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# DENR

## IN THE NEWS

# MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICES

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## DENR mulls strategies for coral reef rehabilitation

**BORACAY ISLAND, Aklan** – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Western Visayas (DENR-6) is eyeing sustainable strategies by which degraded coral reefs off the coast of Boracay Island in Malay town, this province, may be effectively rehabilitated.

“What Boracay needs to sustain its coastal marine resources is a change in policy directions that would properly manage the island’s fragile ecosystem,” said DENR-6 Regional Director Jim Sampulna.

Two separate assessments made by DENR-6 validated other independent studies that tourism-related activities such as diving and snorkeling have strongly contributed to coral bleaching, wherein corals turn white and then decay.

Dennis Piñosa of DENR-6’s Biodiversity Partnerships Project recommended six strategies to reverse the situation.

Foremost is the need to formulate a Boracay Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) Plan. This would entail creating separate zones for sustainable land and water uses.

Second is a need to formulate a management plan for Boracay’s existing marine protected areas.

Third is a marked shift from tourism-driven diving activities to a rehabilitation concept. There must be more “adopt-a-coral” or “plant-a-coral” programs, Piñosa stressed.

Fourth, the DENR-6 and the First Boracay Master Divers Association Inc. wants to conduct training for divers on how to re-plant corals.

The fifth strategy consists of more assiduous monitoring and stricter implementation of waste and wastewater discharges to be undertaken by the local government of Malay town and DENR-6.

Lastly, is a reassessment of Boracay’s carrying capacity.

For DENR-6, there must be a change in a “business as usual” attitude where it concerns tackling the dire environmental situation in Boracay.

Sampulna added that DENR-6 will assist the Malay local government and other stakeholders to rehabilitate Boracay’s coral reefs.



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## Newsbits

### • 402 DENR employees in mass oath-taking

TACLOBAN CITY, Leyte - Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary for Field Operations Demetrio Ignacio, Jr. presided over the oath-taking of 402 newly appointed and promoted employees of the DENR in Eastern Visayas with salary grades ranging from four to 22 last Friday, March 4, 2016. The occasion took place at the Leyte Academic Center in Palo town. DENR-8 Regional Director Leonardo R. Sibbaluca said the employees were from DENR-8's regional office and the Provincial Environment and Natural Offices (PENROs) of the region's six provinces - Biliran, Leyte, Southern Leyte, Eastern Samar, Northern Samar and Samar. (Restituto A. Cayubit)



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## Newsbits

### • Rivers, coastal waters monitoring stepped up

CEBU CITY (PNA) – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)'s Environmental Management Bureau in Central Visayas (EMB-7) has stepped up its monitoring of six rivers and four coastal waters in the region. DENR-7 Regional Director Dr. Isabelo R. Montejo said the monitoring includes checking water quality in Butuanon River in Marikina City; Sapangdaku River in Toledo City; Guadalupe River in Guadalupe, Cebu City; Luyang River in Carmen, Cebu; Bagatayam River in Sogod, Cebu; and Bulecao River in Cebu City. The same activity will be conducted in such coastal areas as Nibutungan Channel on Mactan Island's east coast; Panglao town in Bohol; Liloan town in Cebu and Oanaga Bay, which straddles the coastal areas of Marikina City and the towns of Liloan and Consolacion. "These water bodies are valuable assets providing pastoral beauty, wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities over the years," Montejo said adding that the Beach Ecowatch Program is also regularly monitoring beaches, namely, Cebu Marine Beach, Palmera Beach Resort, Palm Beach, Parker Beach, Blue Roof, Hadsan Cove Resort, Kontiki, White Sands Resort, Maribago Blue Waters, Tambuli Beach Resort, Cebu Beach Club, and Hilan - Punta Engaño, all in Mactan; and the coastal waters of Panglao Island and Liloan town, Cebu.



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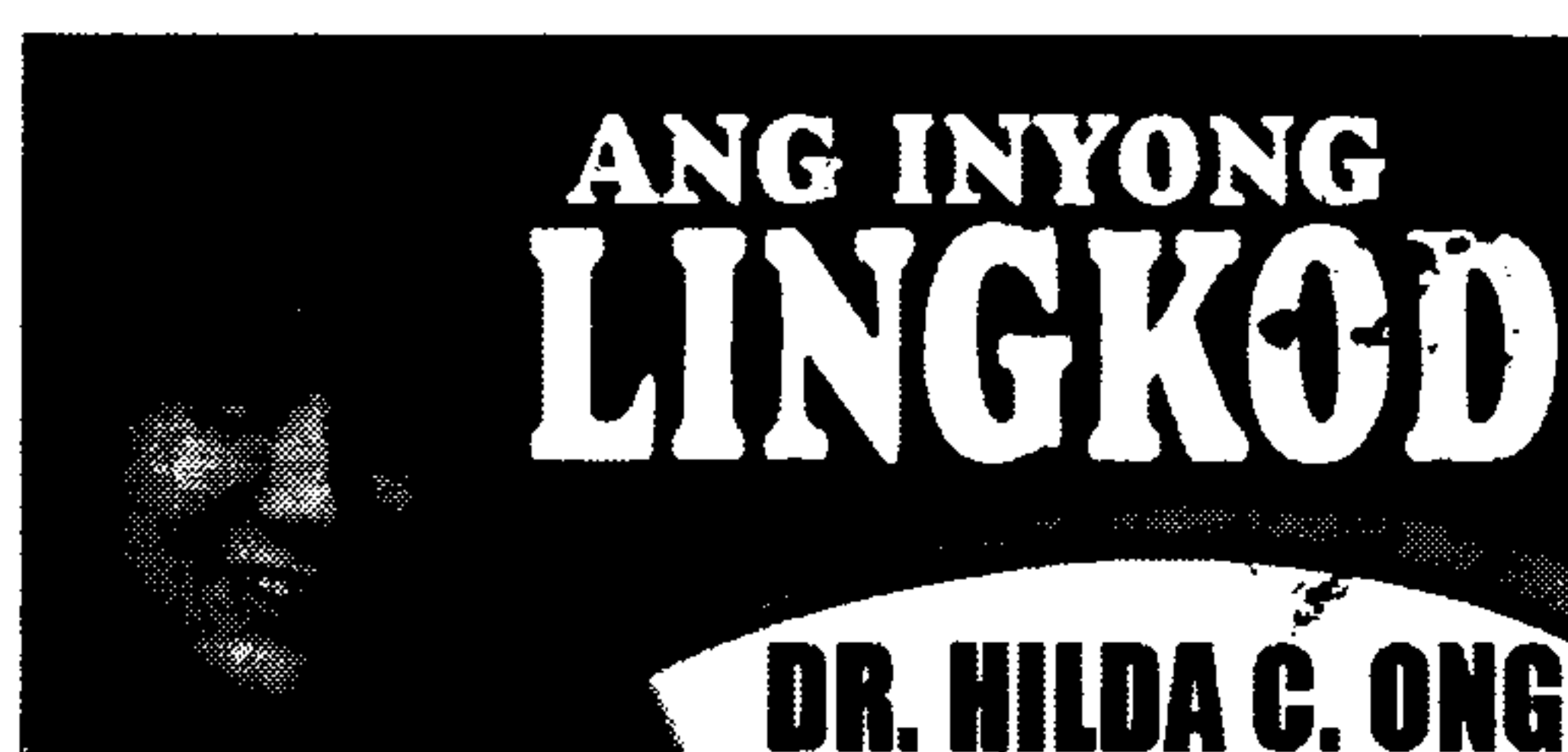
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NAGING saksi ang inyong lingkod sa naging pagkilos ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) na pinangungunahan nina Secretary Ramon J.P. Paje bilang chairman at Seville D. David, Jr. bilang executive director, nitong nakaraang taon ng 2015 hinggil sa banta ng El Niño phenomenon. Dahil sa maagap na preparasyon, bagamat may epekto ang naturang weather disturbance sa mga lalawigan ng Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sultan Kudarat at Zamboanga peninsula, hindi kasing tindi ang naging resulta nito kumpara noong 1997 - 1998.

Isa sa mga tinutukan ng ahensiya ang pagbabantay sa lebel ng tubig sa Angat Dam na siyang pinagmumulan ng suplay ng tubig ng Metro Manila at mga lalawigan ng Bulacan, Cavite, Pampanga at Rizal.

Isinakatuparan ang pagbabawas ng alokasyon ng



## **TUNGKULIN, PROGRAMA AT PROYEKTO NG NWRB**

tubig simula Setyembre 2015 na nagresulta naman sa water pressure reduction, scheduling at interruption.

Pero bukod dito, marami pang isinagawang programa at proyekto ang NWRB noong 2015 na siyang ibahagi ng inyong lingkod para sa inyong kaalaman.

Ang NWRB ay ang dating National Water Resources Council (NWRC) na ni-reorganisa sa ilalim ng Executive Order No. 124-A na siyang nangunguna pagdating sa pamamahala ng water resources at potable water ng bansa sang-ayon sa Integrated Water Resource Management.

Isa sa mga mandato ng ahensiya ang paglikha, pagpapatupad at pag-aanalisa ng mga polisiya at plano, at ilan sa mga nagawa ng NWRB ay ang pagrerebisa

sa fees and charges, pag-amyenda sa water rights over surface water permit for hydro-power projects with petitions for transfer of water permit with volume of more than 80%, work and financial plan para sa taong 2015 at 2016, at ang nabanggit nga natin sa itaas na pagbabawas ng alokasyon ng tubig para sa domestikong at agrikulturalang paggamit.

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A broader look at today's business

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### DOF exec: Sector specific measures needed to cushion El Niño effects

**T**HE rate of price increases in the Philippines remains manageable and even below the government's target, despite El Niño, but an economist of the Department of Finance (DOF) said sector-specific measures are needed to lessen inflationary risks.

DOF chief economist and Undersecretary Gil Beltran said further drop of inflation in February 2016 to 0.9 percent from the previous month's 1.3 percent and the DOF's 1.4-percent forecast is largely due to slower food inflation.

He projected food prices to post a faster rate of 2.4 percent, but it instead declined from 1.7 percent to 1.5 percent.

"Despite the ongoing dry spell, the country managed to put food-price inflation under control," he said. The government's inflation target for 2016-2018 is a range between 2 percent and 4 percent.

Beltran said average food prices stood at about 1.5 percent in the second month this 2016, slower than last January's 1.7 percent.

He said that since overall price stability in the country remains, authorities have a "larger room for maneuver to accommodate external economic shocks."

He, however, said that "while the overall price level appears stable, sector-specific measures will have to be carried out." "In this dry season, the agriculture sector is especially vulnerable," he said.

"Innovative approaches to counter the dry spell may be necessary in vegetable-producing areas to dampen inflationary impact of supply tightness," he added. *PNA*



# The Manila Times

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## Philippine Eagle found wounded in Mindanao

BY ALBERT BALBUTIN HARIBON FOUNDATION

ONLY six months after the death of Pamana—a Philippine Eagle that used to roam the Mount Hamiguitan Range in Davao Oriental freely—another “Haring Ibon” released in the forests of Mindanao was also shot.

Fortunately, the Philippine Eagle was only wounded and is now being rehabilitated at the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) in Davao City.

Because of these incidences, Haribon Foundation's wildlife biologist J. Kahlil Bohol Panopio affirmed that shootings of

>>newsonH

Philippine Eagle in Mindanao is increasing. This is more alarming when compared to Luzon's data, an average of about one shooting per year since 2013.

“In past discussions between Haribon, PEF, and other Haring Ibon conservation partners, one of the possible reasons behind this could be the increasing encroachment of communities in Haring Ibon forest habitats,” explained Panopio.

There is also the fragmented forest habitats of Mindanao, said Panopio. Each pair of Haring Ibon parents need 7,000 to 13,000 hectares of forest to call their territory. Once their chick grows to an age where it must disperse to search for its own home, it has a lower chance of finding a suitable area and even risks its life as it approaches the forest edge.

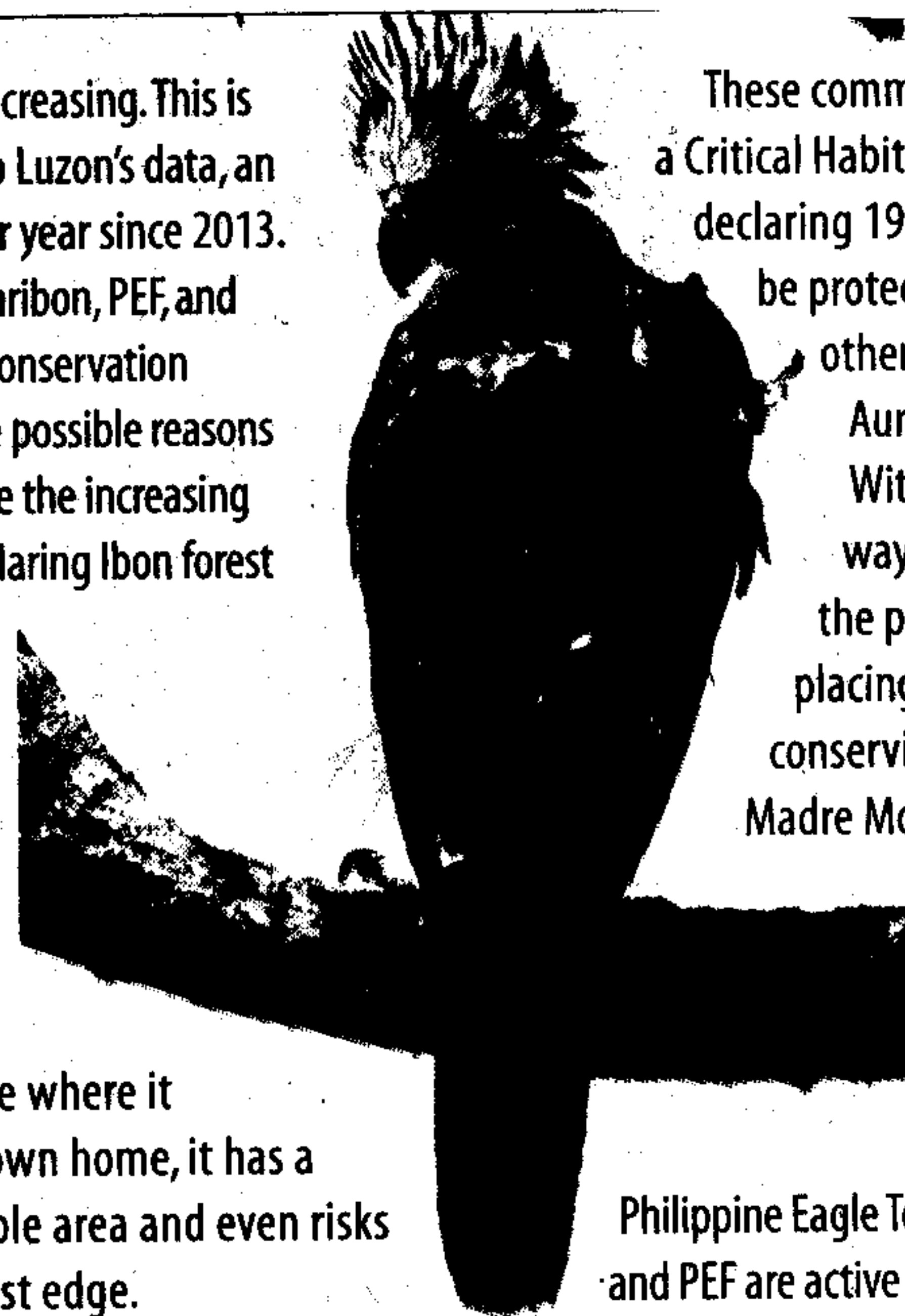
Panopio added, “The forest fragmentation, together with communities pushing further into forest areas where the Haring Ibon live, could be contributing to the higher rate of reported shootings of the species in Mindanao.”

### Community role, integral to survival

As natural forests where Haring Ibon resides are threatened by encroachment, the importance of community awareness programs becomes more and more important.

After 40 years of zero confirmed sightings in Nueva Ecija, a family of Haring Ibon have been spotted living on Mt. Mangan, thanks to botanists working in the area. Haribon conducted a field survey to validate and confirmed the sightings of the Haring Ibon. Currently, Haribon works with the local government units (LGUs), indigenous peoples and community members surrounding Mt. Mangan to ensure the survival of the Haring Ibon living there. One of them, Gab-e, was named by communities in one of the towns not too far from its habitat in Gabaldon, Nueva Ecija.

“It is important to have communities name the Haring Ibon living in their area because it gives them ownership of its conservation,” said Panopio.



These communities have worked to establish a Critical Habitat (CH) for the Haring Ibon declaring 19,000 hectares of forest habitat to be protected and conserved, with two other towns, San Luis and Dingalan of Aurora province, following the same. With this, Mt. Mangan is now on its way to becoming a CH network for the protection of the Haring Ibon, placing the area ahead of other sites in conserving the Haring Ibon in the Sierra Madre Mountain Range.

On a national scale, a partnership of several government agencies, non-government organizations (NGOs), academe and private institutions form the

Philippine Eagle Technical Working Group. Haribon and PEF are active partners of this group working together sharing data, information, and strategies regarding the protection of Haring Ibon. Unfortunately, they alone cannot accomplish the grander task of ensuring that the National Bird is no longer shot or its forest habitats no longer encroached upon.

In Filipino, “Matatag” means steadfast. But it is the steadfast actions of communities living closest to Haring Ibon that will ensure the survival of the species. As for those living further away in urban centers, participation in environmental policy-building and forest restoration efforts is just as critical. The lack of action by all might make everyone just as guilty as the hunters who shoot the Haring Ibon year after year.

For more information about Haring Ibon in Luzon, email: [conservationscience@haribon.org.ph](mailto:conservationscience@haribon.org.ph).

(The Philippine Eagle Project on Mt. Mangan is made possible with funding and support from Birdlife International, Toyota Foundation, Evolutionarily Distinct and Globally Endangered (EDGE) fellowships of the Zoological Society of London (ZSL), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit Protected Area Management Enhancement (GIZ-PAME), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and the local government units of Gabaldon, Dingalan and San Luis.)



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RWM Celebrates Earth Day with Green Activity.



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## Ex-mayor caught 'red-handed' illegally mining limestone

By JEFFREY G. DAMICO

Since he admitted hauling truckloads of limestone, state prosecutors asked the Sandiganbayan Third Division not to dismiss the theft of minerals case against former Consolacion, Cebu Mayor Avelino Gungob Sr.

The prosecution prayed that the anti-graft court's Third Division deny Gungob's judicial determination of probable cause seeking the dismissal of the case of theft of minerals penalized under Section 103 of Republic Act 7942 (the 1995 Philippine Mining Act).

On November 26, 2009, when Gungob was still Consolacion town mayor, National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) operatives, conducting monitoring and checkpoint on illegal extraction or hauling of minerals within Consolacion seized

three municipal dump trucks containing 30 cubic meters of limestone taken from a quarrying site in Barangay Garing in Consolacion.

"It is noteworthy that in Gungob's Counter-Affidavit and even in the present Motion, accused-movant did not deny that he directed other accused to extract minerals and/or transport earth materials without any permit, the application for the renewal of his gratuitous permit to quarry having been denied," cited state lawyers.

"This being the case, without any permit issued by the appropriate office as provided under R.A. 7942, the extraction, taking, gathering and removing of said minerals is illegal," they stressed.

Gungob claimed that the case is politically motivated and what were being hauled were earth materials to pave the way for an

ongoing road construction project.

"Essentially, the issues raised by accused Gungob in his Motion are evidentiary in nature and matters of defense which the Honorable Court may not properly consider at this juncture," state lawyers said.

Further, they noted that there is nothing in the Motion that would support the contention of the accused that he is not engaged in illegal mining. "Assertions are not equivalent of proof," they added.

The prosecution called the filing of Gungob's motion a "mere superfluity since without it, the (anti-graft court's) Third Division is 'duty-bound to personally evaluate the resolution of the Office of the Ombudsman and the supporting documents to determine probable cause for the purpose of issuing warrant of arrest.'"



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## CA dismisses Marcopper bid to stop damage suit

**W**hile academicians dissuade the public in using the popular encyclopedia website, the Court of Appeals (CA) resolved a Marcopper Mining Corporation (Marcopper) civil suit case with the help of Wiki-

pedia and the Internet.

In a five-page decision penned by Associate Justice Jose Reyes, Jr., the CA's Former Fifth Division denied the bid of Marcopper to stop the conduct of a full-blown trial of the civil suit filed by a group of fishermen seeking damages against the mining firm in connection with the 1996 mine

tailings on Calancan Bay in Marinduque that adversely affected their livelihood and resulted in sickness and death in surrounding communities.

The appellate court also defended its use of the Internet and Wikipedia in affirming its decision upholding the order issued by the Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 38 of Boac, Marinduque on July 5, 2013 denying its motion to dismiss the class suit.

It would be recalled that the CA cited Wikipedia and other information on the Internet in its June 2015 decision, which rejected Marcopper's argument that the trial court committed grave abuse of discretion in not junking the complaint filed Calancan Bay Fisherfolk Federation, et al, based on prescription and laches or undue delay in seeking relief.

The CA stressed that even the Supreme Court (SC) has cited Wikipedia, a free encyclopedia on that is built collaboratively, since 2004 in several of its rulings.

"Resort to the internet was made to supplant the missing information that will provide a sufficient background to apprise the Court of the basis and the reason for the tort case filed by the fishermen," the CA said.

The CA explained that it had to study why the mining pit collapsed and how the villagers and the lake itself were affected, thus, the use of internet and Wikipedia as well as SC decisions was needed in order for the Court to resolve the petition "in a fair and just manner."

"The effect of the pollution and damage wrought by Marcopper on Calancan Bay - the people,

their livelihood and the environment -- is truly immense in terms of health, quality of life, and source of livelihood," the CA said.

Records showed that Marcopper was engaged in the mining production of copper concentrates since 1968.

In October 1975, Marcopper was granted a permit to operate a "Tailings Disposal System" in Sta. Cruz, Marinduque by the then National Pollution Control Commission for a submerged disposal system.

Starting 1975, Marcopper discharged mine tailings from its Mt. Tapan mining operations into Calancan Bay. The degradation of Calancan Bay spanned a period of 16 years from 1975 to 1991 where some 80 square kilometers of coral and seagrasses at the bottom of the bay were smothered in 200 million tons of mine tailings.





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## Marcos: Give directly to LGUs their share of mining taxes

**LOCAL government units (LGUs) should be given directly their share of mining taxes.**

This was the position aired by vice presidential candidate Ferdinand "Bongbong" R. Marcos Jr. as he reiterated his support to the clamor of LGUs for direct remittance of their share in the taxes for exploration and utilization of mineral resources in their localities.

"We have been pushing for that for a long time but the national government steadfastly opposed this move," said Marcos.

Marcos noted that according to the current practice, the share of LGU in national wealth taxes has to be remitted first to the national government and will remain in government coffers for three years be-

fore it is finally given to the concerned LGU.

"We have conducted a hearing on this and mining companies agree to our position that they should directly remit to the LGU their share of the taxes instead of having to remit it first to the national government. I believe that this is what should be done," Marcos said.

Despite this, Marcos said the national government continues to oppose such proposal. "Everybody agrees, except the Palace," said Marcos.

Marcos has filed Senate Bill No. 133 mandating automatic appropriation and release to the concerned local government unit (LGU) of their 40 percent share in national wealth taxes as part of his advocacy to promote the welfare of LGUs in the country.

Marcos also called for close monitoring of practices of mining companies, particularly their compliance to regulations safeguarding the environment.

Reports earlier said that according to estimate of experts the Philippines has the fifth richest mineral in the world. On a per hectare bases, the country ranks 3rd in gold, 4th in copper, 5th in nickel and 6th in chromite.

With such mineral wealth mining can become a key driver to economic growth of the country, according to economists. Marcos agrees but stressed that mining practices should be tempered with proper regulation and close monitoring.

"If mining companies do not comply with

environmentally-friendly mining practices, they can cause massive damage to the environment and destroy the source of livelihood of many of our citizens," Marcos warned.

The senator pointed out that there are existing technologies that mining companies can be required to adopt to prevent disasters that could not only damage the environment but also pose danger to the lives of the residents in mining areas.

"But it is important that the government is always there, closely monitoring the operation of mining companies to ensure they are not cutting corners and that all the environmental safeguards provided for in the laws are faithfully complied with," Marcos stressed.



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### PRO-MINING 'WAG IBOTO!

#### Ni Lhean Angeles

"Mga kandidatong pro-mining huwag iboto!"

Ito ang sigaw ng Alyansang Tigil Mina (ATM) kasabay ng paglulunsad ng kanilang kampanya upang hikayatin ang botante na huwag tangkilikin at iboto ang mga kandidato na pumapabor sa pagmimina sa bansa.

Sa isinagawang pulong-balitaan sa lungsod Quezon, pinangalanan ni Alyansa national coordinator Jaybee Garganera, na ang mga kandidatong hindi dapat iboto dahil sa mga koneksyon sa pagmimina ay ang mga sumusunod:

Sen. Grace Poe na ang asawa ay nagtatrabaho sa isang kompanya na may kinalaman sa proyekto ng pagmimina at ang kompanyang ito ang siya umanong gumagastos sa transportasyon at pangangampanya ng senadora.

Si Vice President Jejomar Binay naman umano ay agresibong sumusuporta sa pagmimina. Habang si Mar Roxas na bet ng administrasyon ay gumagamit umano ng mga eroplano ng isang mining company at may share sa ilang kompanya ng minahan.

Si Mayor Rodrigo Duterte naman, bagama't may ordinansa sa Davao laban sa pagmimina, ay

nagpahayag ng pagpayag sa pagmimina ng isang Australian Mining.

Sa mga tumatakbong bise presidente, tinukoy din ng ATM sina Sens. Allan Cayetano, Chiz Escudero at Antonio Trillanes na sinusupportahan ng mga mining companies.

Sa mga tumatakbong senador, pinangalanan din ng grupo sina ex-Sen. Richard Gordon, Cong. Sherwin Gatchalian at Cong. Martin Romualdez na may mining project.

Ayon sa ATM, ang dapat umanong kandidato na iboboto ng mamamayan ay makakalikasan, makatao at tutol sa pagminina.

Ilan sa mga nakiisa

sa nasabing kampanya ay sina Judy Pasimio ng Purple Action for Indigenous Women's Rights (LILAK), Dr. Benito Molino ng Concerned Citizens of Zambales (CCOS), Rose Trajano ng Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA), Atty. Aaron Pedrosa ng Sanlakas and Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCI), at Norie Garcia of ABS-CBN Lingkod Kapamilya Foundation, Inc. and Green Thumb Coalition.

Samantala, maanghang ang mga salitang binitiwang ni Lipa Archbishop Ramon Arguelles, chairman ng Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines-

Permanent Committee on Public Affairs, laban kay Pangulong Benigno 'Noynoy' Aquino III nang akusahan itong "sinungaling at hindi tumutupad sa pangako".

"Salamat at 'yung Presidente nagpunta sa Paris pumirma siya na kasali ang Philippines sa pag-suppress ng further deterioration of the environment, pero pagdating niya dito, um-attend siya ng opening ng Coal Fired Power Plant sa Davao, then marami siyang pinirmahan na mga mining developments, at saka research at saka 'yung mga Coal Fired Power Plant, that is a contradiction,' paliwanag pa ng Obispo. (With Noel Abuel)



# 'PNP, AFP still most corrupt govt agencies

By Florante S. Solmerin

*FOLLOWING local government units, the Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces of the Philippines are still the most corrupt government agencies, the Ombudsman said in a report released Monday.*

"For five straight years, officials from local government units [LGU] and members of the Philippine National Police [PNP] topped the chart as the agencies with the most number of cases filed with the Office of the Ombudsman," Morales said.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines is at third place followed by the Department of Education (fourth); Department

of Environment and Natural Resources (fifth); State Universities and Colleges (sixth); Department of Agriculture (seventh); Department of Finance (eighth); and Department of Agrarian Reform (ninth).

"Based on the report submitted by the Finance and Management Information Office, cases against LGU officials rose by 31 percent, an increase from 2,053 cases in

2014 to 2,697 in 2015, while cases against members of the PNP increased from 1,258 in 2014 to 1,265 in 2015," Morales said.

Surprisingly, Ombudsman Conchita Morales there has been a "downward trend" of corruption cases at the Bureau of Customs, now at 10<sup>th</sup> place.

"In contrast, the Bureau of Customs, at 10<sup>th</sup> place, registered a downward trend with 177 cases in 2011 to 81 cases in 2012, 76 cases in 2013, 84 cases in 2014 and 70 cases in 2015," she said, noting the cases filed included both criminal and administrative complaints.

Morales released the report a month after Transparency International noted in its annual Cor-

ruption Perceptions Index that the Philippines slipped 10 notches in ranking of corruption perception in 168 countries.

In the 2015 CPI released late January, the Philippines got a score of 35 out of 100, 10 notches lower than its ranking last year. Philippines scored 34 in 2012, 36 in 2013, and 38 in 2014.

The scores in the CPI, which could be from a scale of 0 (perceived to be highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean), are based on "expert opinions of public sector corruption."

Transparency International also observed that two-thirds of the 168 countries have scores below 50, adding that no country in the world is completely corruption-free.



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## PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

### LGUs, PNP top list of Ombudsman cases

By Alden M. Monzon *Reporter*

LOCAL GOVERNMENT units and the country's police force had the most number of cases lodged against them at the Office of the Ombudsman last year, followed by other government agencies including the military, as well as the environment and education departments.

According to the Office of the Ombudsman, administrative and criminal cases filed against local government officials were the most numerous in their records — with 2,697 cases in 2015, from 2,053 cases in 2014.

Those lodged against officials of the Philippine National Police (PNP) were at 1,265, from 1,258 the preceding year.

The other agencies in the Ombudsman's list include: the Armed Forces of the Philippines (3<sup>rd</sup> place); Department of Education (4<sup>th</sup>); Department of Environment and Natural Resources (5<sup>th</sup>); State Universities and Colleges (6<sup>th</sup>); Department of Agriculture (7<sup>th</sup>); Department of Finance (8<sup>th</sup>); Department of Agrarian Reform (9<sup>th</sup>) — and the Bureau of Customs at the bottom of the list.

Sought for comment, Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC) founding Chairman Dante L.A. Jimenez gave several reasons why the PNP and local government units are on top of the Ombudsman's list; saying these government institutions are some of the most prone to corruption.

Mr. Jimenez said it also doesn't help that the criminal justice system is full of loopholes and mired in its long process and delays.

When it comes to the PNP, Mr. Jimenez said the problem lies in low salaries of policemen and poor disciplinary action by the police leadership.

"Despite of the number of cases filed against corrupt policemen, these people rarely get punished and are just transferred to another police unit," he said.

In a related development, Sandiganbayan sentenced former Davao del Sur Governor Benjamin P. Bautista, Jr. and five other former officials to at least 24 years in prison for four counts of graft.

In a 17-page resolution on Friday, the Sandiganbayan Special First Division sentenced Mr. Bautista, former State Accountant Richard T. Martel, former General Services Officer Allan C. Putong, former State Treasurer Abel A. Guinares, former Budget Officer Victoria G. Mier, and Sangguniang Panlalawigan member Edgar C. Gan for the illegal purchase of five vehicles in 2003 supposedly for government service.

Investigation showed the vehicles — two units of Toyota Hilux pickups, a Mitsubishi L300 Van, and two Ford Rangers, all amounting to more than P5.6 million — did not go through public bidding and were not part of the local government's intended procurements.



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**LGU, PNP officials may pinaka maraming kaso sa Ombudsman**

Ang mga opisyal mula sa mga lokal na pamahalaan at mga pulis ang may pinaka maraming kaso na naisampa sa tanggapan ng Ombudsman sa nakalipas na limang taon.

Ito ay base sa naisumiteng report ng Finance and Management Information Office ng Ombudsman.

Sa record, tumaas pa ng 31 percent ang mga kaso ng mga opisyal sa LGU's. Mula 2,053 cases noong 2014 ay umabot

na sa 2,697 ang naisampa sa Ombudsman noong 2015 habang ang mga kaso ng mga miyembro ng Philippine National Police (PNP) ay tumaas mula 1,258 noong 2014 ay naging 1,265 noong 2015.

Sa mga tanggapan ng gobyerno, ang Bureau of Customs ay naitalang pang-10 sa puwesto na may 177 cases noong 2011 na naging 81 noong 2012, 76 cases noong 2013, 84 cases noong 2014 at

70 cases noong 2015.

Ang ilan pang ahensiya ng gobyerno na nasa top 10 ay ang Armed Forces of the Philippines (3<sup>rd</sup> place); Department of Education (4<sup>th</sup>); Department of Environment and Natural Resources (5<sup>th</sup>); State Universities and Colleges (6<sup>th</sup>); Department of Agriculture (7<sup>th</sup>); Department of Finance (8<sup>th</sup>); at Department of Agrarian Reform (9<sup>th</sup>).

Ang mga kaso ay kriminal at administratibo. (*Angie dela Cruz*)



# The Manila Times

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**

## PH, UNDP implement program on climate change

THE Philippines moved to take concrete action to tackle climate change through a new program that will ensure the integration of disaster risk reduction and sustainable development in development plans and programs of the national and local governments.

The program will be implemented by the Climate Change Commission with the support of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

The Philippines adopted the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction,

and Agenda 2030 to achieve sustainable development goals.

"Our Commission is facilitating the convergence of efforts of the government and all sectors and stakeholders to build the resilience of local communities in accordance with the post-2015 international frameworks. This convergence shall strengthen local risk governance, enhance rural livelihoods, and ensure ecosystems integrity. It shall also make the People's Survival Fund accessible to local governments and people's organizations for their community adaptation and resilience build-

ing programs," Climate Change Secretary Emmanuel M. de Guzman said.

UNDP Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific Hao-liang Xu, who is visiting Manila, stressed the need to strengthen national and local capacities "to adapt to, or mitigate, the effects of climate change and to prepare for possible disaster scenarios."

"Climate change and disaster risk reduction go hand-in-hand. The volatility and unpredictability of a changing climate threatens to increase both the frequency and

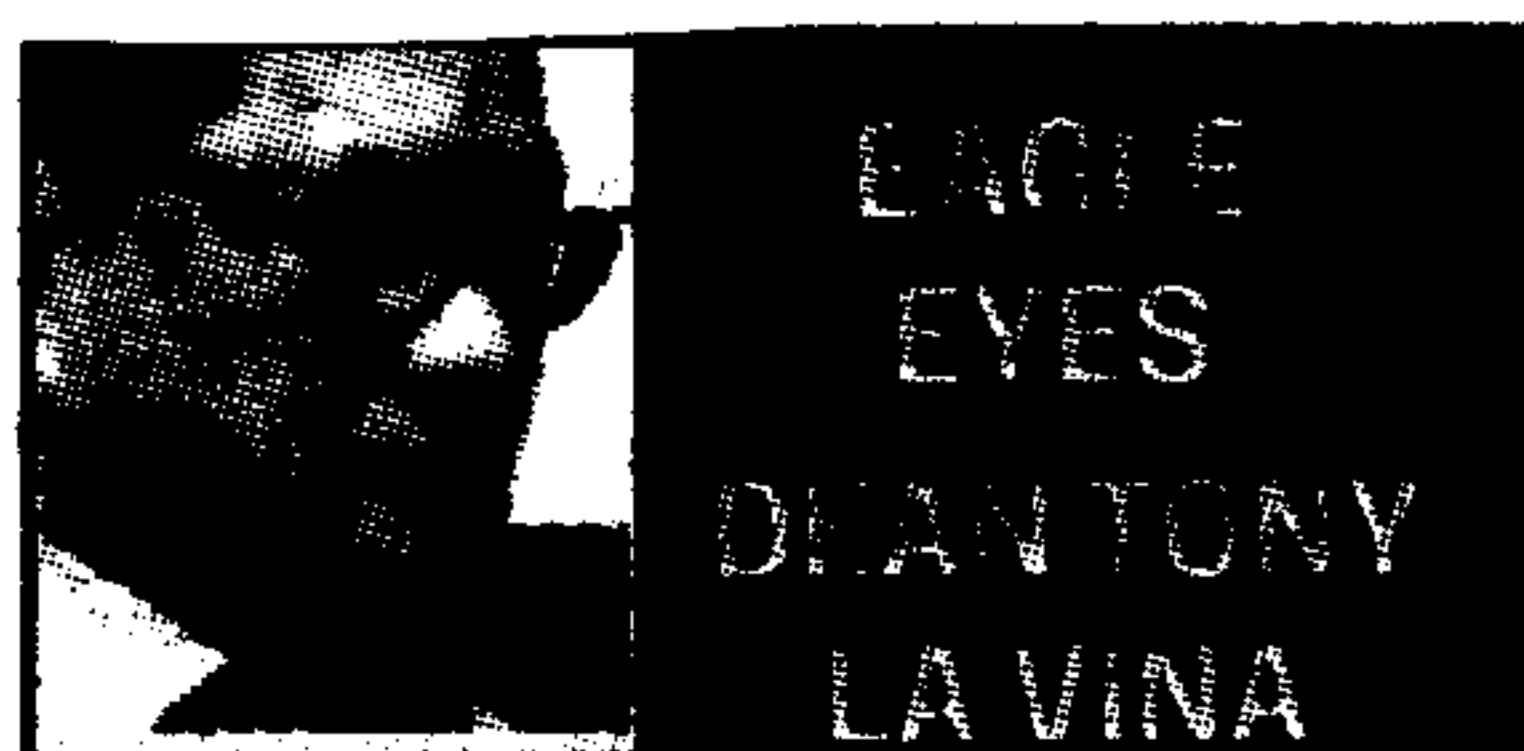
severity of disasters," he said.

"We commend the Philippine Government for this innovative program on climate action. How government formulates policies and laws, develop budgets and translates this into effective support to vulnerable communities will play a critical role in reducing disaster and climate change risks," Xu said.

The new program will establish partnerships to increase awareness of disaster risks, enhance knowledge sharing and management and improve national and local competencies on disaster risk reduction and management.



**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**



## HUMAN RIGHTS, ECOSYSTEMS, AND CLIMATE CHANGE

THE Paris Agreement is definitely not perfect, as I wrote in my last column, but embedded in it is guidance on how to undertake climate actions while ensuring socially and ecologically sustainable outcomes. In a recent article published in the website of the Center for International Forestry Research, I argue this important point with colleagues Rosalind Reece and Purple Romero. I borrow language from that article in this column.

We are all affiliated with the REDD+ Safeguards Working Group, a North-South coalition of more than 40 human rights, environmental and indigenous organizations pushing for the effective implementation of REDD+ safeguards. REDD+ refers to the approach or mechanism in the climate change convention that provided policy incentives for developing countries to implement climate change mitigation programs in their forests. REDD+ programs, projects and activities are subject to human rights, governance and environmental safeguards.

The Paris Agreement introduces a set of principles to guide climate actions in its Preamble. In particular, the Preamble states that countries should, "respect, promote and consider their

respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity."

The Agreement also recognizes the "importance of the conservation and enhancement, as appropriate, of sinks and reservoirs of the greenhouse gases referred to in the Convention" and notes "the importance of ensuring the integrity of all ecosystems, including oceans, and the protection of biodiversity ... when taking action to address climate change."

Although some are disappointed that references to human rights and ecosystem integrity are not included in the operative text of the Agreement, the language used in the preamble clearly shows the intent to bind governments to implement its provisions.

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### HUMAN... From A9

It was not a walk in the park to get human rights and ecosystems integrity language into the Agreement. Indeed in Paris, the RSWG worked hard to keep the critical provisions in place and saw crucial support from Mexico (which took the lead on human rights, forming a Friends of the Principles group) as well as from the Philippines, Costa Rica, Chile, Brazil, Tuvalu and Indonesia. In the meantime, the Philippines and Turkey took the lead in pushing the language on ecosystem integrity in the Preamble.

We in RSWG campaigned hard for the inclusion of ecosystem integrity, human rights and the rights of indigenous peoples in the operational part of the text. We stressed that 1.5 degrees Celsius would be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve without ecosystem integrity. We reminded negotiators that the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change contains many provisions on ecosystems, including in the Objective (Article 2) and the Commitments (Article 4). We emphasized that inclusion of ecosystem integrity in the Preamble is not enough, and would be a backsliding from the Convention itself.

In the second week of the Paris meeting, COP presi-

dent Laurent Fabius announced the creation of new informal consultation groups, including one on the Preamble facilitated by Claudia Salerno, Venezuela's lead climate negotiator. As talks entered their final days, under heavy pressure from the civil society inter-constituency group and the Friends of Principles, countries mustered political will, resulting in what Ambassador Salerno described as "a revolutionary Preamble."

It provides clear social and ecological framing for all climate actions taken under the Paris Agreement, and represents a powerful set of guiding principles for climate actions that send a strong signal which cannot be ignored. The Agreement also provides for the development of guidelines and procedures over the next five years, opening the door for the adoption of further social and ecological protections when the Agreement enters into force.

The preamble is revolutionary for several reasons. First, human rights, the rights of indigenous peoples and ecosystem integrity were not included in the 1992 Convention or the Kyoto Protocol. Now we have an agreement that affords them a clear role in battling climate change. Further, the new climate deal tasks countries to ensure the integrity of all ecosystems, including oceans, and to protect biodi-

versity when taking action on climate change. This finds stronger and solid footing in Article 5.1, which states, "Parties should take action to conserve and enhance, as appropriate, sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases" (i.e. "biomass, forests and oceans, and other terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems").

When taken together with the Preamble, the Agreement states loud and clear that all countries, both developing and developed, are mandated to conserve and enhance the integrity of ecosystems in a way that also respects human rights and the rights of indigenous peoples and protects biodiversity.

The next step in the negotiations will set the stage for countries to give substance to the Paris Agreement's references to the protection of human rights, the rights of indigenous peoples and ecosystem integrity.

The coming years will be a test of countries' will to ensure the 'revolutionary Preamble' effects real change. We have the right signal from the Paris Agreement; with global resolve and political will, we can work together to turn this signal into effective climate actions.

Facebook Page: Dean Tony La Viña Twitter: tonylavs



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## Young environmental activist seeks unity on climate agenda

BY RIZAL RAOUL REYES

**A**TLAS did not shrug. Neither did Rama Olivares Co, 16, the second-youngest member of the National Youth Council (NYC) of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Philippines.

There was no earth-shaking event for me to respond to the call of environmentalism, according to Co. Nevertheless, he always felt that climate change is a major and global issue that is beyond race, class and nationality and, more important, everybody is vulnerable.

"On the other hand, it [climate change] exists as an opportunity like no other," Co said in an e-mail interview with the BUSINESSMIRROR. "The universality of the climate-change threat is such that we, as a species, are forced to put aside our differences for the sake of a common good. I believe that, to be a part of the movement, that is the chief

facilitator of such a peace; [it] is the greatest honor of all."

Co, son of designer Maja Olivares-Co, was tapped by the WWF recently for the Philippines's own version of its youth group. The WWF Philippines said it organized the NYC to give young people a bigger role in promoting environmentalism and sustainability. The council has seven members ages 16 to 24 coming from Philippine-based schools.

Just like any true-blue environmentalist, Co cites Al Gore and Christiana Figueres as role models. The former is the 45th vice president of the United States, who predicted the world to have ended last month.



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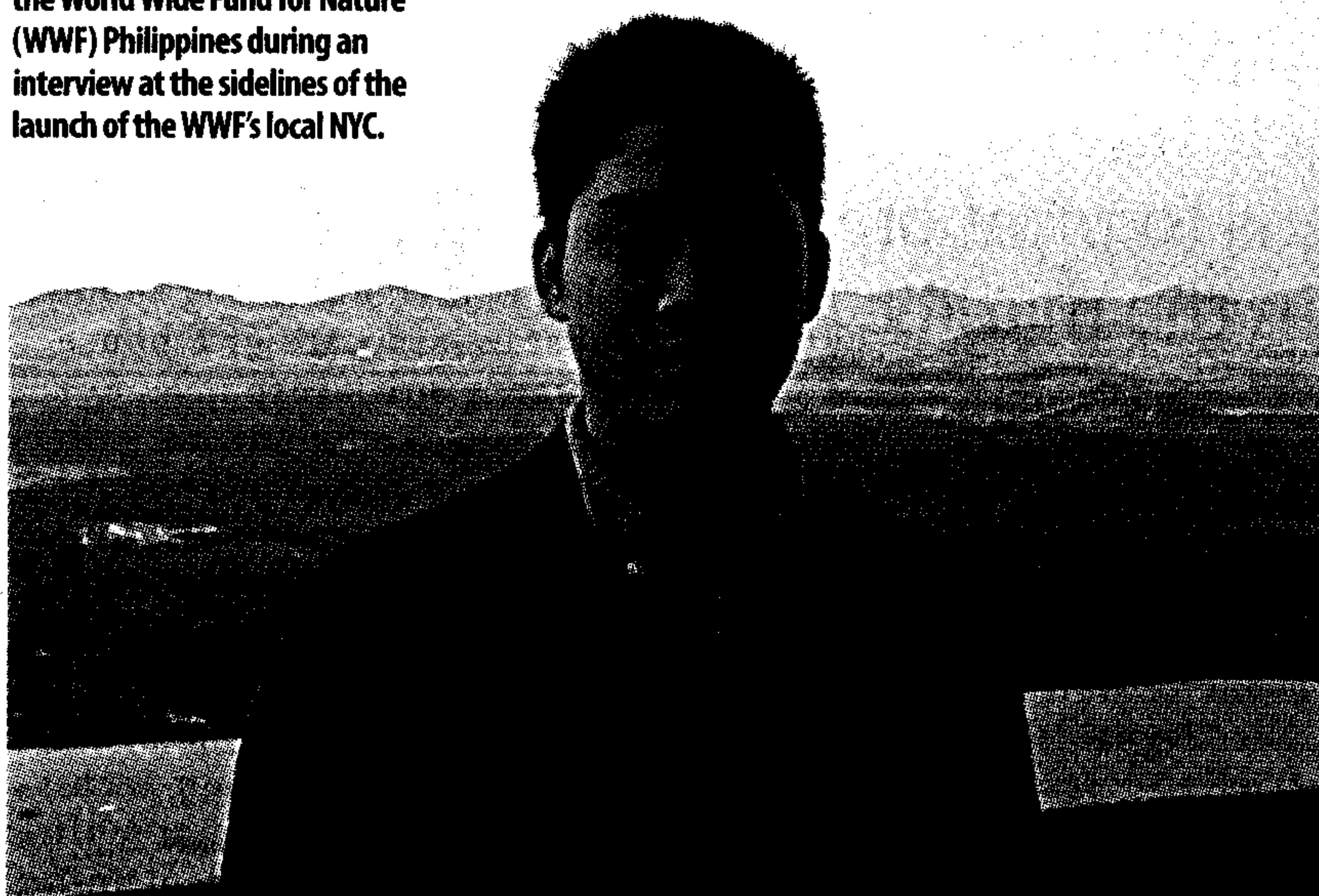
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Young environmental activist seeks unity on  
climate agenda

THIS undated photo courtesy of Rama Olivares Co shows the second-youngest member of the National Youth Council (NYC) of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Philippines during an interview at the sidelines of the launch of the WWF's local NYC.



Figueres is the current executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. An anthropologist by profession, Figueres offers a perspective that is quite different from typical environmentalist, according to Co.

"While an understanding of the science behind climate change is undoubtedly necessary, it is her ability

to understand how this phenomenon affects humans on an interpersonal level that makes her a successful champion of the cause."

Co said he looks forward to exchange ideas and learn from the experience and maturity of his older contemporaries in the WWF council. Although he knows his youth can be sometimes a handicap, he believes

that each member of the council brings a unique perspective.

"It is the synthesis of our differing backgrounds that will result in a successful [youth council]."

Co said he plans to pursue his environmentalism in college. Definitely inspired by Gore and Figueres, Co plans to take up Political Science, International Relations, or Anthropology.

He said he believes that a solid background in either a social science or humanities subject will enable him to become a more effective advocate and communicator.

"I think this is especially relevant, as climate change continues to remain a very intangible nonissue in the minds of many individuals, despite its looming threat," he said.

Co believes the Filipino youth is the country's greatest assets, "because [we have] both the passion and the vision to drive the Philippines forward."

However, the youth needs a venue to harness their talent and enthusiasm, he said.

"I believe this applies not just to environmentalism, but to any advocacy," Co added. "This youth council represents a great leap forward in bestowing upon the youth the platform for expression that we so crave."



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### **LOREN URGES BETS TO HAVE CLEAN CAMPAIGN**

SENATOR Loren Legarda has appealed to all candidates in the May elections to conduct a "clean campaign" and reminded them against the posting of campaign materials on trees.

She also called on local government units to take the lead in ensuring that campaign materials are displayed only on common poster areas as prescribed by the law.

"It should not be posted on trees, heritage buildings, public infrastructure and other properties not assigned as poster areas," said Legarda.

Under the Fair Elections Act (RA 9006), common poster areas are designated public places such as plazas, markets and barangay centers.

The Commission on Elections has pro-

hibited the posting of campaign materials on trees. Republic Act 3571 prohibits the cutting, destroying or injuring of planted or growing trees, flowering plants and shrubs or plants of scenic values along public roads, in plazas, parks, school premises or in any other public ground.

Legarda urged candidates to use campaign materials, which are "recyclable and eco-friendly."

She said that candidates and campaign organizers must urge their supporters to ensure clean elections, not only by avoiding mudslinging but also in making sure that in every campaign rally, the surroundings are kept clean and free of trash and litter.

**Bernadette Tamayo**



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# ENVIRONMENTAL RACE TO 5 COUNTRIES

Considered one of the biggest and fastest-growing running events in the Philippines, National Geographic Channel's Earth Day Run will be going international when it marks its seventh year on April 17.

In celebration of seven years of promoting fitness and caring for the environment, *Earth Day Run 2016* will be happening simultaneously for the first time in five cities across the region: Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Tai Chung, and Manila. Each city's race will be using support from the registration of all participants to help raise money for World Wide Fund for Nature and its projects.

On April 17, *Earth Day Run 2016* will be held in all cities, with the Manila leg expecting 20,000 runners to participate in a race course that spans Bonifacio Global City and McKinley West. NGC will once again partner with Cherifer Premium to help make the Manila race its biggest Earth Day Run thus far. Combined with thousands of runners from the other cities, Earth Day Run 2016 will be the largest collection of running Eco Warriors in the history of the race.

NGC's *Earth Day Run* has consistently helped in promoting sustainable living and supporting environmental advocacy utilizing the popular platform of running in its seven years of operation. As a result, participation in *Earth Day Run* in the Philippines has increased year on year, allowing



2016  
EARTH DAY RUN PHILIPPINES

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL

CHERIFER Premium

HONG KONG | MANILA | SHANGHAI | SINGAPORE | TAICHUNG

DISTANCE	REGISTRATION FEE:	ASSEMBLY TIME:	GUNSTART TIME:
42K	P1,700.00	11PM (APRIL 16)	12:00MN
21K	P1,300.00	2:00AM	3:00AM
10K	P850.00	3:30AM	4:30AM
5K	P750.00	5:00AM	6:00AM

17 APR | BGC • MCKINLEY WEST  
REGISTER NOW AT SM AURA

www.natgeorunph.com #NatGeoRun2016

NGC to contribute significantly to various environmental causes.

Massive participation in Earth Day Run throughout the years has made it possible for NGC to plant 36,000 fruit-bearing trees in a watershed in the Abuan watershed in Isabela, in the Sierra Madres region. Not only was the watershed partially reforested but local farmers were also allowed to care for and harvest these trees for themselves. In 2014, *Earth Day Run*'s proceeds went to training fishermen affected by Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) on how to make and use fiberglass boats, which can better withstand the hard weather common in the Philip-

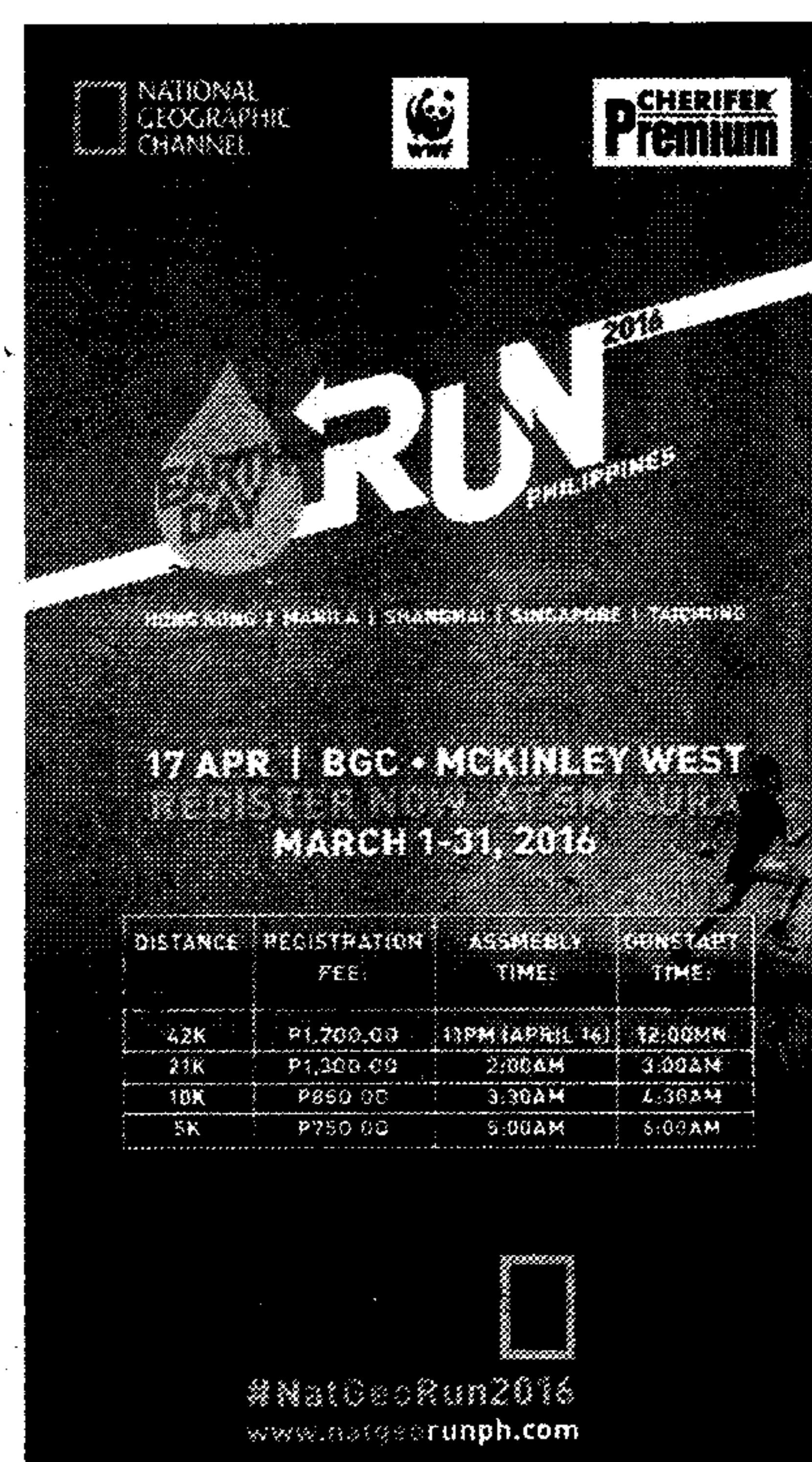
pinas and allow them to continue with their livelihood. Last year, NGC was able to provide portable solar-powered lighting kits to the Tawbuid Mangyan tribesfolk in Mindoro, giving them and Forest Rangers' camps safe and sustainable light sources off the grid.

*Earth Day Run 2016* expects to register 20,000 runners this year, and slots for 5K, 10K, 21K and 42K are open via online registration through the regional site <http://www.natgeoeearthdayrun.com>, which leads to the Nat Geo EDR sites for each country. On-site registration for the Manila leg will be open until March 31 at the Ground Floor of SM Aura Pre-

mier in BGC.

NGC is seen on SkyCable Ch.41, Destiny Cable Ch.55, Cable Link Ch.58, Dream Ch.28, Signal Digital TV Ch.76, GSat Ch.14 and over 300 cable operators nationwide.

NGC, together with its partners, aims to create awareness on the benefits of climate change solution, endangered species protection, watershed management, and food security through the World Wide Fund for Nature. It is hoped that *Earth Day Run 2016* will reach more people throughout the region and inspire them to care more for the environment and find more sustainable ways of living.



2016  
EARTH DAY RUN PHILIPPINES

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17 APR | BGC • MCKINLEY WEST  
REGISTER NOW AT SM AURA  
MARCH 1-31, 2016

DISTANCE	REGISTRATION FEE:	ASSEMBLY TIME:	GUNSTART TIME:
42K	P1,700.00	11PM (APRIL 16)	12:00MN
21K	P1,300.00	2:00AM	3:00AM
10K	P850.00	3:30AM	4:30AM
5K	P750.00	5:00AM	6:00AM

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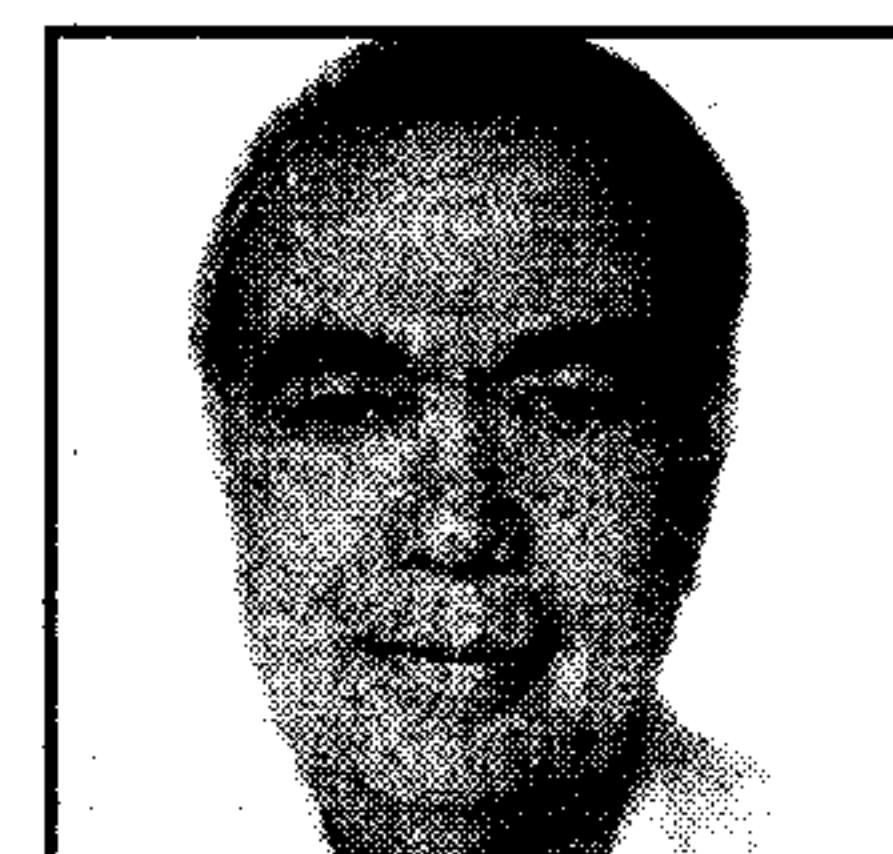
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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICES

NEVER ON A SUNDAY

# Implementing government policies



By **ATTY. RENE ESPINA**  
Former Senator

**I**N general, government policies are good especially when you read the objectives. It is in the implementation of said policies that the objectives fail to materialize.

Indeed there are many programs that are now failures rather than successes. Let us talk about basic programs that are needed for the economic progress of our country:

Power, as we have time and again emphasized, must be cheap and readily available in adequate megawatts. Without such power how can a country industrialize? The other day our country honored President Elpidio Quirino by transferring his mortal remains to

"Libingan ng Mga Bayani – Heroes Burial Ground." President Quirino, if memory serves, was the Philippine president who started the construction of the Hydro Electric Agus River System/Lake Lanao, and the ones in the Mountain Provinces i.e. Ambuklaw Dam and others.

Yet today we continue to suffer power shortages, especially in the Mindanao area. We are told that with the production of several new coal fired plants in Mindanao, a shortage would be a thing of the past. Really? But, what about the price of electricity, will it be cheap, enough to encourage industries to be built in our country?

How about water? Again without sufficient cheap water a country cannot move up its economy into a developed one. All water production,

distribution, and operation of the system has been privatized. We are forewarned that because of the El Niño we might suffer shortages of our water supplies – for human consumption. How about for industrial use? Would the water be available at a reasonable price? In previous articles, I had written about how Israel solved most of its water supply problems. Remember, I wrote that the thing that was most important with the Jewish water officials was that rain water would be saved so that not a drop of it would ever reach the sea. In our country we have more than enough water that drops from the skies when the monsoon winds bring in the rains. The many missing structures are the dams to save the maximum water that we can.

During WW II our population

was only 16 million people. Today our population is estimated at 102 million. So, how much more water for human and industrial use do we need? Unfortunately many government administrations have been long on promises and short in performance in both water and power production and distribution at reasonable prices.

The third requirement for a progressive country is infrastructure – roads, bridges etc. Again the many government administrations have been very "promising", and very short in delivering the needed infrastructure. In addition, the construction and use of these structures have been quite expensive – overpriced?

How about the construction of new school buildings? Are they typhoon proof? Is there a uniform design for certain types of buildings? For example: how can we forget the Gabaldon (Quezon's Time) type of concrete school buildings for the public elementary school stu-

dents. They are all over the country and until today they are as strong as ever and they look new.

How about food production and distribution? Since i was in primary grades our country already had NA-RIC – The National Rice and Corn Corporation, now the National Food Authority. How many billions of pesos does NFA owe? Have all the unpaid loans as a result of the governments rice subsidy policies been useful? Are we sure that the losses were not caused by overpriced imports of cereals with the corresponding kickbacks?

The incoming new government administration should review the basic policies, and why they failed. Land Reform has been a total failure. Likewise the other policies. Indeed it is time to completely change policies and how these are implemented.

*rene.g.espina@gmail.com*



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### Surge of tourists endangers dam in Ilocos Norte

**L**AOAG CITY—The sudden surge of tourists visiting Madongan Dam, with its cascading waterfalls and crystal-clear waters, is starting to alarm residents, with an overwhelming number of cottages being built by its lower stream and some individuals throwing garbage anywhere.

“Madongan Dam in Dingras, Ilocos Norte, will only last for five years if the constraint in the upper stream of the watershed will not be given attention,” said Charlie Batin, a forester-researcher who specializes in silviculture, agroforestry and social forestry at the state-run Mariano Marcos State University (MMSU) in Batac City.

Batin, a professor at the MMSU, said the watershed needs proper management to maintain its aesthetic pleasure for the next generation to see and appreciate. Citing over a thousand of tourists and picnickers visiting the area this summer season, he suggested that carrying capacity studies be conducted “to regulate the flock of people going to this emerging local tourist destination.”

Popularized by thousands of visitors who post majestic views of the Madongan Dam on social networking sites, thereby catching media attention, the Madongan River resort that is within the tri-boundary of Dingras, Marcos and Nueva Era towns is attracting huge number of local and foreign tourists, including *balikbayan* here. *PNA*



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# PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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# PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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## Gov't approves new GMO rules; farmers relieved

THE PHILIPPINES has approved a new set of rules on genetically modified organisms (GMO) after the Supreme Court ordered an overhaul of previous regulations, bringing relief to farmers but at the same time worrying importers that any delay could spark a food crisis.

Five department secretaries signed off on the rules, Merle Palacpac, chief of the plant quarantine service at the Bureau of Plant Industry, told Reuters.

The new rules, which would be forwarded to the Department of Agriculture, would likely take effect by April, Palacpac added.

The Supreme Court in December stopped the issuance of new permits for the planting or importation of genetically modified crops until the new rules were in place, putting in limbo nearly 1 million corn farmers and buyers of GM soybean meal, the Philippines' top GMO import.

The court acted on a petition by environmental activists led by Greenpeace, with the move likely closely watched by governments elsewhere as the Philippines is seen

as a trailblazer for GMO.

Greenpeace yesterday said it would take further action against the new GMO guidelines.

"Definitely, there will be action but we haven't decided [what it will be] yet," said Greenpeace campaigner Leonora Lava, adding that it would discuss options with other petitioners and allied groups.

### Improve transparency

The new rules are expected to improve transparency in the approval process for permits to plant, import and commercialize GM products, including enhanced regulations on risk assessment and involvement of local governments, said Palacpac.

"The technical working group made sure that these concerns by the Supreme Court were addressed," she said.

The government had set the target date for the signing of the regulations by the five secretaries on Feb. 24, but the plan did not push through as scheduled as some officials were traveling.

While importers of soymeal welcomed the new regulations, they were concerned it would now take longer to get permission to bring in GM crops.

Under the old rules, feed millers were only required to get sanitary and phytosanitary import clearances for the soybean meal that they shipped in, said an industry source.

It is unclear whether they will have to get a separate biosafety permit, the source added.

The Philippines was the first country in Asia to approve the commercial cultivation of a GM crop for animal feed and food in 2002 when it allowed GM corn planting. It has also allowed GM crop imports for more than a decade. Around 70 percent of its corn output is GM.

GMO critics argue the technology poses risks to public health, while advocates say such fears have not been scientifically proven and that high-yielding genetically altered crops would help ensure food security as the world's population grows.

Reuters