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25 JAN 2017

Wednesday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

Commonsense

By MARICHU A. VILLANUEVA

Social justice champion

When President Rodrigo Duterte appointed environment champion Regina Paz "Gina" Lopez as his Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), it caught many by surprise. This is because she is related to the Lopez clan that owns ABS-CBN, one of the country's biggest television and radio networks.



President Duterte made no secret his disappointment over perceived bias against him by the Lopez-owned media network in the coverage of the presidential campaign period during the May 9 elections last year. The former Davao City Mayor, however, did not take it against Gina who has busied herself in environment protection concerns and stayed out of their family-run media network and other businesses.

Nonetheless, her fellow environment activists warmly welcomed the unexpected appointment of a Lopez empire heiress. To them, it showed very good signs that the newly installed President Duterte is very serious about addressing the threats to our country's environment, including activities wantonly destroying our wealth of natural resources.

Unfortunately, environment activists immediately jumped the gun to renew their attacks against the mining sector—their favorite whipping boy for purported destructive extraction activities in the country.

President Duterte himself could not have been more blunt when he declared mining companies should comply with our environment laws, or leave the country. Thus, Sec. Lopez's decision to conduct a comprehensive mining audit was merely in keeping with the presidential direction to protect our country's environment even if this might hurt certain private business sector interests.

It was a step in the right direction and consistent with the President's directive. Clearly, an audit would help determine which mining companies are complying with the laws and standards put in place to prevent the environmental degradation—and often times unfairly—associated with mining activities.

If done properly, this audit should help prevent tragedies like the 1996 mining disaster in Marinduque which buried villages and displaced hundreds of families. The success of DENR's mining audit, of course, depends largely on those chosen to lead it.

It was DENR Undersecretary Leo Jasareno, who in the previous administration headed the DENR's Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB). He was tapped anew by Lopez to head the audit, which initial findings were released in September last year.

As MGB Director, among Jasareno's responsibilities was, to quote the MGB website "to promulgate rules and regulations, policies and programs relating to mineral resources management and geosciences developments" and "assist in the conduct of investigation of complaints (including illegal mining activities)."

This means that as MGB chief, Jasareno was the DENR's point man in the fulfillment of its mining regulatory functions. It was his job, during the previous administration, to ensure that mining companies complied with all mining-related laws and regulations.

While Jasareno has since stepped down as the head of the DENR mining audit team, its findings nonetheless resulted in the suspension of the operations of 10 mining firms and recommendations to suspend several more.

This is why Sec. Lopez should go further. Rather than directing the DENR to identify the mining firms that have failed to follow the country's environmental standards, an inquiry must be made into how they were able to violate our laws with impunity in the first place. These 10 mining companies would not have been able to get away with breaking our laws through these years unless they had accomplices right inside the DENR.

Of course, this cannot be done if one of the guys that should be investigated like Jasareno is still with the DENR and still wields influence in the agency?

I understand where Lopez is coming from in her staunch defense of Jasareno when fellow advocates of environment groups demanded earlier for the latter's ouster from the DENR. As pro-active environment advocate in the past, Lopez got to know and worked with Jasareno who apparently acted as the designated man to rein her in.

While she is willing to give Jasareno a second chance to prove his detractors wrong, the more militant environment advocates/groups, however, are more unforgiving. They squarely blamed Jasareno for allegedly having abetted mining companies circumvent DENR's mining regulations. Addressing their appeal to Sec. Lopez, they warned Jasareno's continued stay at the DENR might be detrimental to the efforts of the new leadership to bring change in better safeguarding and protection of our country's natural resources wealth.

It would do well for Sec. Lopez to start the new year with a fresh slate at the DENR.

Aside from weeding out the mining companies that have violated our laws, she should also seriously consider weeding out people in the DENR. Last Monday, Lopez announced having reshuffled DENR field officials to push its environmental programs designed to develop local communities nationwide.

The revamp involved 17 DENR regional officials nationwide. She cited the revamp was a vital step to implement the DENR's five-year development plan under the Duterte administration. Lopez described the medium-term plan as anchored on so-called sustainable integrated area development (SIAD). Most especially, she underscored this is in line with the "AmBisyon Natin 2040," or the government's 25-year vision to transform the Philippines into a predominantly middle-class society by the year 2040.

Lopez said the restructuring would allow more efficient implementation of the SIAD approach in environmental programs and projects, especially those that directly impact the marginalized sector, such as the Enhanced National Greening Program, a massive reforestation initiative that doubles as a poverty alleviation measure.

Based on the medium-term plan, Lopez explained, the SIAD would serve as the DENR's framework for localizing development, creating social enterprises in the countryside and building "mini economic zones" that can generate employment, livelihood and equitable income-generating activities in communities.

Also under this plan, Lopez will designate key DENR field officers as site managers for area development management program sites. "The key thing here is people's access to environment, and if you want to develop an area, you have to develop the people," Lopez pointed out.

Through this, the DENR chief expressed her confidence the restructuring of the department would steer it to carry out its mandate as one of the government's social justice champions.

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HATAW!

D'YARYO NG BAYAN

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

DENR regional officials binalasa

BINALASA ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang kanilang field officials upang isulong ang environmental programs na idinesenyo para mapaunlad ang mga komunidad sa buong bansa.

Sinabi ni Environment Secretary Gina Lopez kahapon, apektado sa nasabing pagbailasa ang 17 DENR regional offices, aniya ay isang mahalagang hakbang, patungo sa five-year development plan para sa nasabing kagawaran.

Ang kanyang medium-term plan, sinabi ni Lopez, ay kaakibat ng tinaguriang sustainable integrated area development (SIAD) at kaugnay sa "AmBisyonNatin 2040" ang 25-year vision ng gobyerno para maisulong ang bansa patungo sa predominantly middle-class

society sa 20140.

Ayon kay Lopez, sa "restructuring" ay maipatatupad nang maayos ang SIAD approach sa environmental programs and projects, lalo na ang direktang makaaapekto sa marginalized sector, katulad ng Enhanced National Greening Program, ang massive reforestation initiative na hakbang din sa pagresolba sa kahirapan.

Base sa plano ni Lopez, ang SIAD ang magsisilbing framework ng DENR sa lokal na pagpapaulad, pagbubuo ng social enterprises sa mga kabukiran at pagbubuo ng "mini economic zones" na lilikha ng trabaho, kabuhayan at equitable income-generating activities sa mga komunidad.

Kompiyansa ang DENR chief na ang "restructuring" ay

makatutulong sa DENR sa pagpapatupad ng mandato nito bilang isa sa social justice champions ng gobyerno.

Ang itinalagang regional directors ay sina: Francisco Moreno para sa Region 1; Gil Aromin, Region 2; Francisco Milla, Region 3; Arsenio Tanchuling, Region 4A; Natividad Bernardino, Region 4B; Crisanta Marlene Rodriguez, Region 5; Jim Sampulna, Region 6; Emma Melana, Region 7; Leonardo Sibbaluca, Region 8; Felix Mirasol, Region 9; Paquito Melicor, Region 10; Edwin Andot, Region 11; Reynulfo Juan, Region 12; Charlie Fabre, Region 13; Ludy Wagan, National Capital Region; Ralph Pablo, Cordillera Administrative Region; at Al Orolfo, Negros Island Region.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

→ZERO WASTE MONTH CELEBRATION SLATED FROM JAN. 26 TO 29

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) and the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) will lead this year's celebration of Republic Act 9003 and the Zero Waste Month from January 26 to 29 in Quezon City.

Also known as the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, the law promotes proper solid-waste management and mandates local government units (LGUs) to implement solid-waste management programs that will address the looming garbage crisis.

With the theme "Engaging Response to the Changing Environment", the DENR-EMB, NSWMC and zero waste advocates will showcase various ways to reduce, reuse and recycle (3Rs) solid wastes during the one-day event.

January of every year is declared as Zero Waste Month.

The DENR-EMB, which serves as the secretariat of the NSWMC has prepared an array of activities, including exhibition, bike run/fun-ride, symposia, stage play and concert next week, starting on Thursday, January 26, at the Quezon Memorial Circle.

The event hosted by the Quezon City government is held in partnership with the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, Climate Change Commission, and the departments of the Interior and Local Government, Science and Technology, and the Philippine Information Agency.

Mayor Herbert Bautista, Sen. Cynthia Villar, Environment Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez are expected to lead the event, with other government officials and non-governmental organization leaders.

Exhibitors include the EMB Central Office, EMB Regional Offices (NCR, Region 3 and Region 4A), the Quezon City government, the NSWMC, Climate Change Commission and Zero Waste and Recycling Movement of the Philippines, among others.

Ely Idelfonso, executive director of the NSWMC Secretariat, said there are a number of ways to reduce garbage produced by as much as 75 percent through recycling and composting alone.

The official said LGUs will learn a lot from the three-day event to help address their respective localities' garbage woes. *Jonathan L. Mayuga*

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

3RD NATIONAL INTEGRATED Eco-Waste Management Exhibition
Engaging Response to the Changing Environment

Senator Cynthia Villar keynotes the four-day 3RD NATIONAL INTEGRATED eco-waste management exhibition with the theme "Engaging Response to the Changing Environment," which opens on Thursday, January 26, 10 a.m. at the Quezon City Memorial Circle.

The four-day Exhibition spearheaded by Director Eli Eldifonso of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-NCR (DENR) showcase initiatives, best practices, and emerging technologies. Lectures and presentations by experts on varied subjects of interest will also be conducted. The following are the exciting activities of the summit:

- January 26: Opening / Fashion Show by the Fashion Designers' Association of the Philippines and Yes-O Manila
- January 27: Product Demo and talks from Different Sponsors
- January 28: E-Concert with True Faith and Sponge Cola
- January 29: ECO Bike Ride "Padyak Para sa Kalikasan"
- Zumba "Dance For Your Health"

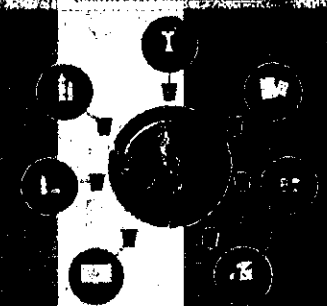
The Environment Summit aims to shed light on environmental and ecological issues that disrupt the processes of Mother Nature and the creatures living within it. In light of the celebration of the Waste Management Act anniversary and the Zero Waste Month every January, the summit seeks to educate the public on the destruction of the environment and what they can do to help alleviate this situation.

One of the highlights of the Summit is the "Walkthrough the Environment", an interactive activity with 10 stations that will make you experience what the environment is going through right now and will help you reflect on what you can do to save Mother Earth.

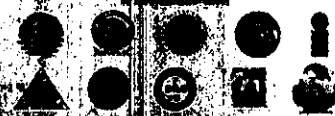
Along with raising awareness, the E-Summit works with government agencies and non-government organizations to urge the public, especially the youth,

ECO Waste management

ENGAGING RESPONSE TO THE CHANGING ENVIRONMENT
(6 A. 000 and 3pm onwards)



JANUARY 26-29 2017



Summit Program
• Opening / Fashion Show by the Fashion Designers' Association of the Philippines and Yes-O Manila
• Zero Waste Exhibition

Product Demo and talks from Different Sponsors
• Presentation of various products and services
• Product Demo and talks from different sponsors

E-Concert with True Faith and Sponge Cola
• E-Concert with True Faith and Sponge Cola
• Zero Waste Exhibition

ECO Bike Ride "Padyak Para sa Kalikasan"
• ECO Bike Ride "Padyak Para sa Kalikasan"
• Zumba "Dance For Your Health"

to participate in effective solid waste management, healthier lifestyle programs, and other initiatives that would help save the environment and promote a healthy way of life.

Officials of the DENR-NCR, Environmental Management Bureau, Climate Change Commission, National Solid Waste Management Commission, Metro-Manila Development Authority and other national agencies and local government units, as well as CEOs and senior managers of private companies participating as exhibitors are also attending the opening day of the event.

This event was made possible by our major sponsors like LG Lopez JFE, Landbank, Cemex, Development Bank of the Philippines, Maynilad, JJ Esteban Enterprises, Cleanway, Metroclark Waste Management, Plantex, LG Lopez Industrial Sales and Services Inc., Eco-system Technologies Inc., and EEI Corporation. Our minor sponsors, Malabon Soap, Full Advantage Phils Int'l., and our official media partner, WhenInManila.com and Buhay Pinoy at PTV4.

For more details, visit their website at www.environmentsummit.ph, follow them on Facebook, EnvironmentSummitPH2017, and on Twitter @Esummit2017. The event is free and open to the public.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Leaks found in abandoned Marcopper dam

MGB exec says typhoon contributed to deterioration of water diversion tunnel

By Maricar Cinco
@maricarcincoINQ

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) detected leaks in one of the abandoned dams of Marcopper Mining Corp., raising anew public concerns over the integrity of the decades-old mining facility in Marinduque province.

Roland de Jesus, director of the MGB in Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan) region, said an eight-member team sent to the area found leaks in a diversion tunnel of Marcopper's Makulapnit dam in Barangay Hinapulan in the capital town of Boac.

De Jesus said the MGB has yet to determine the gravity of the situation. He said "water is gushing" out of the old and rotten tunnel that was installed when the mining company started its operations in 1970s.

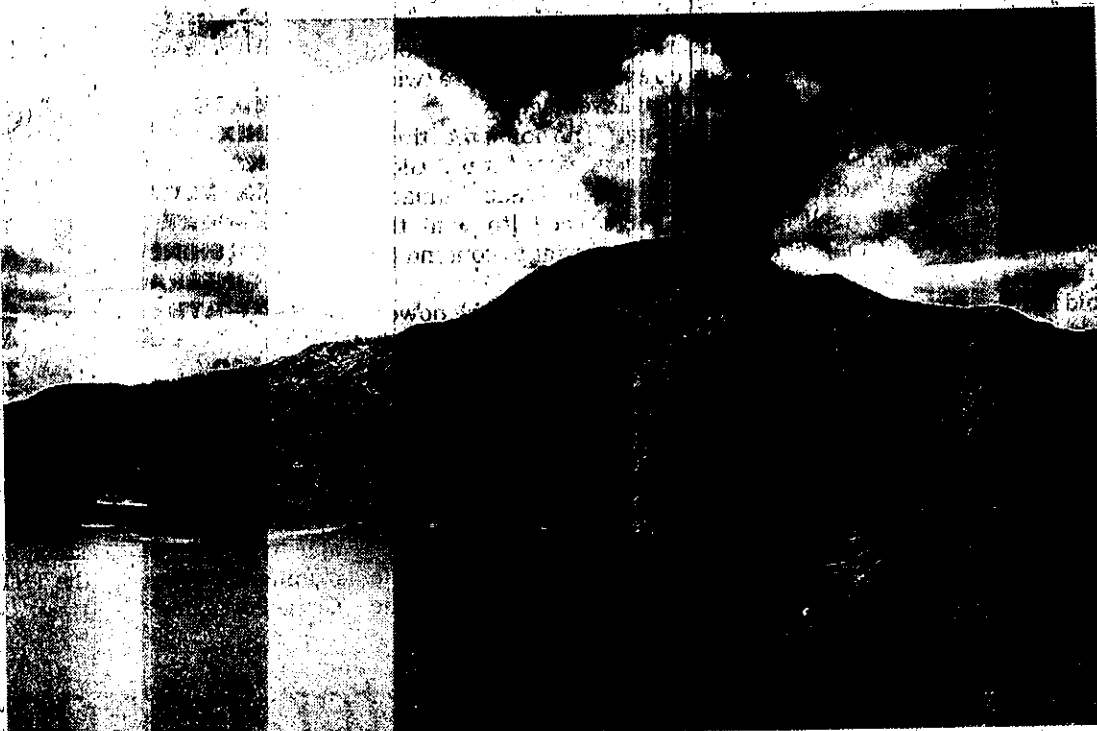
The company shut down in 1996 after one of its drainage tunnels gave way, unleashing about 200 million tons of mine tailings into the Boac River.

The provincial government in 2005 filed a \$100-million class suit against Marcopper and its parent company, Barrick Gold Corp., but the Nevada State District Court threw out the case a decade later.

Not a single centavo had been paid as compensation for what was tagged as the country's worst mining disaster.

A 1996 report by the United States Geological Survey identified Makulapnit and Marcopper's other dam, Maguila-guila, as both in a state of "imminent danger of collapsing."

De Jesus said heavy rain dumped by Typhoon "Nina" (in-



The Mines and Geosciences Bureau is inspecting the abandoned Marcopper Mining Corp. mine site in Marinduque after local officials reported leaks in one of its dams. —INQUIRER FILE PHOTO

ternational name: Nock-Ten) in December may have contributed to the tunnel's deterioration.

He doubted its chance to survive a stronger typhoon, which will bring heavier rainfall or similar to the amount of rain dumped by Tropical Storm "Ondoy" (international name: Ketsana) in Metro Manila in 2009.

Luna Manrique, Boac municipal planning officer, said members of the Citizen Armed Forces Geographical Unit (Cafgu) patrolling the area on Jan. 18 noticed the cracks in the concrete tunnel.

Manrique, in a letter to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, said water leakage "had significantly increased" from the time he

observed it in October 2013.

Makulapnit dam was used to collect clean water from Hinapulan creek that the company used for mining copper. Manrique said the tunnel was large enough that a "dump truck could fit through."

De Jesus said the technical inspection continues this week to include Maguila-guila, following reports of acid seeping from the mine wastes and flowing into Boac River.

Once completed, the MGB will submit a report and discuss with the provincial government possible measures to address the situation, he said.

Manrique and De Jesus could not say how much volume of water the dams hold.

De Jesus said Makulapnit dam functioned as a siltation pond and as a water reservoir.

He said the leaks were found in the tunnel connected to the water reservoir.

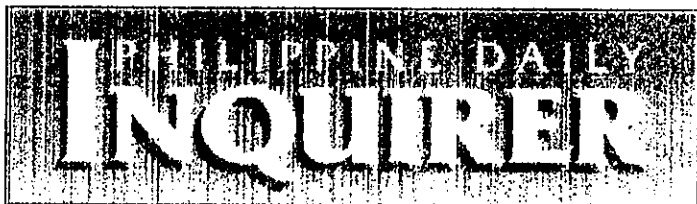
De Jesus said there were no tailings in this reservoir because it holds rainwater and water from the river and creek.

"In fact, the community that used to live inside the Marcopper site tapped water from Makulapnit for domestic use," he said.

When asked if water in the reservoir is clean, De Jesus said, "We don't know because [it has not been used for] years."

The MGB, he said, would conduct sampling to assess water quality. INQ

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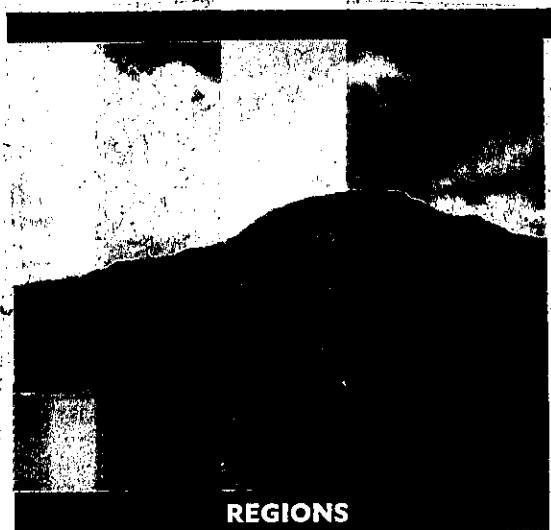
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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



REGIONS

Marcopper dam leaks

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau sent a team to Marinduque to inspect the abandoned mine site of Marcopper Mining Corp. after officials found leaks in one of its dams. The MGB said while the Makulapnit dam did not contain tailings, it was unsure about the volume of water it holds. Marcopper shut down in 1996 after one of its drainage tunnels gave way, unleashing mine tailings into Boac River. —STORY BY MARICAR CINCO

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Congress advised vs repeal of Mining Act

AN environmental group yesterday warned against moves by Congress to repeal the Mining Act, saying all it needs is proper implementation.

The Philippine Business for Environmental Stewardship (PBEST) said repealing the Mining Act of 1995 could only encourage illegal mining activities that do not respect government regulations.

The House Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives had started conducting technical working group meetings to deliberate on alternative mining bills that would replace and amend Republic Act No. 7942.

"The law has technically been just in operation for less than eight years, and a cycle in the mining industry spans more or less 20 years. There is no need to repeal the mining law. The real problem is implementation," said Dindo Manhit, convenor of PBEST and president of think-tank Stratbase-Albert Del Rosario Institute.

The Mining Act as it is faced constitutional challenges while Executive Order No. 79 in 2012 effectively stymied its implementation.

Manhit said changing the rules in the middle of the game may just foster illegal mining activities that do not follow environmental regulations.

He said while the goals set in amending the Mining Act or creating new mining regulations are in the best interest of the country, the proposed methods may not be the most effective.

Some of the proposals include limiting the raw metals the country will produce to only serve the local market.

PBEST said such move will not jumpstart industrialization as envisioned but may even kill the mining industry.

Proposals to extend the no-mining zones over what are already covered under the Mining Act and the National Integrated Protected Areas System Act are practically tantamount to a nationwide mining ban, PBEST added.

While the group bucks the law's amendments, the Mining Act is not perfect.

"There is still a lot of room for improvement, such as the transparency and dissemination of data concerning environmental programs, findings and mineral production," the group said.

It added that additional funds should be dedicated to environmental protection, the increase of waste generation fees and some form of substantial guarantee fund for natural hazards.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Environment group: Mining law needs proper implementation, not repeal

REPEALING the Mining Act of 1995 could only encourage illegal-mining activities that do not respect government regulations, according to an environment group.

The Philippine Business for Environmental Stewardship (PBEST) warned against moves by Congress to repeal the Mining Act and replace it with proposed legislation collectively referred to as alternative mining bills (AMBs).

PBEST said the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives had started conducting technical working group meetings to deliberate on the AMBs.

"The law has technically been just in operation for less than eight years, and a cycle in the mining industry spans more or less 20 years. There is no need to repeal the mining law. The real problem is implementation," said Prof. Dindo Manhit, convenor of PBEST and president of Stratbase-Albert del Rosario Institute.

The Mining Act—or Republic Act 7942—faced constitutional challenges, while Executive Order 79 in 2012 effectively stymied its implementation.

Changing the rules in the middle of the game may just foster illegal-mining activities that do not follow environmental regulations, Manhit said.

He added that, while the goals set in amending the Mining Act or creating new mining regulations are in the best interest of the country, the proposed methods may not be the most effective.

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Lawyer Ysan Castillo, secretary-general of PBEST, said despite the group's opposition to the law's amendments, PBEST does not think that the existing law is perfect.

"There is still a lot of room for improvement, such as the transparency and dissemination of data concerning environmental programs, findings and mineral production," he said.

Castillo said additional funds should be dedicated to environmental protection, the increase of waste-generation fees and some form of substantial guarantee fund for natural hazards.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Mining law just needs proper implementation

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Remate

MALAKANG perwisyo talaga ang pagkasira ng kalikasan o kapaligiran.

Batay ito sa nagaganap na malakasan, matagalan at malawakang pag-ulan, habagat at pagbagyo, na nagbubunga ng katumbas na pagbaha.

Nariryan naman ang madalas na ring matitindi at matagalang tag-araw at El Niño.

Dahil sa mga ito, nariryan ang pagdapo ng maraming kamatayan, malawak na paghihirap at gutom, pagkaubos ng calamity fund ng pamahalaan, pagkasira ng hanapbuhay, kawalan ng kinabukasan ng marami at marami pang iba.

KAMATAYAN

Malagim na kamatayan ang pinhararating ng mga pag-ulan, bagyo at pagbaha na bunga ng pagkasira ng kalikasan at kapaligiran.

Heto ang ilang sampol: Yolanda (tragedy) (Kabisayaan) - 6,340 kumpirmadong patay at 1,061 missing; Uring (Ormoc) - 5,100 patay; Pablo (Mindanao) - 1900 patay; Ruping (Cebu) - 1,364 patay; Sendong (Mindanao) - 1,080 patay; Nina o Sisang (Kabikulan) - 979 patay; Frank (Kabisayaan) - 938 patay; Rosing (Manila-Kabikulan) - 936 patay.

Hindi pa kasali rito, mga Bro, ang daan-daang namatay sa Ondoy, Quezon tragedy, at iba pa na pumatay rin ng daan-daang katao.

Kalbong kabundukan at land conversion o palitgamit ng lupa mula sa kagubatan patungo sa mga pabahay at kapabrikaan ang kakambal ng mga bagyo o siyam-siyam na ulan para maminsala sa atin.

MGA PINSALA

Heto naman ang ilang sampol ng matitinding pinsala sa ararian at hanapbuhay, dahil sa masungit na panahon.

Humigit-kumulang sa P571 bilyon ang nasira na ararian at 90 porsento ng bulto nito ang sa parte ng mamamayan habang nasa 10% lang ang sa gobyerno.

Nasa apat na milyong katao ang labis na natama, milyon-milyong



ULTIMATUM NI BENNY ANTIPORDA

YANG LAND CONVERSION AT PAGTATANIM NG PUNO

puno ng niyog ang nasira, daan-daang-libong bahay at eskwela ang nasira rin habang nasira rin ang maraming imprastraktura.

Bagama't nasa 464 katao lang ang namatay sa Ondoy tragedy, anak ng lokwa, malaki na rin ang P27 bilyong pinsala ng mahigit 5,000,000 kataong naapektuhan nito, kasama na ang 13 lalawigan na sinakop ng trahedyang

GUTOM AT HIRAP

Milyon-milyong katao ang napinsala ng bagyong Yolanda at hanggang ngayon, daang libo pa rin ang nakararanas ng gutom at kawalan sa Yolanda tragedy.

Kung sa akala ninyo ay nakarekober na ang Metro Manila at 13 lalawigan na sinalanta ng bagyong Ondoy, nagkakamali tayong

Marami ang tuluyan nang nawalan at namulog sa bihabang pilit na bumabangon ang iba pero baon sa mga pagkakautang

KALBONG KAGUBATAN

Subukan mong mamasyal at umikot sa buong Pilipinas, Bro, lalo na kung tag-araw at itaon mo sa araw at hindi sa gabang iyong biyahe, makikita mo ang mga nakakalibong kabundukan at kapaligiran.

Kwento ng mga taga-roon sa mga lugar, tinira ng mga legal at illegal logger, minero, mag-uuling at kainginero.

Itong mga minero at logger ang talagang matitindi dahil ang mga minero, pinapatag mismo ang mga bundok samantalang kinukuha naman ng mga logger ang mga troso, maliliit o malalaki.

Ang mga kagubatan naman sa mga patag ay

nilatagan na ng mga housing project, industrial zone at iba pang gawing urbanisasyon kung tawagin.

Kapag-umulan, katakot-takot nang baha ang nagaganap, baha na may putik, baha na may mga gumugulong na malalaking tipak ng bato at landslide.

MAY MAGAGAWA

May ilang magagawa pa mga Bro, para malaban ang mga calamidad na dumarating sa hinang masamang kalikasan.

Dapat na kumilos ang lahat, tingnan ang posibilidad gawin sa mga kalibong bundok at kapatagan.

Sabi nga ni Pangulong Digong sa laban sa korapsyon, mag-ingay ka gumawa ka ng iskanda mo at magsumbong ka sa mga awtoridad o sa kanilang

PWEDENG GAWIN

Dapat na may pagkakaisa sa pagitan ng mga mamamayan at pamahalaan para sa maraming hang pagtatanim ng puno na panlaban sa baha, landslide at maging sa polusyon na pinagmulan ng climate change o pag-init ng mundo.

Pero dapat kakambal nito ang dapat na pagkontrol ng pamahalaan sa development project na sumisira sa kalikasan gaya ng pagpapalit ng gamit o land conversion mula sa mga sakahan, kakahuyan at iba pa patungo sa mga industrial zone, housing project at corporate farm o makabagong sistemang as-yenda.

Maging ang pagpatag ng mga minero sa mga kabundukan na sumisira sa lahat ng bagay sa lugar ay dapat ding makontrol.

Anomang reklamo o puna ay maaaring ipatiling sa www.remate.ph o i-text sa 09228403333.

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MGA KUWEBANG MAGIGING KAPAKI-PAKINABANG SA TURISMO, TINUTUKLAS NG DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES SA MABINAY, NEGROS ORIENTAL

SISIMULANG suriin ng Department of Environment at Resources (DENR) sa Negros Island Region (NIR) ngayong Miyerkules ang mga kuweba sa munisipalidad ng Mabinay sa Negros Oriental upang matukoy kung alin sa mga ito ang maaaring itampok sa turismo.

Inihayag nitong Lunes ni Mabinay Mayor Ernesto Uy na magkakaroon ng cave congress at cave presentation sa Biyernes, Enero 27, na lalahukan ng tourism officers ng mga lungsod at munisipalidad, mga cave enthusiast at iba pang mga stakeholder sa industriya ng turismo.

Sinabi rin ni Mayor Uy na ang assessment at inventory ay mas magiging kapaki-pakinabang sa paghahanda ng bayan sa pagdedebelop ng mas maraming tourists spot sa munisipalidad.

Ibinahagi niya na sa 400 kuweba sa Mabinay, tanging 30 lamang sa mga ito ang napupuntahan; anim sa mga ito ang napaganda na, tulad ng Bulwang Cave, Panligawan Cave, Pandalihan Cave, Crystal Cave, Odlomon Cave at Cagado Cave.

Inaayos at dinedebelop na rin ang daanan patungo sa iba pang mga kuweba, ayon sa alkalde.

Kasabay sa pagsusuri sa kuweba ang pagdiriwang ng Mabinay ng ika-57 taunang pista nito bilang pagkikila sa kanilang patron na si Señor Sto. Niño, sa Langub Festival bilang isa sa mga pangunahing kaganapan at idinadaos tuwing ika-24 ng Enero.

Ngayong taon, maglalaban-laban ang bawat barangay sa street dancing competition, sa apat na barangay ang bumubuo sa bawat grupo at ang bawat grupong magwawagi ay nakatanggap ng P40,000.

Itatampok sa Langub Festival ang mga sayaw na magsusulong sa mga kuweba ng Mabinay na kakaiba kumpara sa ibang mga pista sa probinsiya.

Inilahad din ni Mayor Uy na isinasagawa rin ang river rafting activity sa isa sa mga nakamamanghang talon sa Mabinay, ang Bugsok Falls, na matatagpuan sa Barangay Banban, 13 kilometro mula sa Poblacion.

Sinabi ni Uy na 300 metrong daanan patungong Bugsok Falls ang hindi pa naaayos.

Ang susunod na gagawin, ayon kay Uy, ay ang regular nang makapagsagawa ng river rafting activity mula Bugsok Falls patungong Kauswagan Bridge, na halos dalawa at kalahating oras ang paglalakbay, gaya sa Cagayan.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

DAVAO REGION

Municipality monitors threats, *kaingin* via app

AN APPLICATION called LAWIN or Landscape and Wildlife Indicator is now being utilized in the municipality of Sta. Cruz in Davao del Sur to monitor *kaingin* and threats especially in the area of Mt. Apo. Named after the Philippine hawk eagle, the app was launched last year in Ilagan City, Isabela, by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Forest patrollers can use tablets or smartphones and directly record geo-referenced observations on habitat, wildlife, trees, threats and illegal activities. CyberTracker, a free open-source software, is used to create the interface for the mobile application. After a patrol is completed, observations are uploaded to a computer using the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) software for data analysis and mapping. "What makes this tool interesting [is that] while patrolling, ... they discovered new species in the flora and fauna [and automatically] they will record it in the LAWIN app, and then if they find any threats such as *kaingin* or illegal logging, automatic they will also record them in the app," tourism officer Julius R. Paner said, talking about the app's features. — **Maya M. Padillo**

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

'Reefs, not rockets' in Spratlys — Green activists

ENVIRONMENTAL activists staged a picket outside the Chinese consulate in Makati City Tuesday to protest what they said is the continuing construction of missile bases on disputed reefs in the Spratly Islands. "Reefs, not rockets, should be proliferating in the ecologically critical waters of the West Philippine Sea," Clemente Bautista, national coordinator of Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment, which spearheaded the protest, said in a statement. — *interaksyon.com*

>> See full story on <https://goo.gl/BkAdbh>

MABILIS SA BALITA

Adante

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LPPCHEA protectors nagtatagumpay - Villar

Ipinahayag ni Sen. Cynthia Villar na nagtatagumpay ang mga volunteer sa pangangalaga sa Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Eco-Tourism Area (LPPCHEA) dahil ipinahinto ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang Manila Bay reclamation project na kanya-ring pinapurihan.

"This is a welcome development to the cause I'm pursuing along with residents of Las Piñas, Parañaque and Cavite, as well as groups in religious, private and environmental sectors. We hope the Manila Bay reclamation project, which experts see as detrimental to the environment and livelihood of 300,000 fishermen, will be permanently shelved," ani Villar.

PEOPLES JOURNALS

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Beware of lead-laden amulets, lucky charms

THE environment-advocate group EcoWaste Coalition has warned consumers against buying lead-laden lucky charms and amulets as they await the Chinese New Year.

Project Protect coordinator Thony Dizon said their group found that some of these Feng Shui items are decorated with paints containing dangerous levels of lead.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has included lead in its list of "10 chemicals of major public concern."

According to the WHO, lead "is a cumulative toxicant that affects multiple body systems, including the neurologic, hematologic, gastrointestinal, cardiovascular, and renal systems."

"Not all Feng Shui charms and amulets are created equal. While many are safe from toxic lead, some are coated with highly-leaded paints and should in fact carry a lead hazard warning," Dizon stressed.

Dizon observed that while these products supposed to attract energy, health, long life, happiness and wealth, they are actually fake and would cause harm to luck seekers.

"We make this warning after finding high concentrations of lead in red and yellow paints of some lucky charms and amulets. Red and yellow are among the lucky colors for the year of the Fire Rooster," Dizon said.

Dizon disclosed that the five Feng Shui items bought from retailers in Binondo, Sta. Cruz and Quiapo, Manila that contain lead way beyond the regulatory limit are the red paint of metallic "bagua"; yellow paint of "gain luck coin" or "money plate"; yellow paint of "lucky dragon amulet"; black-green paint of a rooster figure and yellow paint of a "four-corner blessing" charm.

Cory Martinez

Monday

PILIPINO MIRROR

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AMIN NG KATOTOHANAN

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NAGSUOT ng maskarang manok ang mga miyembro ng isang anti-toxics group upang ibabala sa publiko ang pagbili ng mga pampasuwerte at anting-anting na kontaminado ng nakalalasang kemikal na lead o tiggas.

Kuha ni RUDY ESPERAS

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900
MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



TOWN UNDER WATER — This is what has become of the town proper of Kapalong, Davao del Norte right beside the swollen Libuganon River yesterday, following incessant rains since last week. (Davao del Norte-Provincial Information Office)

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Gov't agencies send relief aid to Maguindanao flood victims

By ALI Q. MACABALANG

BULUAN, Maguindanao — Unprecedented convergent relief aids started pouring in for two Maguindanao towns severely inundated following heavy torrential downpours that hit many parts of Mindanao.

"The local government has extended aid but we all know it was not enough," Vice Mayor Otto Montawal of Datu Montawal town in Maguindanao said in a phone interview.

All of the 12 villages of Datu Montawal and nine in the adjacent town of Pagalungan have been underwater since Thursday last week after the Kabacan River which emanates from Pulangi River in Bukidnon swelled as a result of the low pressure area.

Heavy downpour occurred in Bukid-

non and the water from Pulangi River flowed down to North Cotabato and Maguindanao.

"We are glad aid is coming because it will unburden our people and give them the opportunity to rebuild their lives," the vice mayor said.

On Saturday, the Sangguniang Bayan passed a resolution putting the entire town under state of calamity.

Regional Governor Mujiv Hataman of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and personnel from Humanitarian Emergency Action Response Team (HEART) distributed relief items composed of rice, canned goods, blankets and kitchen provisions to some 6,900 families displaced by the natural calamity.

Most of the affected families have moved and stayed since Friday beside the national highway that passes

through Datu Montawal and Pagalungan, two Maguindanao towns sitting beside Malitubog and Maridagao Rivers and the Liguasan marshland.

On Monday, Lynette Estandarte, Maguindanao Governor Esmar Sison's focal person for medical programs, led the relief and medical mission team and dispatched four truckloads of relief packages.

At the same time, Estandarte's medical team also conducted an outreach program and medical mission to the displaced families.

Even Agriculture Secretary Manny Piñol said in his Facebook page he will visit the affected communities in Maguindanao and North Cotabato to assess the damages to crops and other agricultural products.

"I would want to see what our agency can provide to the affected families who

are mostly farming households," he said.

The water level has gone down in all barangays but residents still have to deal with the thick mud brought by floodwaters.

Secretary Piñol was urged to prod President Duterte to heed calls for the prompt implementation of the Mindanao River Basin project, which Congress appropriated with P6.5-billion in 2015 to end perennial inundations from the 220,000-hectare Liguasan Marsh that borders Maguindanao, North Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat provinces.

The Master Plan P6.5-billion project prescribed the construction and implementation of both structural and non-structural flood control interventions such as dredging, solid river banks mounting and reforestations, among other long-term solutions to perennial flooding around the Liguasan Marsh.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

News

Wednesday, January 25, 2017

Agusan del Sur under state of calamity

By MIKEU CRISMUNDO and JELLALYN DE VERA RUIZ

PATIN-AY, Prosperidad, Agusan del Sur – The whole province of Agusan del Sur has been declared under a state of calamity even as the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said that several areas in the Caraga and Davao regions will continue to experience rains until the weekend.

The Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (PDRRMC), in its meeting here Monday afternoon, placed the entire province, which is in the Caraga region, under state

of calamity due to severe damage brought about by flooding.

Earlier, the municipalities of San Luis, Esperanza, Loreto, Vuela, Bunawan, Talacogon, La Paz and Trento were declared under state of calamity. All barangays in these towns, particularly those in river municipalities remain flooded.

Yesterday, PAGASA warned residents in Caraga and Davao regions of moderate to occasionally heavy rains and thunderstorms that could trigger floods and landslides in low-lying and mountainous communities.

Cloudy skies with light to moderate rains and isolated thunderstorms is expected over the rest of Mindanao, it added.

According to the PDRRMC, 223 houses were destroyed while other houses were washed out by the rampaging flood that started on Jan. 17, 2017 in Las Paz, Agusan del Sur.

The PDRRMC has already asked the Municipal Social Welfare Development offices to prepare the requests and documents for Emergency Shelter Assistance (ESA) for those who lost their houses or those with severely damaged houses.

The Manila Times

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SEI

Floods, landslides hit Davao Region

DAVAO CITY: Continuous rains for several days have caused heavy flooding in some parts of Davao Region and landslides have occurred in some areas of Davao del Norte, Compostela Valley and Davao Oriental.

Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) forecast as of 5 a.m. Tuesday that the eastern sections of Mindanao, particularly Caraga and Davao will continue to be affected by the tailend of a cold front.

Pagasa said cloudy skies with moderate to occasionally heavy rains and thunderstorms may trigger flashfloods and landslides in those areas.

Massive flooding in Compostela Valley affected parts of Poblacion of Nabunturan town, including some *barangay* (villages) on Monday, resulting in the suspension of classes in all levels on Monday and Tuesday.

Families were evacuated from heavily flooded areas all over Compostela Valley as well as those in landslide-prone areas.

Preemptive evacuation of residents in other flood-prone areas was also conducted.

Roads connecting flooded areas to the town centers were no longer passable for light vehicles because of the rising flood.

The Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office (PSWDO) in Compostela Valley as of 8 a.m. on Tuesday reported a total of 682 families or 2,020 directly affected by floods from the towns of Nabunturan, Compostela, New Bataan, Montevista and Mawab.

The PSWDO and the municipal level

social service offices have conducted relief operations in affected villages.

An alert was also up in Davao del Norte as the water levels of Libuganon River and Saug Rivers were already at critical level as of 4:30 a.m. on Tuesday.

The Lawang water level in Asuncion town was considered in critical level as of 11:40 a.m. on Tuesday, while the Sabangan Bridge in Tagum City was also being closely monitored.

Reports said all villages in the town of Kapalong are flooded as roads connecting the town to Tagum City and other towns are no longer passable for light vehicles.

Meanwhile, hundreds of passengers were stranded in Cebu ports on Tuesday morning as 14 vessels canceled their trips after Pagasa issued a gale warning for the eastern coast of Cebu, Bohol and Siquijor.

Commander Dionlett Ampil of the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) Cebu Station said vessels of 250 gross tons and below are not allowed to sail if a gale warning is issued.

Ampil added that the gale warning affected trips to and from the ports of Bantayan Island, Camotes Island, and from Tinago in Cebu City bound for Tagbilaran, Ormoc City and Negros.

He said the PCG is updating the number of affected passengers.

Vhan Singson, Pagasa weather specialist in Mactan, said sea conditions in Cebu, Bohol and Siquijor are rough to very rough.

The gale warning was issued because of the presence of the northeast monsoon, or *amihan*.

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SWAMPED CROPS. Floodwaters submerge thousands of hectares of rice, corn, and bananas in Datu Montawal, Maguindanao on Saturday. Heavy rains spread including the latter's municipal government compound. Both towns in the second district of Maguindanao are marked with swamps and large waterways that co



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Naghihingalong industriya ng niyog, isasalba

ISULAN, Sultan Kudarat - Hindi maikakaila ang unti-unting paglalaho ng mga tanim na niyog sa Sultan Kudarat, at kinumpirma ng dating provincial agriculturist na halos 70-80 porsiyento ng mga punong niyog ang naglaho, kasabay ng pagdami ng nakikinabang sa coco lumber.

Ayon kay Engr. Nestor Casador, retiradong agriculturist ng Sultan Kudarat, na dati ay malawak at sagana ang taniman ng niyog sa lalawigan, ngunit ngayon ay halos maubos na ang mga ito dahil marami, aniya, sa mga dating puno ay naging coco lumber bilang muwebles sa loob ng mga tahanan.

Maging ang ilang kilalang

magniniyog sa lalawigan ay nagsabing pinipili na lang nilang putulin ang mga punong niyog nila dahil hindi nila napakikinabangan o "unproductive" na ang mga ito.

Ang pinutol na puno, anila, ay ibinebenta nila sa gumagamit dito sa pagpapatayo ng mga istruktura.

Pinili naman ng ilang magniniyog na magtanim na lang ng pagkukuhanan ng palm oil at iba pang produktong agricultural ang dating taniman nila ng niyog.

Gayunman, sinabi ni Abunawas Abdulas, al hadz, ng Tacurong City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO), na minsan nang nakipag-ugnayan ang pamunuan ng

Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) sa mga magniniyog sa Sultan Kudarat upang tuluyan nang ipagbawal ang pamumutol sa mga nalalabing puno ng niyog sa lalawigan.

Nilinaw din ni Abdulas na sang-ayon siya sa pagputol sa mga puno kung matutukoy sa ebalwasyon na hindi na nga ito kapaki-pakinabang, ngunit mahalagang may nakatanim nang kapalit nito bago gawing coco lumber ang puno.

Nakikipag-ugnayan na rin ang CENRO sa mga magniniyog at mga lokal na pamahalaan upang maiwasan ang tuluyang paglalaho ng industriya ng niyog sa Sultan Kudarat.

Leo P. Diaz

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

• **GenSan council's
new IP rep
assumes post**

GENERAL SANTOS CITY (PNA) – A respected B'laan tribal leader here formally assumed on Tuesday as the city's new indigenous peoples' mandatory representative (IPMR) at the city council or Sangguniang Panlungsod. Fulong Benjamin Talon joined the city council's regular session for the first time as an ex-officio member after being sworn in by City Mayor Bonnel Rivera as the city's third IPMR since 2014. His designation as IPMR representative was affirmed earlier this month by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples. Talon, who is also a Protestant pastor, was chosen by fellow tribal leaders in December to succeed the late Fulong Juanito Kindat, who died last November after just 10 months in office.

STRATEGIC

THE KITAKYUSHU SKYLINE

IVES SERVICE

JICA to draft urban infrastructure plan to develop Davao City

DAVAO CITY — The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) will put together an urban infrastructure development plan and capacity-building project for Davao City.

"This is a very unique approach that has not been implemented in other cities in the Philippines," Ken Kumazawa, JICA project team leader said during a news conference immediately after yesterday's meeting with the city government and the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Davao region officials.

Mr. Kumazawa said the plan, which will support the infrastructure development plan and implementation of both the city and NEDA, is expected to ultimately improve the city's competitiveness, safety from disasters and general urban conditions.

"The expected output is an urban development plan for Davao City focusing on land use, roads, urban transportation, water supply and solid waste management with a short term target year of 2022 and a long-term target year of 2045," he said.

He said JICA decided to partner with the city and view as a model plans for the Japanese city of Kitakyushu in Fukuoka Prefecture. The similarities include population size, distance from the capital city and long-term plans to make both locations environment-friendly cities.

Davao formed a strategic environmental partnership with

Kitakyushu in November. Kitakyushu suffered from serious industrial pollution problems in the 1960s that were eliminated by the 1980s, becoming one of the most advanced environmental cities in Asia.

"Kitakyushu City established the Kitakyushu Model as a methodology for sustainable city development that is based on their experiences and know-how of urban development," Mr. Kumazawa said.

The Kitakyushu Model addresses areas like solid waste management, energy management, water and wastewater management, urban transportation and environmental preservation.

Lawyer Tristan Dwight Domingo, Davao's assistant city administrator, said the study will focus on the review of the 2013-2022 Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) of the city, road network and mass transit, solid waste management and effective traffic scheme.

"We will have a workshop with the Kitakyushu experts tomorrow (Jan. 25) and look at how we can come up with systems on proper waste segregation," he said.

The project, which will last for 14 months, will be divided into two components — the development planning and capacity building stages. The draft final report is expected to be out by December.

— Carmencita A. Carillo

The Manila Times

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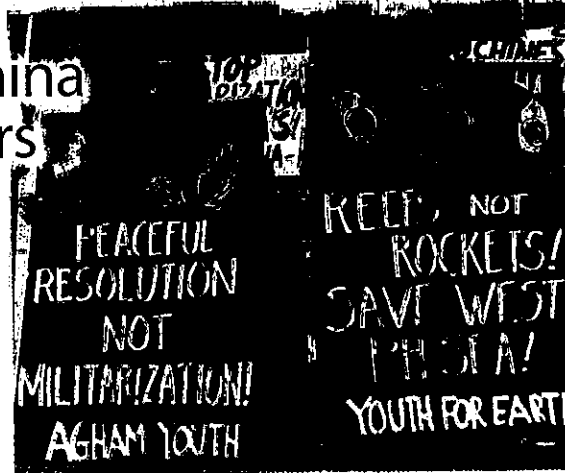
DUTERTE TO MEET XI IN MAY

US vows to block China from disputed waters

THE Trump administration has vowed to protect American interests in the South China Sea and block China's occupation of artificial islands in international waters, a statement that drew a defiant reaction from Beijing.

"If those islands are, in fact, in international waters and not part of China proper, yeah, we'll make sure we defend international interests

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SAVE THE REEFS

Environmentalists protest Chinese military activities at the West Philippine Sea in front of the Chinese consulate. PHOTO BY BOB DUNGO JR.

■ BLOCK FROM A1

US vows

from being taken over by one country." White House spokesman Sean Spicer said in a news briefing on Monday.

Beijing said it would be "firm in safeguarding our rights" in the disputed waters, while an influential Chinese newspaper said China must strengthen its nuclear arsenal to "force the US to respect it" in response to the stance of the new Trump administration.

The Global Times said China's nuclear forces "must be so strong that no country would dare launch a military showdown" with it.

China's state media earlier warned that the US would need to "wage a large-scale war" if it puts up a blockade in the South China Sea, in response to statements from the US Secretary of State designate, Rex Tillerson.

Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines Zhao Jianhua dismissed the newspaper piece and said Beijing would exercise a "wait-and-see" approach on the issue.

"Our policy is for peace and stability. I don't think that it is advisable or wise for China and the US to engage in a confrontation," he said during the Chinese Embassy's Spring Festival reception in Makati City on Monday night.

Zhao announced that President Rodrigo Duterte and his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, will hold bilateral talks in May at the sidelines of a multilateral forum.

The Philippine leader was said to have confirmed his attendance to the China-led "One Belt, One Road" economic partnership summit in Beijing. This will be his second meeting with Xi after a state visit in October 2016.

"It's a summit and a bilateral meeting," Zhao told reporters.

MICHAEL JOE T. DELIZO