

**DATE**  
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**Thursday**

# **DENR**

## **IN THE NEWS**

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## DENR cancels permits for 4 mine firms

The Philippine government has cancelled the environmental permits for four more mining projects, including one planned nickel venture, as the world's top nickel ore supplier deepens a months-long crackdown on the resources sector.

The Southeast Asian nation has been reviewing hundreds of environmental compliance certificates (ECCs) including those granted to mines. That is separate from an environmental audit of the country's 41 operating mines whose results are set to be released on Jan. 31.

The four revoked ECCs include one for Norwegian firm Intex Resources' proposed \$2.5-billion nickel mine on Mindoro island in the central Philippines.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Regina Lopez told a media briefing the project would damage the environment as it would be located on a watershed.

"Everyone there, the politicians, the church, the academe, they vehemently did not want mining there," she said.

A member of staff at Intex's Manila office declined to make immediate comment, saying the branch was waiting for an official response from headquarters in Norway.

Lopez, a committed environmentalist, in December cancelled the ECCs of three nickel mines as part of the clampdown.

Firebrand Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has backed Lopez's aggressive campaign against mines causing environmental harm, warning shortly after taking office in June last year that

the country could survive without a mining industry.

The three other ECCs cancelled on Wednesday were for a gold mine, a coal producer and an iron and copper project.

A separate mining audit has led to the suspension of 10 mines with 20 more

at risk. The clampdown stoked worries about supply of nickel from the Philippines last year, helping spur a 14-percent rally in global prices.

The Philippines' nickel ore shipments to top market China dropped 11.6 percent to 28.8 million tons in January-November. (Reuters)

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## DENR cancels ECCs of 4 mining, 2 'environmentally destructive' projects

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

@jonlmayuga

**T**HE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has canceled the expired environmental compliance certificates (ECCs) issued for six development projects, including four for mining, as part of the agency's continuing industry-wide ECC audit.

Environment Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez said the cancellation of the ECCs was meant to prevent environmental degradation and suffering of people in would-be affected communities.

The canceled ECCs for mining are the Mindoro nickel project of Intex Resources Philippines Inc.

for the extraction of nickel laterite ore covering 11,216 hectares in the municipality of Victoria, Pola and Socorro in Oriental Mindoro and municipality of Sablayan in Occidental Mindoro; Cebu coal mining project of Forum Cebu Coal Corp. (FCCC) in Cebu province; iron copper and other mining project of

CEKAS Development Corp. at a 810-hectare land in Donsolihon, Cagayan de Oro City, in the province of Misamis Oriental; gold mining and processing project of Eaglerock Mining Corp. in Bayog, Zamboanga del Sur.

Also canceled were ECCs for Integrated Forest Management Agreement (Ifma) of Mejore Wood Works Inc. in Janipaan, San Agustin, Surigao del Sur; and the Parañaque-Las Piñas Coastal Bay Project Land Reclamation of Alltech Contractors Inc. for the reclamation of 203.34 hectares in Parañaque and 421.71 hectares in Las Piñas along the coasts of the two Metro Manila cities.

All the ECCs, Lopez said, have expired, and the DENR has no intention of granting the companies the ECCs, considering their potential impacts to the environment.

A known antimining advocate, Lopez said the campaign against illegal, irresponsible and destructive mining projects will continue under her watch, as she vowed to announce

the result of the ongoing mining audit by the end of the month.

"On January 31 we will announce the result of the mining audit, and the following week, we will announce whether those already issued with suspension order will remain suspended or not," she said. "As I've said the DENR has adopted social justice as its heart and soul. All projects that will cause people to suffer will have to stop."

Lopez said she strongly opposed land-reclamation projects because of their adverse impact to coastal environment.

The DENR had declared protected areas and watersheds as "off limits" to destructive development projects as part of the agency's mandate to protect the environment and conserve the country's rich biodiversity.

The DENR is currently reviewing a total of 800 ECCs for various development projects and had so far canceled six ECCs for mining projects, including a housing project within the La Mesa watershed.

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**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**

## DENR cancels ECCs of 6 companies

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has canceled the environmental compliance certificates (ECC) of six projects including those of four mining companies, for failing to operate within their certificates' validity period.

In a press conference on Wednesday, Environment Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez noted that the validity of the ECCs for these projects have expired, in accordance with existing laws in which a project's ECC is deemed expired five years after the project's failure to launch.

These projects with expired ECCs are Intex Resources Philippines, Inc., whose \$2.5-billion nickel project in Occidental Mindoro is scheduled for operations next year; Mejore Wood Works, Inc.'s project in Surigao del Sur; Forum Cebu Coal Corp.'s coal mining project in Cebu; CEKAS Development Corp.'s mining projects in Misamis Oriental covering iron, copper, and other minerals; and Eagelerock Mining Corp.'s gold mining

and processing project in Zamboanga del Sur.

Alltech Contractors, Inc.'s Coastal Bay Land Reclamation Project Land in Paranaque City also had its ECC canceled. Ms. Lopez said this project may interfere with her agency's plan on massive mangrove planting.

Speaking with reporters on the sidelines of the press conference, Undersecretary for Legal Maria Paz G. Luna explained that sending out issuance letters to companies on the cancellation of their ECCs serves to remind them of the need to reassess the environmental impact of those projects to their concerned communities.

"The reason the ECC lapses is because it becomes a different environment... so we set the five-year lapse," Ms. Luna said, adding: — **Janina C. Lim**



Read the full story by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or by typing the link <https://goo.gl/4FcJwZ>

# PILIPINO MIRROR

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AMIN NG KATOTOHANAN

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## 6 ECC KANSELADO

**KINANSELA** ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang anim na Environmental Compliance Certificate na inisyu sa anim na kompanya.

Sinabi ni DENR Secretary Gina Lopez na may basehan ang kanilang aksiyon dahil matagal nang walang operasyon ang naturang mga kompanya.

Ang anim na kompanya ay kinabibilangan ng IFMA-Mejbre Wood Works, Inc. na nasa Surigao del Sur; Mindoro Nickel Project ng Intex Resources Philippines sa Mindoro; Cebu Coal Mining Project ng Forum Cebu Coal Corporation sa Cebu; Iron, Copper and other Minerals Mining Project ng Cekas, Devt. Corporation sa Misamis Oriental; Gold Mining and Processing Project ng

Eaglerock Mining Corporation sa Zamboanga del Sur; at Parañaque-Las Piñas Coastal Bay Project and Land Reclamation area ng Altech Contractors.

Ayon kay DENR Undersecretary for Legal Maria Paz Luna, kung kukuha ng bagong ECC ang mga nabanggit na mga kompanya ay kailangang magsumite sila ng panibagong dokumento na naaayon sa bagong kautusan ng kalihim na dapat masunod ang mga kondisyon bago sila maisyuhin ng ECC.

Samantala, ang mga nakabimbing desisyon sa pag-audit sa ECC ay inaasahang ilalabas bago matapos ang buwang kasalukuyan.

Umaabot na sa 12 ECC na ang kinansela ng DENR.

**MONCHET LARAÑO**

# THE STANDARD

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## DENR to close illegal landfills

By Anna Leah E. Gonzales

DUMPSITES near water reservoirs will be closed within this quarter, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said Wednesday.

"We are signing an order that there will no longer be dump sites near bodies of water, it's putting the lives of people there at risk," said Environment Secretary Regina Lopez.

Lopez said the department would give local government units time to find an alternative area for a sanitary landfill.

Environment Undersecretary Art Valdez said only 5 percent of LGUs followed the solid waste law.

"The Ombudsman is really busy filing cases against the local governments. Open dumpsite is illegal so the Ombudsman is doing it," Valdez said.

He said the government would give a 30- to 60-day deadline to look for an alternative area for sanitary landfill.

"In Boracay for instance, I already gave them a warning. Hotel operators there were given show cause orders to explain why they are discharging their effluent into the drain system," Valdez said. "Now they are really compliant and putting up their own sewage treatment facilities because if they do not do that, we will close the hotel. We are looking at Boracay, Iloilo, Kalibo and the Payatas dumpsite here in Quezon City."

"We will give them 30 to 60 days or we close it down. For Payatas, I think it will take 30

# THE PHILIPPINE STAR

TRUTH SHALL PREVAIL

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### DENR3 receives US aid to protect CL forests

By RIC SAPNU

SAN FERNANDO, Pangasinana – The Regional Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR3) here recently received more than half a million pesos worth of desktop computers and laptops to further boost forest protection and biodiversity conservation in Central Luzon under the Lawin Forest and Biodiversity Protection System.

The donation came from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and its Biodiversity and Watersheds Improved for Stronger Economy and Ecosystem Resilience (B+WISER) Program.

Francisco Milla Jr., DENR3 regional director, said the computers are equipped with upgraded forest and biodiversity protection, which is the SMART Connect software that will be used in the Lawin system in the region.

"This upgraded system will synchronize the data gathered from the field by forest protection officers, including threats, forest conditions and indicator species, and will be transmitted on the web or internet server and will be accessible to all levels of forest law enforcement agents (i.e. national, regional, PENRO and CENRO) to ensure that DENR can respond quickly to field reports of threat," Milla said.

He said the system can collect data from the field and share this in real time. It can also manage and respond to real time alerts and centrally manage SMART deployment at multiple sites, as well as integrate SMART with other

Cagayan de Oro region.

"We are now moving to the next level. Our forest rangers and data managers are already trained in the Lawin Forest and Biodiversity Protection System. And at this stage, we are now providing them advance technology as their weapon to better protect and safeguard our forest and biodiversity," he said.

Last year more than 200 forest officers from DENR3 underwent skills enhancement training on forest protection through the application of Lawin.

This is in addition to the 2,000 forest rangers trained last year covering 18 regions in the country, which resulted in the patrolling of more than 6,500 kilometers of forest areas in 170 conservation sites.

Lawin, named after the Philippine hawk eagle, combines science-based planning, low-cost, collaborative, user-friendly technology and indigenous knowledge to protect forest and wildlife. It uses real-time and measurable data that allow environmental law enforcement agencies to act quickly.

SMART Connect for LAWIN system is being supervised by the B+WISER and FMB with support from USAID.

DENR records show that Central Luzon has 942,387 hectares of forestland, of which 589,489 hectares (62 percent) are thickly covered with forests.

Some important plants and animal species that can be found in these forests include the smallest of the giant flower *Rafflesia consue-*

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## DENR-Central Luzon receives computers to help in forest, biodiversity conservation works

BY MAR T. OLIVIA

**SAN FERNANDO CITY, Pampanga** – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) recently received more than ₱500,000 worth of computers to help boost forest and biodiversity conservation in Central Luzon.

The new equipment came from the United States Agency for International Development and the Biodiversity and Watersheds Improved for Stronger Economy and Ecosystem Resilience Program. The said computers are equipped with an upgraded forest and biodiversity protection system, called the SMART Connect software, that can be used in the rollout of the LAWIN Forest and Biodiversity Protection System in the region.

"This upgraded system will synchronize the data gathered from the field by forest protection officers – including threats, forest conditions and indicator species – and will be transmitted via the web and will be accessible to all levels of forest law enforcement agents to ensure that we can respond quickly to field reports of threat," DENR Regional Director Francisco Milla Jr. said in a statement.

The system can also collect data

from the field and share this in real time.

Forest Management Bureau Director Ricardo Calderon disclosed that Central Luzon and Northern Mindanao were chosen as pilot areas for the project.

"We are now moving to the next level. Our forest rangers and data managers are already trained in the LAWIN forest and biodiversity protection system. And at this stage, we are now providing them advance technology as their weapon to better protect and safeguard our forest and biodiversity," Calderon said.

Last year, about 200 forest officers from DENR Region 3 underwent skill enhancement training on forest protection through the application of LAWIN.

Named after the Philippine eagle, LAWIN combines science-based planning, low-cost, collaborative, user-friendly technology, and indigenous knowledge to protect forest and wildlife. It uses real-time and measurable data that allow environmental law enforcement agencies to act quickly.

DENR records show that Central Luzon has 942,387 hectares of forestland, with 62% forest cover.



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## Bamboo, mangrove plantations seen to enhance Eastern Visayas environment



**TACLOBAN CITY** - The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) under the leadership of Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez is undertaking the "massive planting of bamboo and mangrove all over the

country, especially in the super-typhoon Yolanda-hit areas," said DENR-8 Regional Director Leonardo Sibbaluca.

The department is allocating a bigger budget for the flagship project and a multimillion-peso fund allocation have been set aside to put up massive bamboo and mangrove plantations in Region 8. "She instructed us to conduct massive planting of mangroves. In fact, she is giving more funds for these purposes and that we have to establish more bamboo and mangrove plantations in Eastern Visayas."

Sibbaluca said for Eastern Visayas, about ₱600 million is allotted for the massive planting of bamboo and mangrove with ₱200 million allotted for Leyte; ₱200 million for Western Samar; ₱100 million for Eastern Samar; and another ₱100 million for Northern Samar.

Eastern Visayas is suited for man-



**GIANT BAMBOO**/Photo by Restituto Cayubit / Manila Bulletin

grove and bamboo planting, said the DENR official, adding that soil and environmental conditions are favorable for growing these plants.

The director explained that the primary objective of the mangrove plantation establishments is to strengthen the coastal communities against the rise of sea water.

Meanwhile, bamboo is best for erosion control, especially in steep slopes or landslide prone areas. He added that bamboo strengthens riverbanks. "There are many rivers in Eastern Visayas where bamboo plantations will be established to strengthen the riverbanks and protect these from possible erosion," Sibbaluca said.

The leaves of bamboo are also known to absorb more than 100 times than that of the ordinary tree. Bamboo also has many economic uses - as building material, furniture, fencing, food, and has export potentials.

# HATAW!

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## AKSYON AGAD

ALMAR BANGUILAN

**KILALA** si DENR Sec. Gina Lopez, bilang environmentalist. Ibig sabihin, mahal niya ang kalikasan at kalaban niya ang mga sumisira nito.

Kalaban ni Lopez ang mga sumisira sa kalikasan dahil sa masamang dulot ng pagsira sa Inang Kalikasan. Batid naman natin kapag kalikasan ang winasak maraming maaapektohan at ang magdurusa ay mamamayan. Maraming magkakasakit at mamamatay dahil sa polusyon at iba pa.

Malaki ang responsibilidad ng DENR kung ang pag-uusapan ay patungkol sa kalikasan — isa sa pangunahing trabaho ng ahensiya ay iligtas ang kalikasan para sa mamamayan.

Nandiyan iyong kinakailangan bantayan nila ang lahat — hindi lang ang kabundukan kundi lahat ng kapaligiran para malaman kung ligtas ang bawat indibiduwal.

Hindi lamang pagkalbo sa kabundukan, hindi lamang pagmimina at iba pang klaseng pagwasak sa kalikasan ang binabantayan kundi maging ang hangin na araw-araw nating nilalanghap. Iyon bang titiyakin ng DENR na hindi polluted ang hangin.

Iniupo ni Pangulong Digong Duterte sa DENR si Lopez sa tiwalang matutugunan ni Lopez ang lahat na nais ng pangulo para sa mamamayan. Oo naman kaya ni Madame iyan.

Hindi naman binigo ni Lopez ang Pangulo. Suportado nga ng Kalihim ang Pangulo hindi lamang sa maayos na pangangalaga sa kalikasan kundi maging sa kampanya laban sa korupsiyon.

Pero sa kabila ng lahat, si Lopez ay kinasuhan naman sa Ombudsman. Ha! Bakit? Ayon sa ulat, ugat ng pagsasampa laban kay Lopez ang maanomalyang pagbili ng EMB-

## Air pollution equipment ng DENR palpak nga ba talaga?

DENR Air Monitoring Section ng equipment na Differential Optic Absorption Spectroscopy (DOAS) noong 2010. Ang DOAS ay isang air quality monitoring.

Teka, ang pagbili ay nangyari noong nakaraang administrasyon, PNoy administration. So, anong kinalaman ni Lopez, bakit nadawit ang kalihim samantala malinaw na wala siyang kinalaman sa pagbili?

Nitong 10 Enero 2017, kinasuhan sa Ombudsman si Lopez at 3 pang DENR official, ng grupong United Filipino Consumers and Commuters (UFCC) at Airboard Company.

Isinama sa kaso si Lopez dahil hindi umano umaksiyon sa ilang reklamo na idinulog sa kanyang tanggapan sa umano'y overpriced at depektibong pagbili ng DENR sa Air Quality Monitoring na lubhang mapanganib sa kalusugan ng mga tao.

Hayun, malinaw na wala ngang kinalaman sa sinasabing maanomalyang pagbili si Lopez — meaning clear ang ale. Oo naman dahil noon nakaraang admin nangyari ang bilihan. Lamang, kaya siya kinasuhan sa alegasyong wala daw siyang ginagawang hakbangin hinggil dito. Wala nga ba kayong ginawang hakbang Madame Lopez? Meron naman siguro, di po ba ma'am?

Sa mga ulat naman, itinanggi ni Lopez ang alegasyon.

Pero Sec. Lopez, mabigat ang akusasyon na walang kuwenta ang nabiling equipment.

Kung magkagayonman, mayroon na ba kayong binuong independent body na mag-iimbestiga sa alegasyon para managot ang nasa likod nito? Kung mayroon, ano na po ang nangyari? Nagtatanong lang po para mailathala din natin. Totoo ba ang sinasabing hindi raw nakapagbibigay ng tamang report para sa air pollution ang equipment?

Samantala, nagpahayag si UFCC president

Rodolfo "RJ" Javellana sa pahayag sa publiko ni Lopez makaraan na siya ay sampahan ng kaso ng grupo sa Ombudsman.

"May I point out to the honorable DENR secretary that the evidence you are supposed to be looking for just come out from your own mouth. In your own words and admission you said that these DENR machines are overpriced, inaccurate and not regularly being calibrated. DENR's job is to make sure that these machines are calibrated regularly so that it will work properly and deliver accurate data on air pollution. Is this not a valid reason for you as the new DENR secretary to order an immediate and independent investigation on our formal complaint to protect the interest of our people?" pagtatanong ni Javellana.

Sabi ni Javel-

nakatakdang pagbili ng kaparehong kasangkapan at muling gagamitin ang katulad na Terms of Reference (TOR) na ginamit noong bilhin ang kuwestiyonableng Air Monitoring Pollution Machines.

Kaya, naniniwala ako Madame Secretary na dapat ninyong bantayan upang hindi na maulit ang sinasabing maanomalyang pagbili noong nakaraang administrasyon. (Kung totoo ang akusasyon na maanomalya ang pagbili). Bukod dito, sa pagbabantay po ninyo ay hindi magiging palpak ang mabibiling equipment.

# Remate

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**LUMAHOK** ang mga mahilig sa photography na naninirahan sa Metro Manila sa photo contest ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) na may temang "Women and Water" o pagpapakita ng mahalagang papel ng kababaihan na may kaugnayan sa tubig noong ika-1 ng Oktubre 2016 hanggang ika-10 ng Nobyembre 2016.

Ang pagpili sa mga photo entry ay ibinabase ayon sa sumusunod na pamantayan - 30% innovativeness, 25% creativity and uniqueness, 25% visual impact at 20% total appeal.

Mahalaga ang papel ng kababaihan pagdating sa sustenableng paggamit at pamamahala ng water resources. Bilang namamahala sa tahanan kabilang sa mga isina-

saayos at sinisiguro ng isang ina sa kanyang tahanan ang pagkakaroon ng malinis na tubig na magagamit bilang inumin, pangluto, pampaligo, at panglaba. Mas alam ng isang babae ang iba't ibang paraan upang maka-pagtipid ng tubig at ang tamang paggamit nito.

Makikita sa unang larawan ang isang batang babae

## ANG INYONG LINGKOD

DR. HILDA C. ONG

### MAHALAGANG TUNGKULIN NG KABABAIHAN AT TAMANG PAGGAMIT NG TUBIG

kasama ang kanyang ina, habang binubuhos ng ina ang tubig sa malit na aquarium ng kanyang anak na may lamang-alagang isda at masayang-masaya ang bata. Ipinapakita sa larawan na ang tubig ay hindi lamang nagbibigay ng buhay kundi pati na rin kaligayahan.

Ang photo entry ni Arturo B. De Vera na may pamagat "Soul of Life" ang mapalad na nagwagi ng 1st Prize, pinagkalooban ng NWRB ng Sampung Libong piso (Php10,000).

Sa pangalawang larawan, isang makabagong paraan ng isang babae sa paghuhugas ng kanilang mga damit. Ang pinakamahusay na papel ng bawat ina ang paggawa ng anomang paraan ng pagsuporta sa kanilang pamilya sa kanilang buhay.

Ang photo entry ni Bernard Pasatiempo Recido II na may pamaga na "Hard Working Mother" ang nagwagi ng 2nd Prize, pinagka-

looban ng NWRB ng pitong libong piso (Php 7,000).

Sa pangatlong larawan, ang kagalingan sa maraming bagay ng mga kababaihan, anomang ang edad, ay tunay na isang kapuri-puring katangian ng babae.

Ginagawa ng matandang babae ang "pamimingwit" bilang bahagi ng kanyang karaniwang gawain sa bahay at hindi iniintindi ang init ng araw, nakadamit na may mahabang manggas na kamisadentro, ipinares sa mga lokal na "Salakot" karaniwang kasuotan ng lalaki.

Ang babaeng nasa larawan ay isang ehemplo ng kakayahang ng kasarian ng babae kahit sa anomang sitwasyon, kakayanin ang paggawa ng mga ito, tunay na kahanga-hanga at walang alinlangan.

Ang photo entry ni Emma A. Foronda na may pamagat na "Pamimingwit" ang nagwagi ng 3rd Prize, pinagkalooban ng NWRB ng limang libong piso (Php 5,000).

Tangkilikin ang programang "HEALTH & Travel" @ **SERBISYO PUBLIKO**, sa DWBL 1242 kHz (8:00-9:00 a.m.) Monday to Friday at DWSS 1494 kHz (9:00-10:00 a.m.), Saturday & Sunday. Mababasa ang kanyang mga article sa Dr. Hilda Ong FB Fan Page.



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Inirereklamo ng mga residente at umani rin ng batikos sa social media ang walang pakundangang pagsusunog ng nakasusulasok na tambak na basura mula sa Camarines Norte Provincial Hospital. Nakatakda idulog ang kanilang reklamo sa tanggapan ng DENR-EMB Bicol upang matigil na ang pagsusunog ng hospital waste sa lugar na nakasisira sa kalusugan ng mamamayan lalo na ang mga bata sa Camarines Norte at sa sinasabing paglabag sa Republic Act 9003. *Ulat at kuha ni Francis Elevado*

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## Philippine eagle rescued in Sarangani

A juvenile Philippine eagle found in the forested upland village of Batian in Maitum, Sarangani was recently rescued by the municipal government.

The eagle, which was found to have an embedded pellet in its left groin, was taken to the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office of the DENR in Kiamba for assessment. It was subsequently brought to the Philippine Eagle Center (PEC) in Davao City for rehabilitation.

Batian is within the 114,144-hectare Mt. Busa Park, a priority conservation and protection biodiversity study area, and one of Sarangani's remaining forests.

Declared as a key biodiversity area and an important bird area in 2001, Mt. Busa harbors critically endangered, threatened, vulnerable, and rare bird species.

Maitum Mayor Alexander Bryan Reganit said the rescue of the eagle attests to the town's good forest cover

which must be preserved and protected as legacy to the future generations.

The Environmental Conservation and Protection Center (ECPC) of the Sarangani provincial government has reported sightings of tarsier, wild deer, wild boars, monkeys, bats, civets, and endangered bird species in the reservation.

Straddling the towns of Maitum, Kiamba and Maasim, Mt. Busa is threatened by land

conversion, *kaingin* (slash-and-burn), wildlife hunting, illegal logging, and mining.



Rescued juvenile eagle in Maitum, Sarangani / Credit: Local government of Sarangani / Manila Bulletin

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SEI

## Home of Philippine eagle celebrates harvest

**NUEVA ECija:** Environmental group Haribon Foundation will join the Gulayan Festival in Gabaldon, Nueva Ecija — home of the Mt. Mangan protected sanctuary — for the first time to bring to attention the importance of protecting the critically endangered Philippine Eagle and helping to ensure a healthy biodiversity in Gabaldon and its vast fertile soil.

The Municipality of Gabaldon is celebrating the town's sustained bountiful produce in its 6th annual harvest fest dubbed the Gulayan Festival from January 21 to 25.

Started in 2012, the good harvest festival exhibits the rich cultural traditions and natural resources of Gabaldon. Locals showcase the native produce of the town through colorful parade floats creatively decorated with vegetables such as eggplants, tomatoes and onions, as well as fruits and handcrafted ornaments.

In previous years, some local and foreign tourists flocked the venue as street dancing parties, talent showcase, trade exhibits and band parades were held.

Gabaldon is an agricultural town with more than 56 percent of its total land area devoted to farming purposes. Nueva Ecija is the largest province and the biggest rice producer in Central Luzon.

The festivities are a celebration of thanksgiving and prayers for a bountiful harvest in honor of the feast of Saint Paul the Apostle. Communities, students, local leaders, churches, government and non-government agencies partake in the fun-filled celebration.

Besides the showcase of native crops, some participants also bring awareness advocacies related to the environment and eco-friendly agricultural practices.



### Gab-E and a good harvest

In 2014, Mount Mangan was declared a protected sanctuary after Haribon researchers confirmed in an expedition the discovery of an adult pair and a juvenile Philippine Eagle — the latter fondly named by the community as Gab-E (Gabaldon Eagle).

Birds provide an exciting window on nature. BirdLife International explains that because birds like the Philippine Eagle are incredibly sensitive to environmental changes and most are relatively easy to monitor, they can help identify a biodiversity crisis or how well a forest ecosystem

is doing.

Biodiversity is essential to healthy ecosystems that ensure food security and sustain our livelihood. Farming provides the food we depend upon on a daily basis. Simply put, data about birds can help in the development of eco-friendly farming practices.

The protection of the Mangan Mountains where the Haring Ibon (King of Birds) dwells continues strong through the support of the municipalities of Gabaldon, Dingalan, and San Luis.

Unfortunately, the degradation of natural habitats that threaten endangered species such as Gab-E persists in many other regions.

Haribon's Philippine Eagle Project is funded by the German Agency for

International Cooperation (GIZ) under the Protected Area Management Enhancement (PAME) and Zoological Society of London (ZSL) — EDGE program, in partnership with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the municipality of Gabaldon and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP).

The participation of Gab-E in the Gulayan Fest also hopes to drumbeat Haribon's bigger awareness campaign on the Philippine Eagle in June.

The Gulayan Festival is made possible by local governments, the Department of Education, barangays, churches, the police and other supporting organizations.

**KITTY AMANTE/HARIBON FOUNDATION**

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### 11 vehicles crushed by landslide



A SPECIAL rescue team member of the Bureau of Fire Protection checks on the damage caused by a landslide in Cebu City. (Juan Carlo de Vela)

CEBU CITY – Eleven vehicles, including nine public utility jeepneys, were buried in mud and soil after heavy downpour triggered a landslide in Sitio Garahe, Barangay Busay, this city yesterday dawn.

Cebu City Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office Chief Nagiel Bañacia said the debris covered the 11 vehicles parked along the road following the landslide.

No one was reported injured after cold weather forced all of those who typically sleep inside the jeeps to proceed home before the incident occurred.

Meanwhile, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) reiterated its call to local government units through their disaster and risk reduction team to implement preemptive evacuation as the weather bureau forecasts more rain this week.

"The effects of landslide and flooding on people and structures can be minimized by total avoidance of landslide and flood hazard areas or by imposing conditions in areas that were already identified as landslide-prone," said MGB-7 Regional Director Loreto B. Alburo.

MGB-7 has identified 41 barangays in Cebu City that are susceptible to flooding and 63 barangays, mostly hinterland villages that are vulnerable to landslide. In barangay Sirao, 13 sites are identified as susceptible to rain-induced landslide including portion in Kamandagan, Kambyos, Langub, Proper, and Tawagan II. (Mike U. Crismundo)

# Forest loss blamed for Mindanao floods

**DA secretary says agricultural losses minimal; no disruption in food supply, prices**

By Marlon Ramos  
@MRamosINQ

Continued tree-cutting in the hinterlands of Northern Mindanao region has led to the massive flooding that submerged Cagayan de Oro City and nearby areas on Monday, Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol said yesterday.

"I am alarmed actually at the recurrent flooding in that area. When flash floods hit a certain area, there's only one reason for that. It means there are no trees in the mountains to hold the rainwater," Piñol said in a news conference in Malacñang.

"We are looking at deforestation and the unabated cutting of trees in the mountains of Lanao del Norte, Misamis Occidental and Misamis Oriental [provinces] as the possible cause of these flash floods," he said.

"So we are [looking] at the situation not only in the context of providing immediate intervention but also long-term solution," he said.

Piñol said drones would be deployed to make an aerial survey of the mountains around Northern Mindanao and locate areas prone to flooding and landslides.

About 3,000 families in the region evacuated as floodwater rose on Monday, reports from local disaster response agencies showed. Most of them returned home on Tuesday morning.

Piñol formed a technical working group to assess



As water subsides in Cagayan de Oro City, these men struggle to clear a parking lot of thick mud left by Monday's flash floods. —JIGGER JERUSALEM

region and some parts of the Visayas, which left at least 11 people dead.

He assured the public that agricultural losses were minimal and would not disrupt food supply and prices of agricultural products in the region.

As of Wednesday, Piñol said 149.5 hectares of corn were damaged in Bukidnon province while in Misamis Occidental, at least 870 ha of land planted with corn, rice and vegetables

## WHAT WENT BEFORE

Cagayan de Oro City (CDO) was among the badly hit areas in Northern Mindanao after Tropical Storm "Sendong" (international name: Washi) brought intense rainfall that caused flash floods and landslides in December 2011.

The overnight intense rains in the upstream parts of the CDO river, combined with the occurrence of high tide and steep topography of the catchment area,

The 24-hour rainfall in the city collected 180.9 millimeters to exceed its monthly average rainfall by 60 percent, data from state weather bureau Pagasa showed.

Of 1,268 reported dead in seven regions, 674 came from CDO. About 230,000 people were affected and 20,000 houses were damaged in the city, according to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council.





# Balita

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### RELIEF ASSISTANCE NG DSWD, SAPAT

## Dasal at tulong para sa mga binaha

Nanawagan si Cagayan De Oro Archbishop Antonio Ledesma na ipanalangin at tulungan ang mga residenteng naapektuhan ng matinding baha na dulot ng walang tigil na pag-ulan sa nakalipas na mga araw.

Hiniling ng arsobispo sa mga mananampalataya na tulungan siyang manalangin na hindi na maulit ang malaking trahedya, na maitutulad sa pananalasa ng bagyong 'Sendong' sa lungsod ilang taon na ang nakalipas.

Bagamat nababahala ang Arsobispo dahil wala siya sa Cagayan De Oro City dahil sa WACOM 4, ay tiwala siyang mabilis na tinutulungan ng Social Action Center ng Archdiocese ang mga apektadong residente.

#### **SAPAT ANG AYUDA**

Tiniyak naman ng Department of Social Welfare

and Development (DSWD) sa mga taga-Northern Mindanao na tatanggap ang mga ito ng relief assistance mula sa gobyerno.

Sinabi ni Social Welfare Secretary Judy Taguiwalo na sapat ang nakahandang ayuda ng DSWD-Region 10 para sa mga pangangailangan ng mga apektadong pamilya.

Aniya, nasa satellite office ng kagawaran sa Northern Mindanao ang 3,200 bag ng bigas na ipamamahagi sa mga binaha sa Misamis Occidental, Camiguin, Iligan at Bukidnon.

Mayroon ding 9,000 family food packs (FFPs) at 2,000 dignity kit para sa mga naapektuhan ng baha sa mga munisipalidad ng Gingoog at Logonglong sa Misamis Oriental.

Dagdag pa ni Taguiwalo, maaaring gamitin ng DSWD field office ang P7-milyon standby

fund para ibili ng karagdagang emergency relief supplies.

#### **LANDSLIDE SA CEBU**

Samantala, 11 sasakyan naman, kabilang ang siyam na pampasaherong jeepney, ang nalibing sa putik at mga bato sa landslides sa Sitio Garahe, Barangay Busay sa Cebu City, kahapon ng madaling araw.

Wala namang nasaktan sa pagguho ng lupa, ayon kay Cebu City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office Chief Nagiel Bafacia.

Kasabay nito, nanawagan ang Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB)-Region 7 sa mga lokal na pamahalaan na na magpatupad ng preemptive evacuation dahil patuloy na uulanin ang lalawigan ngayong linggo.

**May Ann Santiago,  
Aytch dela Cruz  
at Mars Mosqueda, Jr.**

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**Editorial**

**Matinding baha**

**G**RABENG baha ang naranasan sa Cagayan de Oro City at maraming lugar sa Northern Mindanao noong Lunes. Low pressure area (LPA) ang dahilan nang grabeng pagbaha. Nasorpresa ang mga residente sapagkat sa isang iglap ay tumaas ang tubig at marami ang na-stranded. Ang mga estudyante ay Inabutan ng baha sa kani-kanilang school kaya hindi nakauwi. Ang mga namamasyal sa mall ay hindi makalabas sapagkat hanggang dibdib ang tubig. Maraming sasakyan sa parking area ng mall ang nalubog sa baha at ang ilan ay nagpalutang-lutang. Huling naranasan ang matinding pagbaha sa Cagayan de Oro noong 2011 nang manalasa ang Bagyong Sendong. Pero sabi ng Ilan, mas matindi ang baha ngayon na kanilang naranasan sapagkat wala namang bagyo pero napakabilis tumaas ng tubig. Sa isang iglap ay naging "water world" ang CDO at iba pang bayan sa Northern Mindanao. Sa pinakahuling report, anim na ang namatay dahil sa landslides na dinulot nang pagbaha.

Dalawa ang itinuturong dahilan kaya nagkaroon nang matinding baha sa CDO at marami pang lugar sa Northern Mindanao. Una ay barado ang mga drainage at ikalawa ay ang grabeng illegal logging na nangyayari sa lugar. Hindi umano maayos ang pagkakagawa ng mga drainage sa CDO at nabarahan ang mga ito ng semento na galing naman sa mga construction projects. Natuyo umano ang semento sa drainage kasama ng iba pang non-biodegradable materials kaya walang madaanan ang tubig-baha.

Marami naman ang naniniwala na dahil sa illegal logging kaya nagkaroon nang matinding baha. Kalbo na ang mga gubat sa CDO at iba pang bayan sa Northern Mindanao kaya wala nang pumipigil sa tubig. Dahil sa walang tigil na pag-ulan, ang tubig mula sa bundok ay rumagasa sa kapatagan na naging dahilan nang pagkawasak ng mga bahay lalo na ang mga nasa gilid ng mga llog at sapa.

Madali namang paniwalaan na ang dalawang problemang nabanggit ang parehong dahilan. Pero

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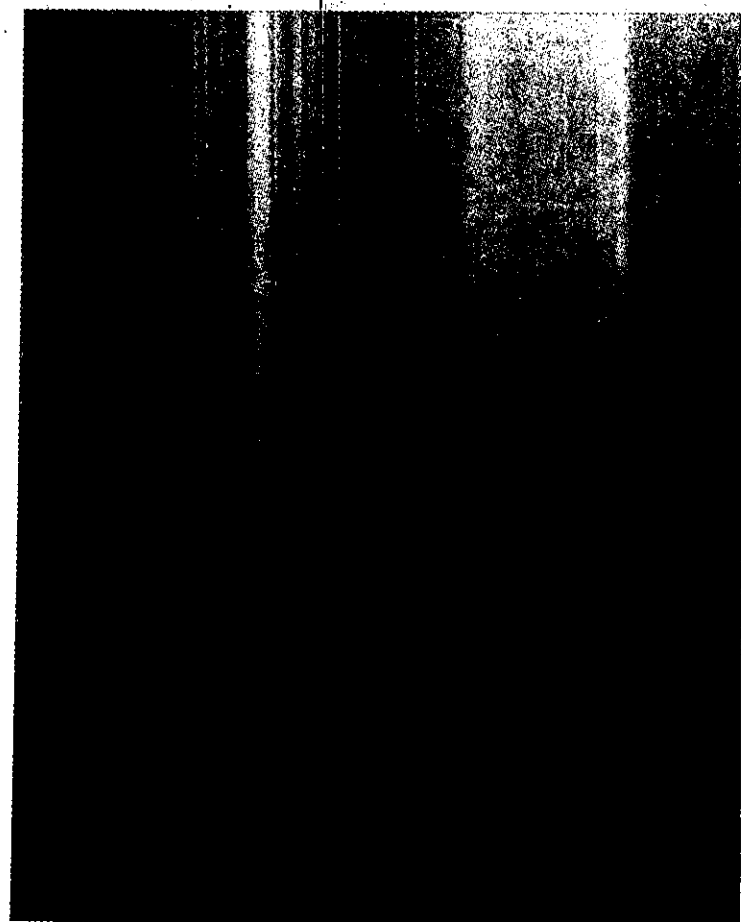
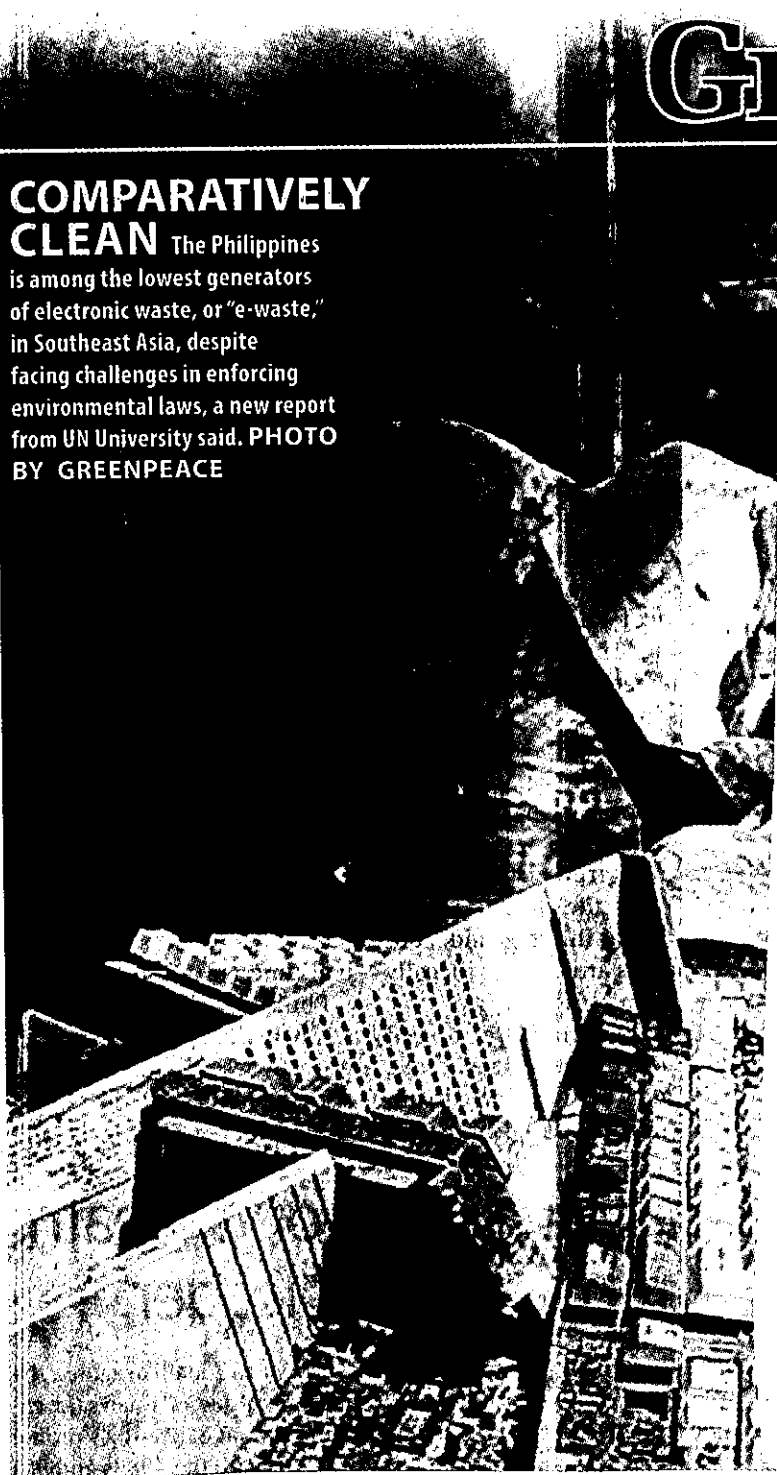
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THURSDAY

January 19, 2017

## COMPARATIVELY CLEAN

The Philippines is among the lowest generators of electronic waste, or "e-waste," in Southeast Asia, despite facing challenges in enforcing environmental laws, a new report from UN University said. PHOTO BY GREENPEACE



## China tells local bureaus to sto

BEIJING: China is suspending

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BY BEN KRITZ

**T**HE creation of "e-waste," or waste from computers, cell phones and other electrical components in Southeast Asia increased by more than half in 2010-2015, but the Philippines remained among the lowest producers of the potentially hazardous waste a United Nations report said.

The *Regional E-waste Monitor: East and Southeast Asia* compiled by the UN University and released last week said that 12 places in the region—Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam—generated 12.3 million metric tons of e-waste between 2010 and 2015, a 63 percent increase from the previous five year period.

To put the amount of e-waste in perspective, the report said that the volume of waste was "2.4 times that of the Great Pyramid of Giza."

"The volume of discarded electronics in East and Southeast Asia jumped almost two-thirds between 2010 and 2015, and e-

waste generation is growing fast in both total volume and per capita measures," the report said.

## Philippines 'improving'

The report noted, however, that on a per capita basis, the Philippines was among the lowest producers of e-waste in Asia, generating just 1.35 kilograms per person in 2015, similar to Vietnam (1.34 kg per person) and Cambodia (1.1 kg per person).

The report attributed the Philippines' comparatively good performance to the enactment of recent e-waste legislation and "improving" enforcement efforts, as well as the relative lack of manufacturing

of electronic devices in the country, which may encourage consumers to use them longer.

"China, the Philippines, Malaysia and Vietnam all have recent e-waste legislation. The four countries are therefore in a transitional phase, with a mix of formal and informal elements in an evolving ecosystem in terms of collection and recycling infrastructure. The countries face similar challenges in enforcing regulations with limited resources and capacity and low public awareness regarding the hazards of improper disposal of e-waste," the report explained.

## Big polluters

The UN University researchers found that China alone more than doubled its generation of e-waste between 2010 and 2015 to 6.7 million metric tons, an increase of 107 percent.

The biggest producers of e-waste were Hong Kong, generating 21.7 kg per person in 2015, followed by Singapore (19.95 kg), and Taiwan (19.13 kg).

The report stressed that the average growth of e-waste creation

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across Asia was "outpacing population growth."

"For many countries that already lack infrastructure for environmentally sound e-waste management, the increasing volumes are a cause for concern," report co-author Ruediger Kuehr said in a statement. "Increasing the burden on existing waste collection and treatment systems results in flows towards environmentally unsound recycling and disposal."

### Health risks

Despite national e-waste legislation in some countries, the report found that improper and illegal e-waste dumping is prevalent in most countries in the study.

"Consumers, dismantlers and recyclers are often guilty of illegal dumping, particularly of 'open dumping' where non-functional parts and residues from dismantling and treatment operations are released into the environment. Informal recycling, also called 'backyard recycling' is a challenge for most developing countries in the region, with a large and burgeoning business of conducting

unlicensed and often illegal recycling practices from the backyard," the report said.

The report explained that common recycling practices are not only hazardous for recyclers and the environment, but are also inefficient.

"Mostly, these recyclers recover gold, silver, palladium and copper, largely from printed circuit boards (PCBs) and wires using hazardous wet chemical leaching processes commonly also known as acid baths. Typically, informal recyclers use solvents such as sulphuric acid (for copper) or aqua regia (for gold). The leachate solutions go through separation and purification processes to concentrate the valuable metals and separate impurities. This often results in the release of toxic fumes," the report said.

"Open burning and acid bath recycling in the informal sector have serious negative impacts on processors' occupational health," study co-author Shunichi Honda said. "In the absence of protective materials such as gloves, glasses, masks, etc., inhalation of and

exposure to hazardous chemicals and substances directly affect workers' health."

"Indirect exposure to these hazardous substances is also a cause of many health issues, particularly for families of informal recyclers who often live and work in the same location, as well as for communities living in and around the area of informal recycling sites," added co-author Deepali Sinha Khetriwal, Associate Program Officer of UN University.

### Proper management

The report gave high marks to Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan for establishing e-waste collection and recycling systems.

"Among the most advanced economies and areas in Asia, the three are also characterized by high per capita e-waste generation, formal collection and recycling infrastructure and relatively strong enforcement," the report said.

Hong Kong and Singapore do not have specific e-waste legislation, but rely on collaboration with producers to manage e-waste, it added.

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# Land reform rules hamper credit — IDEA

RESTRICTIVE conditions set by past agrarian reform laws have prevented farmers from reaping the full benefits of land ownership, according to a group of economists.

According to the Institute for Development and Econometric Analysis, Inc. (IDEA), ample credit remains beyond the reach of agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs).

"The presence of a bank facilitates spending through credit [and in turn] spending facilitates growth in a region, province, or town. But this growth may not be inclusive because there may be sectors left behind, especially those who were not able to access credit," IDEA said.

"The banking industry is hindered by our flawed agricultural and agrarian policies," the group said.

More than four decades since land reform was first implemented nationwide by the late President Ferdinand E. Marcos, Sr., the government has distributed several million hectares of agricultural land to more than two million farmers.

Following Marcos's ouster, his successor, Corazon C. Aquino, pushed for the passage of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) as her centerpiece

**TO ENCOURAGE lending in the rural sector, IDEA suggests amending the Agri-Agra Credit Act while at the same time, addressing property rights restrictions on rural land.**

social-justice program. The enactment into law of the CARP came more than a year after the fatal shooting of 13 farmers holding a protest rally several meters away from Malacañang on Jan. 22, 1987. The fatal shooting was dubbed the "Mendiola massacre," whose 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary falls on Sunday.

In 2009, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo successfully pushed for the extension of CARP, which was renamed CARPer, in line with RA 9700, or the CARP Extension with Reforms Act. In 2014, the CARPer Law expired after President Benigno S. C. Aquino III failed to push for a second extension of his late mother's centerpiece program.

Latest data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed that

only P29.98 billion or 0.96% of loans in the Philippine banking system went to ARBs, a very small percentage compared to the 10% minimum quota set by the Republic Act (RA) 10000, or the Agri-Agra Reform Credit Act of 2009.

"The limited size of the land owned by the farmers does not help entice the banks to lend to them and it would be imprudent for banks to put their depositors' money at risk," IDEA said.

Agrarian reform programs from Marcos' Presidential Decree No. 27, s. 1972, to RA 6657 and its extension, RA 9700 — cap land distribution to a maximum of three hectares per ARB. Landowners, on the other hand, may only retain up to five hectares.

IDEA cited several reasons why such an arrangement is a disincentive to bank lending.

"Firstly, these can't be transferred or sold within 10 years from award, so banks can't foreclose on them and transfer their titles to them. Secondly, the Landbank (Land Bank of the Philippines) has prior lien on these properties on the basis of the amortizations that farmer beneficiaries must pay Landbank. Thirdly, the market for foreclosed CARP lands is limited since by law, it can only be sold to qualified CARP beneficiaries."

Farmer beneficiaries shall pay for their land in 30 annual amortizations to Landbank at 6% interest per annum. Meanwhile, if a CARP beneficiary wants to sell or transfer a landholding within the 10-year lock-in period, the only eligible recipients are the spouse or heirs, another qualified beneficiary, or the State through Landbank.

After 10 years, the land may be sold to the State or to an individual qualified under CARP, who owns not more than five hectares of agricultural land and must be a direct cultivator.

"Moreover, the fact that the majority of CLOAs or Certificate of Land Ownership Awards are still collective (i.e. not broken

down into individual parcels) prevent farmer beneficiaries from accessing credit on an individual basis," IDEA said.

So far, around 4.7 million hectares of agricultural land has

the country's gross domestic product contracted to 9.5% from 19.6%.

To encourage lending in the rural sector, IDEA suggests amending the Agri-Agra Credit Act while at the same time, ad-

"Another condition is that banks should not be required to hold the foreclosed properties up to five years, as required by the Agri-Agra Law, to make whatever bankable assets the farmers have

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# 2016 threatens to be hottest year of the century

**M**OSCOW (PNA/Sputnik). – The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) data revealed that 2016 was the second warmest year ever in record in the US. Most likely, the past 365 days will become the warmest in the last 120 years – at least that is what the preliminary evidence suggests.

The impact of 2016 began on January 30 when in the Russian capital, Moscow, broke temperature records held since 1989 when temperatures hit + 2.6 °C (36.68° F).

Each subsequent month broke the previous months' records with July being the warmest in the history of meteorological observations.

Such changing climatic phenomenon was seen not just in Moscow but throughout the world.

In the fall of 2016, the trend continued as temperatures were abnormally

warm around the globe. September 2016 was the hottest month in Europe since 1910.

The continent of Africa fell a little short of breaking its previous record, with September, 2016 being a little cooler than it was in 2015 when the temperature broke records held since 1910.

At the North Pole in the end of December temperatures hovered around zero degrees, about 20 degrees above the norm.

The growth of ice cover which normally continuously increases in autumn, suddenly slowed from October to November for the first time in 40 years of satellite observations.

In November, the ice at the North Pole covered 9.08 million square kilometers — 800,000 square kilometers less than the previous low in 2006.

Greenhouse effect warms the planet

In 2015, the global concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere exceeded 400 parts per million (scientists call it ppm — parts per million) for the first time ever.

The 400 ppm is psychologically an important mark because according to scientists a "safe" concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> is considered to be 350 ppm. Many experts believe that exceeding this value causes climatic disasters.

While CO<sub>2</sub> is the most known greenhouse gas methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), fluorine-containing gases and water vapor also are greenhouse gases. Together they create a transparent blanket that wraps the Earth and prevents solar heat from dissipating into space.

The main source of carbon dioxide gas is fossil fuels. The combustion of coal, oil, and gas releases huge amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere.

The more greenhouse gases there are in the atmosphere, the more the plant heats up. If the temperature changes just 1-2 degrees the consequences could be disastrous. Some catastrophic changes may include warmer water in the oceans which melt glaciers and as a result, increased sea levels would cause flooding for coastal and low-lying areas.

Desert and arid regions will become even less uninhabitable. However, other regions will also suffer and according to some estimates, if temperatures rise at the same rate as now, by 2050 the Earth will lose some 15% to 37% of its animal and plant species.

Global rising temperatures have occurred for more than half a century. In 2016, temperatures exceeded 1.5 °C

countries global average temperatures were agreed to be kept "well below" 2 °C (35.6 ° F) and limited to rising 1.5 ° C (34.7° F).

However, the document does not stipulate what sanctions await those who do not abide by the agreements.

Nevertheless, even if all the countries which signed the Paris Agreement dramatically reduce emissions, the planet will not immediately cool down. According to the scientists temperatures in the 21st century will continue to grow regardless.

However, the world is pushing for the "global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible." The agreement has been described as an incentive for and the driver of fossil fuel divestment.

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## LETTERS

THURSDAY / JANUARY 19, 2017  
WWW.INQUIRER.NET

### IS GINA AWARE OF SABANGAN HYDROPOWER PLANT?

In a letter to the editor, Environment Secretary Gina Lopez stated: "Since I assumed office at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, it has been my position that the pursuit of industrial development should not compromise the environment and, most importantly, should not cause human suffering" ("Gina: Order was appropriate," Opinion, 1/13/17).

The construction of a hydroelectric power plant in Sabangan, Mountain Province,

has irrefutably compromised the environment especially the Chico River which runs 187 kilometers, more or less, downstream. It irrefutably aggravated the massive destruction of government and private property during typhoons "Ineng" and "Lawin." It has irrefutably caused human suffering among indigenous peoples and farmers downstream the Chico River. Irrefutably, the effect of the damage to the environment will be felt in the next 35 years as our experience

with the past Kairuz Logging Corporation and the Heald Lumber Logging Corporation tells us.

Madam Secretary, we have filed a complaint at the Pollution Adjudication Board (PAB) which you head. Our complaint is already more than one year old, but it has yet to be acted upon. Seemingly, the respondents to our complaint are trying their best to manipulate the PAB so that they will be made to pay a fine of less than a million pesos instead of the

billions of pesos mandated by the Clean Water Act. The impact of the unguarded construction of the Sabangan hydroelectric power plant is so long and "devilish" to write here. I hope and pray that this letter is more than enough to wake up your office and immediately act on our complaint, though it is more than one year old now.

JUNIPER C. DOMINGUEZ,  
Sabangan, Mountain Province,  
dalas812571@yahoo.com