turned the center of a catastrophe into a center of trade, economic growth and opportunity.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

19 JUN 2016

DATE

A-16

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Under the volcano

HOW TIME flies. In the cosmic reckoning, a quarter of a century is barely a hiccup, and it seems to have passed like a brisk breeze.

What has happened since the cataclysmic eruption of Mount Pinatubo on June 15, 1991, that killed over 1,000 people, sent two million others fleeing their homes, destroyed P10 billion in infrastructure, and closed America's air base in Clark and naval base in Subic? The eruption, now recognized as the second largest in the 20th century (after the eruption of Novarupta in Alaska on June 6, 1912), was marked by an ash column that was said to have risen 22 miles. Scientists say the tons of material spewed into the air travelled around the world and cooled global temperatures for years after the blast.

EDITORIAL Bacolor in Pampanga was one of the areas so devastated it evoked Mount Doom in JRR Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings." And lahar made it a no-man's land. (Lahar, defined as a slurry of pyroclastic material, rocky debris and water: There's a term many Filipinos didn't even know existed prior to 1991. Now it's a byword. As is Phivolcs, shorthand for the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.)

A recent report by the INQUIRER's Tonette Orejas describes the post-eruption terrain in terms of the river network. Even as residents have returned to their old settlements, the eight rivers connected to Pinatubo remain inaccessible by boat. Pasac River in Sasmuan has dried up so badly that it's said one can walk on it all the way to the nearby town of Orani. Yet when it rains, Pasac can't drain the water properly, sending it inland. Pampanga River, when draining, brings silt and trash to 30 other rivers in Central Luzon. According to a 2002 study conducted by the Japanese firm Nippon Koei for the Pinatubo Hazard Urgent Mitigation Project Phases 3 and 4, "all rivers in the project area have been subject to significant modification by both natural processes (lahar and sediment movements resulting from the eruption) and manmade interventions."

As a result of the massive accumulations of lahar on the riverbeds, most of the aquatic flora and fauna have been destroyed. The Nippon Koei study recommended "priority structural measures" in order to "stabilize the river water flow and contribute to the recovery of aquatic flora and fauna."

In terms of economics, the gross regional domestic product in Central Luzon dropped from a hearty 7.6 percent in 1988 to a negative 2.4 percent in 1991. The human cost has been high as well. For one, the Aeta uprooted by Pinatubo's eruption will never again see their homeland as they remember it. And at least 100,000 families still live in resettlement centers in Pampanga, Tarlac and Zambales. Imagine: an entire generation growing up and knowing life in a resettlement site as the normal.

The Philippine government spent an estimated P32 billion for relief operations and resettlement of displaced families, dredging of waterways, and rehabilitation/construction of infrastructure. And the people themselves have soldiered on. Last Election Day, former residents of Bacolor returned to vote. The townsfolk have resumed selling the delicacies for which Bacolor is known. Villages in the shadow of the FVR Megadike are returning to life. The woodcarvers in Betis still carve out a living there. Tourism is active in the form of a guided tour for mountaineers and other visitors of Pinatubo's crater lake. The gross regional domestic product of Central Luzon hit 9 percent in 2014. And in 2017, a shuttered school that once sheltered displaced fleeing Aetas will reopen in the volcano's shadow.

It remains a fragile existence 25 years after the fact. But just as the eruption and its aftermath are testament to the awesome power of nature, so, too, has the Filipino experience in the Pinatubo era been a testament to quiet resilience and true grit.

Much can be learned, as evidenced by the establishment of a museum devoted to the eruption at the Center for Kapampangan Studies, built by Holy Angel University. The eruption "developed courage, unity and resiliency in our people and deepened our faith in God," said Pampanga Gov. Lilia Pineda. "Our challenge now is to let the next generations know this kind of natural hazard and what we Kapampangan did to overcome it."

People cope. People endure. If for nothing else, this quarter-century mark of the Pinatubo eruption should indicate how administrations set about making people's lives better under the volcano—or not.

The Manila Times

19 JUN 2016

DATE

B-7

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

59 fish species in danger of extinction

BY GREGORIO E. DELA ROSA, JR.
HARIBON FOUNDATION

THE fish we may be eating today may be extinct 15 to 25 years from now. Do we have our fill now, or should we save these fish varieties from overexploitation?

A new study conducted by Haribon Foundation in partnership with the Newcastle University showed that 59 different species are already disappearing from catches of reef-based fishers.

Dr. Margarita N. Lavides, of Haribon said that the belief that the sea is of unlimited resource is not true. We are slowly losing once common, wide-ranging, yet inherently large vulnerable reef fishes ...

She further explains that "Coral reefs are good sentinels of global ocean change, and like the Philippine Eagle in our forests, the five most vulnerable species to local extinction we found, especially the bumphead parrotfish, giant grouper and humphead wrasse, are telling us that there's not much time left for action".

For his part, Dr. Nicholas Polunin, of Newcastle University UK said "These losses we've recorded in the Philippines are reflective of unsustainable exploitation affecting this exceptionally species rich ecosystem and region but they also mirror what is happening in ecosystems around the globe".

From 2012 to 2014, the Haribon Foundation,

Newcastle University, UK and the Darwin Initiative 19-020 Project interviewed 2,655 fishers around coral reefs.



Coral reefs are called the rainforests of the seas. These are the most biodiverse ecosystem in the coastal and marine environments. Even if the country harbors only 9% of the total global coral reef area, the Philippines is still considered to be the global epicenter of shorefish diversity.

Five of the 59 identified locally disappeared species have the highest number of fishers reporting they have not caught them in the past half of a century.

Filipinos may not easily find anymore such varieties as bumphead parrotfish (*Bolbometopon muricatum*), humphead wrasse (*Cheilinus undulatus*), giant grouper (*Epinephelus lanceolatus*), the mangrove red snapper (*Lutjanus argentimaculatus*), and the African pompano (*Alectis ciliaris*).

The huge decline of these disappearing fin-

fish species may have already had ecological impact considering the importance of these varieties in coral reefs.

For example, the bumphead parrotfish or taungan eats and scrapes algae and bacteria, helping to control algal overgrowth and thus allow healthy growth of corals.

The taungan can remove five tons of coral every year and this washes ashore and becomes the beautiful white sand we enjoy in beaches. The humphead wrasse or mameng feeds on and helps to regulate the population size of some of the poisonous animals found on the reef, an important one being the crown-of-thorns starfish, which feeds directly on living hard coral.

The giant grouper or kugtong helps sustain healthy fish and other invertebrate populations by eating sick and/or old species. It also ensures a balance among algae eaters or herbivores, carnivores and other functional groups in coral reefs.

The humphead wrasse is protected by and international and national law as an endangered specie. Despite these regulations, fishers continue to catch hump head wrasse, unknown to most fishers that this species is protected by law.

Haribon Foundation is a membership organization committed to nature conservation through community empowerment and scientific excellence. Website www.haribon.org.ph or email act@haribon.org.ph.

19 JUN 2016



DATE

7
PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

Villar: Protect environment

By MARLON PURIFICACION

ALARMED by reports of experts that our seas will be turned into “virtual desserts” by 2050, Senator Cynthia A. Villar said she has been pursuing legislations to balance the need to increase marine life production and the need to protect the sustainability and biodiversity of our oceans or marine waters.

Because of this, Villar said she has been pushing for environmental protection especially the marine environment.

“I was the principal author and sponsor of Republic Act 10654 (An Act to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, Amending R.A. 8550) which had been enacted into law for a year,” said Villar.

Together with the House of Representatives, Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, fisherfolks and their communities and other concerned individuals and organizations, Villar said they worked hard to ensure

the passage of R.A. 10654.

In her speech during the Philippine Coast Guard Auxiliary 32nd National Convention, Villar stressed that the amended law will level the fishing legislation at par with other countries, particularly with regards to conservation measures regarding threatened aquatic species, highly migratory species and other marine resources.

Based on the 2010 Census of Marine Life, 90 percent of the large fish are already depleted due to overfishing. She cited reports on the extinction of giant fishes in our country.

“According to the study, overfishing has almost wiped out 59 big fish species such as the green bumphead parrot fish, the African pompano, the giant grouper, and the mangrove red snapper,” said Villar.

But the Nacionalista Party senator expressed hope that this condition can be averted with the strict implementation of the provisions on our new Fisheries Code that imposes strict monitoring of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

19 JUN 2016

DATE

A-12

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Operations start to remove ship from coral area

By Michelle Padayhag
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—Three tugboats were used to pull a Panamanian-registered cargo vessel out of a shoal where it ran aground and destroyed at least 3 hectares of coral reefs.

Two of the tugboats pulled the MV Belle Rose while the third was at the other end of the cargo ship to maintain balance, according to an official who took part in the operation.

MV Belle Rose ran aground in Monad Shoal, a popular dive spot, off Daanbantayan town, Cebu province.

The operation to pull the ship is one of the options laid out to remove the vessel from the shoal to prevent further damage to coral reefs there.

It started around 9 a.m. during high tide but was suspended around 10:30 a.m. for the crew to discharge water from the vessel to help it float.

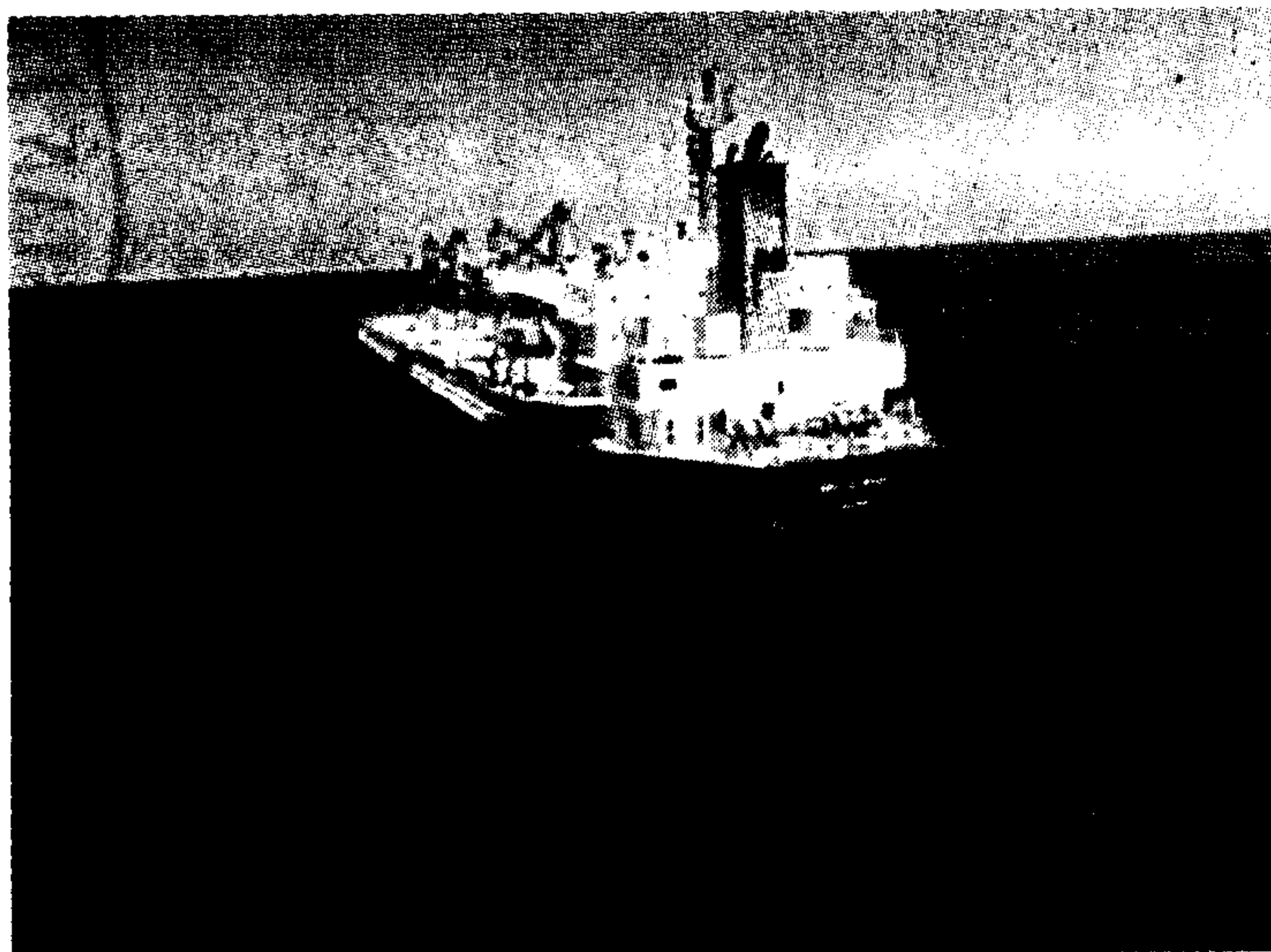
Noel Kimmayong, of Malayan Towage and Salvage Corp., said at least 500 tons of water had to be removed from the ship to make it rise by at least 10 centimeters.

Salvage workers had to use a hose to siphon off water from the vessel because the ship's ballast pump had been damaged and is no longer working, said Kimmayong.

Kimmayong, who held a news conference on board a banca on Saturday while supervising the operation, said he could not confirm the exact distance of the boat's movement out of where it was stuck.

Environment and local officials decided to pull back the vessel and bring it to a deeper portion of the sea where the ship could float.

At least 3 hectares of coral reefs were damaged when the 29,100-ton vessel loaded with 48,000 metric tons of clinker, a raw material used for the production of cement, ran aground while heading for San Fernando town in southern Cebu from Japan.



THE CARGO vessel MV Belle Rose is stuck in Monad Shoal, a popular dive spot in northern Cebu province, where at least 3 hectares of coral reefs were damaged.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Daily Tribune

WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR

19 JUN 2016

DATE

PAGE

B 7

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Cherry blossom trees not suited to PH ecosystem

BY ALBERT BALBUTIN HARIBON FOUNDATION & CATHLYN TOLENTINO INTERN

CHERRY blossom trees are well-known for their beauty, admired worldwide, such that the trees themselves attract tourists who come to Japan to enjoy a view of the tree flowers in full bloom. But if we plant them in the Philippines, we may cause adverse effects on our ecological system and biodiversity.

As an "exotic tree", the cherry blossom trees may not have yet adapted to unique Philippine conditions, like weather or climate, biodiversity, local wildlife, and soil.

Unfortunately, there has been a flurry of planting exotic trees merely because these trees have been getting media exposure or are fast-growing. Local factors or the need for the right tree nurturing and care are neglected.

An example is in Bohol, where exotic mahogany trees were planted in Bilar. But this so-called "man-made forest" is unnaturally quiet, with little or no biodiversity. Tourists come and go, and have no other reason to

stay and explore the place.

Cherry blossom trees may potentially become invasive, and as such they can halt the ecological process in Benguet. They may not survive long, and if they do, they may not attract birds, insects, and other wildlife in the manner that our native trees attract these—all of which would add to the splendour and wonder of our forests, that make bird watching tours a worthy tourist visit.

More so, these cherry blossom trees may replace native tree resulting to monoculture. Diseases and pests invade areas planted with exotic trees, eventually damaging biodiversity, leading to nutrient imbalances in the



■ Bani (*Milletia pinnata*)

soil and plants.

Planting these trees merely for their popularity, may not be sustainable. The trees may not grow well as in Japan, needing more maintenance (fertilizer, insecticide, etc.) to keep them healthy.

Laws on wildlife must also be considered. The Wildlife Act (RA 9147) provides that no species shall be introduced without official clearance, and any such shall need environmental impact study..."

Continuing the mindset of planting exotic trees for short-term gain will simply contribute to further degradation of our environment as well as diminishing of our local pride.

Native trees are more adaptable than exotic trees. Hence, they have greater chance of survival and capacity to sustain life around them.

There are beautiful flowering native trees in the Philippines that the world has yet to discover. These trees can bring eco-

nomic and ecological benefit to local Benguet communities, or any community that desires to attract tourists with the proliferation of trees.

(Albert Balbutin Jr. is Haribon Foundation's Graphic Designer. He's been designing professionally for 10 years.)

Cathlyn Tolentino is a 3rd year Communication Arts student in St. Joseph's College of Quezon City and is currently an intern in Haribon.

Learn more about planting native trees, or support the application of reforesting areas with native trees or "rainforestation" by adopting native tree seedlings or joining tree planting activities this July through November. The public is also called to participate in #nativetreecity by tagging native trees in their schools, offices, or neighborhoods. For more information call +63 (2) 421-1209, visit haribon.org.ph, and/or email: mailto:constituency@haribon.org.ph.

SUGGESTED NATIVE TREES FOR PLANTING IN COMMUNITIES

Banaba (*Lagerstroemia speciosa*)

Bani (*Milletia pinnata*)

Ilang-ilang (*Cananga odorata*)

Salingbobog (*Crateva religiosa*)

Narra (*Pterocarpus indicus*)

Vulnerable

Philippine teak (*Tectona philippinensis*) Critically Endangered

Dapdap (*Erythrina variegata*)

Malabulak (*Bombax ceiba*)

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900

MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

19 JUN 2016

DATE

10

PAGE

✓
UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Big news in solar energy development

WHAT could possibly be the biggest news to industry and to the movement for a cleaner world environment was the announcement the other day that solar energy is now cheaper than fossil fuel energy.

"The debate is over," Solar Philippines President Leandro Leviste said at a forum in Makati this past week. "Solar is cheaper than coal and we're building projects to prove it." Danny Kennedy, founder of Sungevity, one of America's leading solar companies, said solar and battery costs have fallen at an extraordinary rate and are now starting to supply most of the needs of some tropical countries.

Despite the commitment the Philippines made with 130 other nations at the Paris Climate Change Conference last December to support international efforts to reduce worldwide greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming, the Philippines is scheduled to build 23 coal-fired plants in the next four years.

The national government approved the new coal plants to meet the demand for energy by Philippine industry and the general public. Coal was said to be the cheapest fuel for the produc-

tion of energy. Thus the new plants, including two in Davao City, one in Subic, Zambales, and the expansion of plants in Quezon and Bataan.

The forum in Makati the other day, however, disclosed that solar costs have fallen due to economies of scale, vertical integration, advances in technology, and increased market maturity. Leviste said Philippine costs have gone down 50 percent. Kennedy likened the rise of solar power in the world to the rise of mobile cellphones which have effectively eclipsed landlines.

Incoming President Duterte, during the election campaign, called for the eventual phase-out of coal and other power plants that use harmful fuels. He called for more investments in renewable energy, such as solar, wind, hydro, geothermal, and biomass. The time frame for phase-out would be determined by the speed with which renewable energy resources can replace coal.

That time has now come, the forum on "The Truth about Solar: Now Cheaper than Coal" said. With the new administration of President Duterte, the Philippines with its abundant solar, wind, geothermal, and other natural resources, should be taking the lead in this great worldwide effort to bring about a cleaner world.

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900

MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

19 JUN 2016

DATE

15

PAGE

UPPER DATE

LOWER DATE

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Duterte urged to give P123-B Laguna Lake dike project priority

By CHARISSA M. LUCI

A progressive solon is urging the incoming Duterte administration to prioritize the rehabilitation of Laguna de Bay, instead of inheriting and pursuing the Aquino government's P123-billion Laguna Lakeshore Expressway Dike Project (LLEDP).

Bayan Muna partylist Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate maintained that the megadike project has to be thoroughly scrutinized and assessed following its "grave effects" to the people and the environment.

"Instead of this mega-dike project, we urge the next administration to pursue a rehabilitation of Laguna de Bay, being a vital food source for millions of people in Metro Manila. We believe this would result to a more inclusive development, a healthful ecology, and would boost food sufficiency than a mega-dike project instigated by big business," he said in a statement.

He said the project will affect the 108 million people living in the coasts of Laguna Lake.

"This a huge number of people that will be dislocated, physically and economically, once the project pushes through. Also, 40 percent of food supply to Metro Manila comes from the Laguna Lake," he said.

He even expressed alarm that the economic dislocation of fisherfolk in Laguna de Bay could also mean a food shortage and surge in food prices in Metro Manila.

"While the DPWH claimed that the dike is needed to solve flooding, some scientific groups have said it will make more harm than good," Zarate said.

"Aside from disrupting ecological balance and adding to the pollution in the lake, flooding will worsen along its shores up to its only exit point,

the Pasig River. This could be setting us up for a worse calamity," he added.

Zarate led the filing of House Resolution 2093 urging a congressional probe on the LLEDP in the 16th Congress.

He urged his colleagues in the next 17th Congress to look into the mega-dike project after the Lower Chamber failed to act on Bayan Muna's resolution.

"The LLEDP poses a huge negative impact upon the environment and people surrounding Laguna de Bay and we believe that it is prudent for the next congress to step in through a thorough congressional probe," he said.

"LLEDP is shaping up to be a private enterprise than a public utility. Particularly, this may pose as a serious conflict of interest case for incoming DPWH secretary Mark Villar, who recently announced the reopening of the bidding for LLEDP," Zarate said.

He claimed that among the groups that were earlier pre-qualified to bid for the project is a company owned by the Villars.

The qualified bidders for the mega-project include Team Trident (a consortium of business tycoons Jaime Zobel de Ayala's Ayala Land Inc, Henry Sy's SM Prime Holdings, Andrew Tan's Megaworld, and Erramon Aboitiz's Aboitiz Equity Ventures), Alloy Pavi Hanshin consortium of the Malaysian-led firm MTD Group, Prime Asset Venture of Manny Villar, Korean Hanshin Construction and Korea Rural Corporation and San Miguel Holdings Corporation of Danding Cojuangco.

"As with all Public-Private Partnerships under the exiting the Aquino administration, the deals are lopsided to the benefit of large businesses than the welfare of Filipinos. We hope to see an end to this kind of deals in the incoming Duterte administration," Zarate said.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

19 JUN 2016

DATE

A-18

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Can Duterte fix agrarian reform?

By Eduardo Climaco Tadem

THE DESIGNATION by incoming President Rodrigo Duterte of Rafael "Ka Paeng" Mariano as his secretary of agrarian reform is welcome news for the Filipino peasantry, farmworkers and the rural poor. Mariano, born into a poor peasant family in Nueva Ecija, is chair of Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas and former Anakpawis party-list representative.

He will be the first Cabinet member to come from the peasant class, who has a long history of activism on behalf of the marginalized rural masses. Mariano immediately called for a review of the "antifarmer decisions" of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) and announced his priority in completing the long delayed redistribution of thousands of hectares of the Cojuangco-Aquino's Hacienda Luisita, the Araneta estates in Bulacan and the Aguinardo landholdings in Cavite.

Political will crucial

In implementing a contentious social justice program such as agrarian reform, the political will of the sitting President is crucial. The deficit here, however, has been appalling. Outgoing Presi-

dent Aquino's public stance and the absence of an agrarian reform agenda in his major policy announcements reveal no sympathy, interest and understanding of agrarian reform's role in the country's overall socioeconomic, political and cultural development.

Ultimately, this self-indulgent and antireform mindset, common to all Philippine Presidents, have spelled the doom of agrarian reform.

The question is whether Duterte, by his self-ascribed Left persona and avowed socialist sympathies, would reverse the long-standing presidential pattern of ignoring agrarian reform's social justice principles and stand firmly on the side of the long-suffering Filipino rural masses.

28th year of Carp

This June, the Philippine government's agrarian reform law reached its 28th year of implementation with completion nowhere in sight. The Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) and its extension, the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program Extension with Reforms (Carper) had provisions that were generally favorable to their intended beneficiaries. But Carp and Carper were also essentially the result of a compromise between pro and antiagrarian reform blocs in Congress and thus also contained provisions, inserted by antireform and landowner lobbyists, that are considered legal loopholes.

CARP, enacted in 1988, was an improvement over previous legislation in that it covered all agricultural lands and the entire rural landless labor force. But it was hobbled by anti-peasant and pro-landlord provisions that allowed mere regulation of existing tenurial forms, including the nefarious stock distribution option and leaseback agreements, provided for an omnibus list of exemptions, established "fair market value" for landowner compensation, created a payment amortization

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

19 JUN 2016

DATE

Page 1 Story

A-18

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

CAN DUTERTE FIX AGRARIAN REFORM

2

scheme that was unfavorable for beneficiaries, set a high retention limit that could reach 14 hectares, mandated a long period of implementation, and generally ignored the role of beneficiaries and civil society groups in seeing the program through.

Carper's record

Carper, on the other hand, also contained provisions that favored beneficiaries, such as the indefeasibility of awarded beneficiary lands, recognition of usufruct rights of beneficiaries, a grace period for amortization payments, speeding up the process of awarding lands, removal of the stock-distribution option, disallowing the conversion of irrigable and irrigated lands, automatic coverage of lands targeted for conversion pending for at least five years, reinstating compulsory acquisition and voluntary offers-of-sale as main redistribution modes, and recognition of women farmers as beneficiaries.

'Killer amendment'

Despite all these gains, antireform legislators still managed to insert a "killer amendment" that allowed landowners to determine who would be beneficiaries and who would be excluded from the program. Other objectionable provisions are those expanding the list of exempted lands, allowing local governments to acquire agricultural lands beyond the 5-ha retention limit and the deprioritization of seasonal and other nonregular farmworkers as qualified beneficiaries.

Major CARP constraints, such as landlord compensation based on market value and the beneficiary payment formula based on gross production, have been retained.

According to the peasant organization Katarungan, the DAR has accomplished only 18 percent of its 2015 target for land distribution, "the lowest performance in the history of CARP implementation."

In five years under the Aquino administration, less than 20 percent of the goal for land distribution has been accomplished. As of December 2015, there remained a balance of about 477,000 ha of undistributed lands while 1 million ha of agricultural lands inexplicably vanished from the public records. To camouflage its lackluster performance, the DAR has resorted to merely reporting the issuances of notices of coverage as accomplishments while keeping from public view the more essential indicators of certificates of land ownership awards (CLOAs) and, even more crucial, emancipation patents (EPs).

Snail-paced implementation

Indeed, land distribution under the Aquino administration has been moving at a snail's pace—marked by a consistent and chronic failure to meet annual targets, the misrepresentation of performance indicators and lack of political commitment by the DAR leadership under Secretary Virgilio de los Reyes. In the distribution of privately owned and/or privately controlled landhold-

ings, which constitute the heart and soul of agrarian reform, the implementation of Carp and Carper has been found to be most wanting and negligent.

Despite favorable judicial decisions, the redistribution of Hacienda Luisita lands has been slow and bureaucratic with harassments of worker-beneficiaries continuing. Worse, between 80 and 90 percent of the hacienda's distributed lands have been taken over by non-farming *ariendadors* (capitalist-financiers) due to the failure of government to provide the required support services.

Landowner resistance

Chronic landowner resistance continues to plague the program with numerous reports of farmers being evicted, harassed, intimidated and killed by landlords and hired goons. Land grabbing and land-use conversions are intensifying even in landholdings that have been covered for distribution.

These converted and grabbed lands are often misappropriated for nonagricultural purposes, such as real estate development, tourism, mining and special economic zones by foreign and domestic land speculators.

Property developers

Leading these antireform initiatives are influential politicians, local governments and giant property developers. In many instances, powerful families have taken control over public lands and have resisted (sometimes violently) their distribution to qualified beneficiaries.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

19 JUN 2016

DATE

A-18

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

CAN DUTERTE FIX AGRARIAN REFORM

Rent-seeking property developers pose a counterproductive and destructive role by their expansion into the Philippine countryside, which encourages the conversion by local government units of agricultural lands for commercial purposes. This is exemplified by the land conflict in Porac, Pampanga, where Ayala Land is developing a P75-billion 1,125-ha mixed-use commercial, recreational and high-end residential estate.

The "Alviera" project was facilitated by the exemption from agrarian reform coverage and conversion of 750 ha of Hacienda Dolores to commercial use. The conflict has resulted in "the unsolved killings of two Hacienda Dolores farmers, the jailing of a village chief, the eviction of 300 farmers and the destruction of their crops and huts, and the denial of access to a road traversing through Alviera property that leads to Aeta villages and farms."

Protest marches

In April, several hundred farmers marched for 122 kilometers from Sariaya, Quezon to Manila. Organized by Katarungan and its NGO support group, RightsNet, the farmers were demanding the full implementation of a meaningful agrarian reform program, protection for the agricultural sector, food sovereignty and return to farmers of the coco levy fund. The Sariaya farmers lament the cancellation of CLOAs and EPs of 3,781 farmer-families covering 4,800 ha.

This was just one of the many long protest marches undertaken over the years by restive Filipino peasants and farmworkers frustrated and indignant over the poor track record of government in agrarian reform.

Special economic zones

Equally destructive of agriculture and family farms are the proliferation in almost all regions of the country of special economic zones, such as the controversial Aurora Pacific Zone and Freeport Authority, displacing farms and peasant households and establishing enclaves that have little or no backward and forward linkages with rural communities.

Mining activities, on the other hand, impact negatively on farming communities (including indigenous peoples) and on the agricultural environment. As lawyer Christian Monsod pointed out: "Mining activities are usually located in rural and mountainous areas and can affect farmlands, rivers and shorelines, where the poorest of the poor are located."

Worse, land grabs by large mining companies are taking place, such as the 508-ha farmlands in Calatagan, Batangas, tilled by 323 farmers and covered by 818 EPs.

The Aquino administration, like all previous administrations, via its inaction on abuses and its neoliberal economic policies of indiscriminately welcoming any and all forms of investment regardless of the social consequences, is party to and similarly

accountable for this uncontrolled pattern of dispossession and human rights violations triggered by land speculations gone berserk.

Inadequate support services

The neglect by government agencies led by the DAR and the Department of Agriculture to provide timely and adequate support services to agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs) have prevented the latter from becoming economically viable producers and jeopardizing whatever land distribution may have accomplished. Only 44 percent of agrarian reform beneficiaries have had access to support services packages with 27 percent of them in so-called agrarian reform communities (ARCs).

As with other farmers, a majority of ARBs source their credit from loan sharks, who charge usurious interest rates. ARBs in commercial farms and plantations are forced to rely on former landowners and corporations for support services. In Mindanao, reformed areas and ARB ownership of lands have been rendered meaningless due to onerous contracts, leaseback and lopsided growership and production arrangements, leading eventually to farmer bankruptcies.

3

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

19 JUN 2016

DATE

A-18

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

4

CAN DUTERTE FIX AGRARIAN REFORM

Property rights

The reasons for Carp and Carper's failures cannot be traced, as a University of the Philippines Economics professor argues, to the absence of a fully functioning property rights regime "due to strictures on the sale (and rental) of reformed lands and the land ownership ceiling." Under conditions of a protocapitalist system where political and other noneconomic factors play dominant roles, where rural elites are predatory in character and where rent-seeking financial speculation through aggressive property developers rules the day, it would be the height of naiveté to dream of a fully functioning property-rights regime.

Even today, the absence of such a regime has not prevented "investors" from invoking the "laws" of the market by encroaching on land reform areas and harassing and dislocating legitimate ARBs and other farming communities. All in the name of productivity, efficiency and optimum land utilization.

Ayala Land, through its president for international sales, Thomas Mirasol, candidly admitted that the lack of a "land use blueprint by a regulatory body ... has enabled it to acquire large plots of land and develop them according to its own plan and design" (Business Times, May 6, 2014). Mirasol added that the absence of a land regulatory framework

"has been great for Ayala Land," which uses its resources to develop "big tracts of land" and thus "become the government; (that) control and manage everything (and become de facto) mayors and the governors of the communities that (Ayala) develops."

On the other hand, an "efficiently managed" property rights regime will simply open wide the floodgates of the rural areas to modern versions of the unlanded landlord class and reintroduce the oppressive and exploitative social relations that necessitated a land reform program in the first place. It is precisely this elite-biased property rights regime in the rural sector that a truly just and meaningful agrarian reform seeks to prevent and where it exists, to overturn.

Recommendations

After 28 years of implementation of a program meant to emancipate the Filipino peasantry from serf-like servitude to elite landowning interests, the agrarian reform goal remains elusive with final resolution nowhere on the horizon. To start the process of fixing this dismal state, the incoming administration must immediately take the following steps:

- First, extend the land distribution component of agrarian reform since it is obvious that the DAR will be unable to complete this by June 30.

- Second, provide that all unpaid amortizations of farmers be condoned and all future land distribution be made free of cost to the beneficiaries.

- Third, constitute a high level independent commission of upright and credible citizens with legal powers to evaluate and audit the performance of the DAR, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and LandBank, and investigate all circumventions of coverage and human rights violations against farmers and farmworkers, their leaders and supporters.

- Lastly, the goal of equitable land redistribution must be made a permanent feature of the state's policy agenda. Land redistribution is a continuing process that will necessarily have to be resorted to time and again in order to assure that there is no backtracking on the agrarian reform agenda.

Social justice has no beginning and no end.

(Eduardo Climaco Tadem, Ph.D., was one of the founders of the Congress for a People's Agrarian Reform in 1988 and coconvenor of the People's Agrarian Reform Congress in 2014. He is currently president of Freedom from Debt Coalition and professorial lecturer in Asian Studies, University of the Philippines Diliman.)

The Manila Times

19 JUN 2016

DATE

B-7

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Athletes swim for Verde Island Passage

SIX Pinoy open-water athletes swam together in advocacy of saving the Verde Island Passage (VIP) and educating the public on coral reefs conservation.

The athletes were: Ingemar Macarine, Frank Lacson, Betsy Medalla, Julian Valencia, Moi Yamoyam and Miguel Villanueva who together swam an open-water swim marathon recently for Reef Strokes.

The event celebrated Coral Triangle Day by highlighting the dangers of plastic pollution and climate change on the Verde Island Passage, dubbed as the center of the center of marine shore fish biodiversity.

"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 lawyer Ingemar Macarine.

The lawyer was given the Hero of the Environment award by World Wide Fund (WWF)-Philippines for his efforts in raising marine conservation awareness in his swims.

"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 Betsy Medalla, the first to finish the 10-kilometer swim.

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 Wesley Caballa explained that the 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," he said.

"Ang huli ng mga manlalambat



■ Open-water swimmers highlight their advocacy of saving our seas thru the help of the World Wild Life Fund

ay umakyat ng dose kilos kada-araw. May dagdag namang isang kilo kada araw ang huli ng mga namim-ingwit. Mas-marami po ito kaysa datt sapagkat naprotektahan na ang mga tirahan ng isda," testified Adelito Villaluna, a local fisherman who has plied the bountiful waters of Nasugbu for years.

"Coral reefs give millions of people food and livelihoods," added WWF-Philippines President & CEO Joel Palma. "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.

Top airline Cebu Pacific has also been WWF's ally in conserving Philippine reefs. The program known as Reef Strokes was organized by WWF, Hamilo Coast, Pico Sands Hotel, Pico de Loro Beach & Country Club and Cebu Pacific Air.

The Manila Times

19 JUN 2016

DATE

B-2

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

US Embassy marks World Oceans month

FOLLOWING the American government's advocacy to save the world's oceans, the US Embassy has released a video of the United States for an Abundant Ocean, which calls on the public to keep the oceans healthy, clean, and blue.

Luis Manzano, World Wildlife Fund-Philippines' "Ambassador", serves as narrator in the video. The video also documents the joint efforts of both the Philippines

and the United States in protecting protect oceans.

President Barack Obama has declared June as National Oceans Month to protect, conserve, and restore oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes.

The public is also invited to share ideas and ongoing ocean protection programs on the Embassy Facebook page: facebook.com/manila.usembassy or on Twitter by tagging @USEmbassyManila and by using #1Earth.

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900

MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

19 JUN 2016

DATE

12
PAGE

UPPER HALF

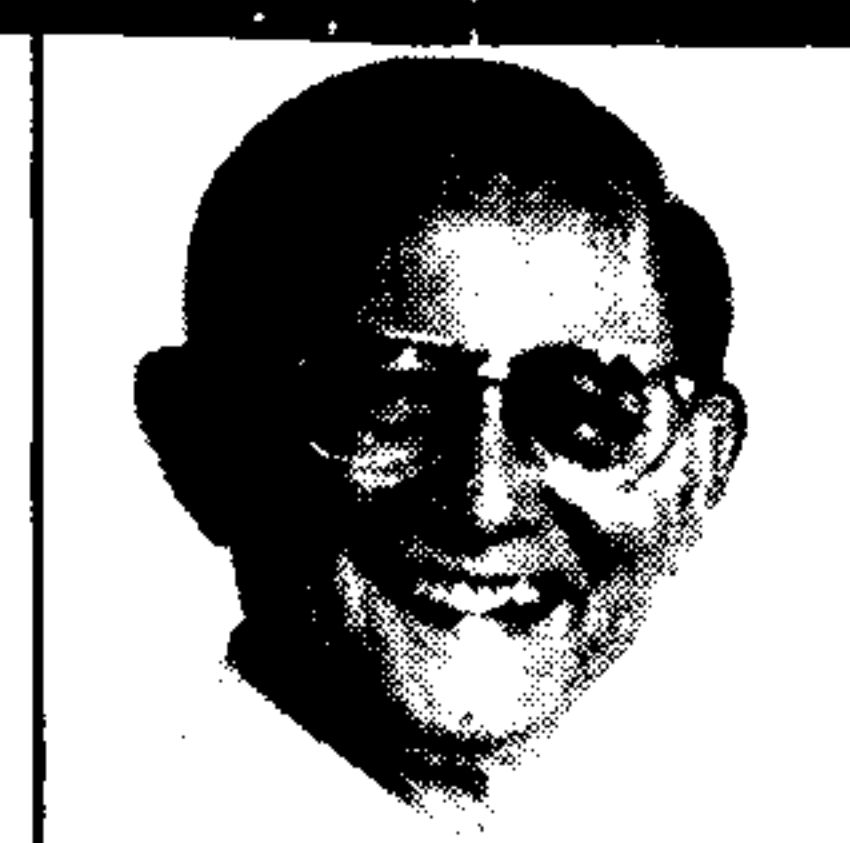
LOWER HALF

P-1

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

ON EMPOWERING THE FILIPINO PEOPLE

Rizal's dream: A better Philippines



By **FIDEL V. RAMOS**
FORMER PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT

(First of Two Parts)

"The advancement and ethical progress of the Philippines are inevitable, are decreed by fate... And once more free... Will recover its pristine virtues... And will again become addicted to peace – cheerful, happy, joyous, hospitable and daring..."

— Dr. Jose Rizal,

The Philippines A Century Hence
1892

"These goals are a blueprint for a better future. Now we must use the goals to transform the world. We will do that through partnership and through commitment. We must leave no one behind..."

— UN Secretary General
Ban Ki-Moon

25 September 2015, New York

Today, we observe the 155th birthday of Dr. Jose Rizal, our national hero who was born in Calamba, Laguna, on 19 June 1861. So much has been written, also filmed, about Rizal to date – but, maybe not really enough about his dream of a better Philippines, or perhaps, too much about his extra-curricular activities which are not really relevant to his love of God, country, and people.

We do believe that it is again time for our education, knowledge, and historical agencies – the Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP), National Book Development Board (NBDB), and the incoming president of the Philippines himself – to revisit Jose Rizal in terms of mankind's dream today of "One World, One Community, One Family" as expressed in the UN General Assembly's Resolution of 25 September 2015 which intends to achieve "The 17 Sustainable Development Goals" (SDGs) by year 2030. What we need from these agencies and President-elect Duterte are new, on-line school textbooks, videos, and other interactive materials on Rizal and our independence movement against Spain to inspire our complacent, but IT-savvy youth, to greater patriotism and respect for the environment.

The same need for IT-sourced knowledge is true for two other crucial periods of Philippine history – (1) the Philippine defense of freedom during WWII, and (2) the people's resistance against martial law and our peaceful "People Power Revolution" at EDSA.

LAST 19 JUNE 1998, IT WILL BE RECALLED THAT PRESIDENT FVR OPENED TO THE PUBLIC RIZAL'S RENOVATED BIRTH-HOME AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR COUNTRY'S CENTENNIAL FREEDOM TRAIL (CFT). THESE ARE HISTORIC SITES ALL OVER OUR ARCHIPELAGO THAT MARK THE STRUGGLES OF OUR HEROIC FOREBEARS IN THEIR PROTRACTED, VALIANT QUEST FOR FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENT NATIONHOOD.

Jose Rizal's Advocacies

RIZAL WAS A WIDE-RANGING SCHOLAR, SKILLED IN BOTH THE ARTS AND SCIENCES. HE PAINTED, FENCED, AND DID SCULPTURES AND WOODCARVING. HE WAS A PROLIFIC POET, ESSAYIST AND NOVELIST WHOSE MOST FAMOUS WORKS WERE HIS TWO NOVELS, *NOLIME TANGERE* (BERLIN, 1887) AND ITS SEQUEL, *EL FILIBUSTERISMO* (GHENT, 1891) THAT INSPIRED BOTH PEACEFUL REFORMISTS AND ARMED REVOLUTIONARIES. RIZAL WAS ALSO A WORLD TRAVELER, AGRICULTURIST, PRACTISING OPHTHALMOLOGIST, AND CONVERSANT IN TWENTY LANGUAGES.

Even at that early stage of our foreign relations, Rizal in the 1880s had already espoused views and concepts about the "Global Fellowship of Humankind," "Worldwide Brotherhood," and similar ideas of

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1908

MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

19 JUN 2016

DATE

UPPER HALF

12
PAGE

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

P-2

Rizal's dream: A better Philippines

universal harmony – as now being forcefully enunciated and vigorously pursued by international organizations, principally the UN. His democratic advocacies taken from his writings, speeches, and analysis of his personal history, works, and actions are still valid and relevant today.

RIZAL WAS AMONG THE FIRST LIBERALS OF HIS TIME TO CHAMPION WORLDWIDE PARTNERSHIPS TO ESTABLISH BONDING, UNITY, AND HARMONY AMONG NATIONS IN ORDER TO HEAL THE ILLS OF HUMANKIND. HIS STRONG SPIRIT OF FRATERNITY COULD HAVE COME FROM THE DISCRIMINATION HE EXPERIENCED NOT ONLY IN SPAIN BUT ALSO ELSEWHERE BECAUSE OF COLOR, SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS, OR RELIGION.

Rizal and Blumentritt

THE SHEER VOLUME OF RECORDED EXCHANGE OF IDEAS THROUGH HIS CORRESPONDENCE WITH VARIOUS PEOPLE – PRINCIPALLY DR. FERDINAND BLUMENTRITT, RIZAL'S CLOSEST EUROPEAN FRIEND AND CONFIDANT – PROVIDES VITAL REFERENCES FOR HISTORIANS AND SCHOLARS. BLUMENTRITT WAS A TEACHER AND SCHOOL PRINCIPAL IN LEITOMERITZ (A CITY IN THE OLD AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN EMPIRE, NOW THE CZECH REPUBLIC) AS WELL AS LECTURER, AND AUTHOR OF ARTICLES AND BOOKS ON THE PHILIPPINES AND ITS ETHNOGRAPHY.

This strong fraternal bond between Rizal and Blumentritt that stood the test of time was among the many elements of the lasting foundation of friendship that our two peoples share, and upon which Czech President Vaclav Havel, a world-class author and dramatist, himself a freedom-fighter against Communism, anchored his state visit to Manila in April, 1995. President FVR reciprocated Havel's goodwill with a visit to Prague and also to Leitomeritz, where now stands a well-endowed Rizal Museum, in September 1997.

Accordingly, during the state dinner hosted by President Havel in the Prague Castle, FVR affirmed: *"The seed of friendship between our two peoples grew more than a century ago – when Dr. Jose Rizal visited Leitomeritz to meet Dr. Ferdinand Blumentritt, a professor whose scholarly interests lay in Philippine studies. What started as a short stopover and scholarly exchange between Rizal and Blumentritt developed into a deep and lifelong friendship!!"*

"In the modern-day relationship between our two countries, we draw heavily on that earlier partnership between these two intimate friends, as well as our common devotion to the Santo Niño de Praga which had been promoted in the Philippines by hardy Czech missionaries."

"THE NATIONAL VALUES WE SHARE AND SIMILAR EXPERIENCES WE WENT THROUGH – OUR OWN PEACEFUL 'PEOPLE POWER' REVOLUTION AGAINST DICTATORSHIP IN 1986 AND YOUR 1989 DEMOCRATIC 'VELVET REVOLUTION' IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC – ENSURE THAT OUR RELATIONS WILL REMAIN PRECIOUS AND CONSTANT THROUGH THE YEARS."

UN's 2030 SDGs

Dr. Rizal's earlier advocacies for a better world – which today we of the Philippines and surely the Czechs share – are essentially imbedded in the 17 SDGs that the UN adopted on 25 September 2015. In brief, these are:

(1) **Poverty** – End poverty in all forms everywhere.

(2) **Hunger and Food Security** – End hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.

(3) **Good Health and Well-Being** – Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all.

(4) **Education** – Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

(5) **Gender Equality and Wom-**

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900

MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

19 JUN 2016

DATE

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

P-3

Rizal's dream: A better Philippines

en's Empowerment – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

(6) **Water and Sanitation** – Ensure availability and sustainable management of water, and sanitation for all.

(7) **Energy** – Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and clean energy for all.

(8) **Economic Growth** – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

(9) **Infrastructure, Industrialization** – Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation.

(10) **Inequality** – Reduce inequality within and among countries.

(11) **Cities** – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

(12) **Sustainable Consumption and Production** – Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

(13) **Climate Change** – Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

(14) **Oceans** – Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.

(15) **Biodiversity, Forests, Deforestation** – Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and biodiversity loss.

(16) **Peace and Justice** – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

(17) **Partnerships** – Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

(Kindly revisit our column in the *Manila Bulletin* of 04 October 2015, titled “U.N. Anniversaries And Development Goals.”)

SUMMARY

As Dr. Rizal deeply believed and exemplified in his life, he held high the virtues of education as the key to the achievement of much of above UN goals – because knowledge is an essential part of people empowerment.

Having just started this week our 2016-2017 school-year, it is worth recalling that in 1889, when education was still a rare privilege, Rizal wrote a letter strongly commending the young women of Malolos for their collective courage in standing up to the Spanish authorities in order to open a school and be educated. This unheard -- of “privilege” for women was strongly opposed by the friars. The Malolos ladies did not give up, and Governor-General Valeriano Weyler eventually acceded to their unprecedented request.

RIZAL'S LETTER TO THE YOUNG WOMEN OF MALOLOS CENTERED ON SALIENT POINTS SUCH AS THE DENUNCIATION OF THE ABUSE OF FRIARS IN EXERCISING THEIR SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY; TRAITS FILIPINO MOTHERS MUST HAVE; OBLIGATIONS OF MOTHERS TO THEIR CHILDREN; AND FUNCTIONS AND ERRANDS OF A WIFE FOR HER HUSBAND. RIZAL ALSO EXPRESSED HIS PHILOSOPHY OF FREEDOM THAT HE BELIEVED WAS THE KEY TO MANKIND'S EMANCIPATION FROM SLAVERY, AND THE NECESSITY FOR EDUCATION AS THE FUNDAMENTAL SOURCE OF LIBERATION. HE ENUNCIATED HIS GREAT WISH FOR FILIPINO WOMEN TO ENJOY THE PRIVILEGES OF EDUCATION, AND NOT BE DOCILE TOWARDS INJUSTICES FORCED UPON THEM. (Extracts from “*Girl Power: The Women of Malolos*” by Quennie Ann Palafox, National Historical Commission of the Philippines, 04 September 2012.)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DR. JOSE RIZAL – AND OUR FELICITATIONS TO ALL FATHERS AND GRANDFATHERS!!!

Please send any comments to fvr@rpdev.org. Copies of articles are available at www.rpdev.org.