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Thursday

# **DENR**

## **IN THE NEWS**



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# DENR to hold environment summit in February

By RHODINA VILLANUEVA

A summit will be held in Manila next month to address environmental problems in relation to sustainable development.

Slated on Feb. 9 to 11 at the SMX Convention Center in Pasay City, the "First Philippine Environment Summit: Breakthroughs and Innovations toward Sustainable Development" will be co-hosted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Environment Secretary Ramon Paje said at least 1,000 participants from various sectors are expected at the event co-organized by the Green Convergence for Safe Food, Healthy Environment and Sustainable Economy.

"Participants include representatives from government, academe, church groups, civil society and other environmental organizations," he said.

The summit, with its theme "Greening Together, Growing Better," will highlight the importance of concerted action to effectively resolve environmental problems, especially climate change, Paje said.

He pointed out that unity in resolving environmental problems was necessary to meet the global agenda affirmed in two major environmental events in 2015: the issuance of Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment in June and the 21st Conference

of Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris last December.

"The summit will showcase breakthroughs and innovations that contribute to environmental protection while encouraging collective action in addressing policy gaps," Paje said.

The event will be composed of plenary sessions, an exhibit on outstanding environmental practices and technologies, and a recognition ceremony for eco-champions from local government units.

Three sessions will be held to feature working, sustainable and innovative programs. These are safe food, healthy environment and sus-

tainable economy.

The session on safety will focus on food security and the effect of chemical fertilizers and pesticides on soil.

Topics include organic agriculture, safe food manufacturing, health and food, and urban gardening and solid waste management.

Meanwhile, the healthy environment session will discuss threats of climate change on ecosystem health, with topics on healthy land, water and air, and on climate change adaptation and mitigation, disaster risk education and management.

A representative from the French embassy is also expected to give an update on the COP21 during this session.

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# BusinessMirror

A broader look at today's business

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## DENR to host first environment summit

**T**HE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) will play cohost next month to a three-day, first-of-its-kind summit dedicated to environmental issues and their interrelation with sustainable development.

To be held from February 9 to 11, the "First Philippine Environment Summit: Breakthroughs and Innovations toward Sustainable Development" will bring together some 1,000 stakeholders from various sectors.

It is coorganized by the Green Convergence for Safe Food, Healthy Environment and Sustainable Economy. Participants include representatives from the government, academe, church groups, civil society and other environmental organizations.

The summit, with its theme "Greening Together, Growing Better," will highlight the importance of concerted action to effectively resolve environmental problems, especially climate change, according to Environment Secretary Ramon J.P. Paje.

*Jonathan L. Mayuga*



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICES

## Rare Hawk Eagle shot dead in Albay

**LEGAZPI CITY, Albay** – A badly wounded one-year old rare Philippine Hawk Eagle endemic to the country was recovered in the mountainous part of Camalig, Albay, and later succumbed after it was turned over by the police to Albay Park and Wildlife authorities last Tuesday.

Dr. Luis Adonay, Albay Provincial Veterinary Office chief confirmed that the rare bird sustained a fatal gunshot wound to the left lower breast area.

"It is possible that the internal organs were hit by the bullet which resulted to death," Adonay said.

He said that the Hawk Eagle has a wingspan of 1 meter, weighed 2 kilos and at is least 1 year old.

"We will send people to Camalig tomorrow to at least know the origin of the eagle. Mati-trace natin yun. I believe na alaga (pet) siya at nakawala dahil na rin sa katawan nitong mataba," Adonay narrated.

He added that the bird may have been shot a few hours after it was discovered, Tuesday afternoon as suggested by the fresh wounds.

Dr. Manny Victorino, veterinarian of the Albay Park and Wildlife said that the bird was found at Qui-tuinan Hills by a concerned citizen who turned over the rare species to



**CRIME AGAINST NATURE** – Albay Wildlife Park personnel inspect the carcass of a rare and endangered Philippine Hawk Eagle which was fatally shot and wounded in Camalig. Authorities have initiated an investigation to track down those responsible for shooting the rare bird species. (Niño Luces)

authorities.

"Ayon sa sinabi ng pulis na nag turn over sa amin, yung ibon ay nakuha ng isang residente at dinala sa pulis, at dinala din dito sa Albay Park and Wildlife at ginawa namin ang lahat

para maisalba yung ibon, pero di na kinaya dahil sa tama ng bala. Posibleng airgun ang ginamit na baril dahil hindi lumusot ang bala sa katawan nito at embedded pa rin yung bullet sa loob ng katawan niya," Victorino said.



**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**

# Phl eagle shot dead in Albay

By CECILLE SUERTE FELIPE

A Philippine hawk eagle, locally known as *lawin*, died after being shot by a still unidentified person in Camalig town in Albay Tuesday afternoon.

Regie Imperial, 37, a driver, found the eagle with a bullet wound in the left side of the chest in the mountainous area

of Barangay Tingao at around 3 p.m., Sr. Insp. Maria Luisa Calubaquib, spokesman for the Bicol region police, said.

Calubaquib said they turned the eagle over to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) office in Albay for treatment. But the hawk died.

Authorities said the bird could have been shot between 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. as the wound was still fresh when the eagle was brought in.

Reports said the hawk had a wingspan of at least one meter, weighed two kilos and was around a year

old.

Calubaquib said they would conduct a probe to trace the origin of the bird.

In August 2014, a Philippine hawk eagle was shot dead in a forest in Sto. Domingo town in Albay.

The DENR appealed to the public, especially those who shoot birds and wild animals for fun, to stop this kind of activity and warned that they could be held liable for killing endangered species.

Under Republic Act 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act, a person caught in possession of vulnerable species can be fined from P10,000 to P200,000 and jailed for one day up to six months.

If found guilty of killing of endangered species, the offender can be imprisoned for two to four years and be made to pay a fine of P30,000 to P300,000.

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## Don't post campaign ads on trees, politicians told

DAVAO CITY – The Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is reminding all candidates not to post their campaign ads on trees which is prohibited and punishable under the Omnibus Election Code.

CENRO Officer Bernardino Juson said politicians violating election policy on posting of campaign ads could be sanctioned with prison correctional or suspension with six months and one day to six years imprisonment.

CENRO is the agency deputized by Commission on Election (Comelec) resolution 6616 to remove campaign materials in public places outside the common poster areas.

Juson said, "Alam naman ng mga

politiko na bawal mag kabit ng posters sa mga puno especially yung mga naka pako. Yung mga tao lang naman nila ang nag lalagay (The politicians know that putting especially nailing posters on trees are prohibited. Their supporters are the ones putting them)."

He said that during the 2013 election, there was one politician who came to their office to apologize after his supporters nailed his poster on trees.

Juson said politicians are responsible even if their supporters were the ones who posted or nailed campaign posters on trees and other areas outside common poster areas.

He admitted that they also fear for their safety when they remove posters on trees because some supporters think they belong to the opposing

party.

Juson has asked the assistance of the Philippine National Police to ensure their safety while doing their job. (PNA)



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICES

# Need to harmonize tribal groups' environmental programs seen

By TARA YAP

ILOILO CITY - There's a stronger need to harmonize environmental programs of the Panay Bukidnon or Sulodnon, the indigenous peoples (IPs) on Panay Island.

This was the main goal of a recent conference between the Western Visayas regional office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR-6) and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP-6).

"We need to have close coordination and undertake our mandates in implementing environmental programs," said DENR-6 Regional Director Jim Sampunsa.

For instance, there's the Forestland Management Project in Iloilo province funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and implemented by the DENR-6.

The Forestland Management Project's 70,000 hectares straddle through the towns of Calinog, Janaway and Lambunao where the Panay Bukidnon live.

Sampunsa said there were major concerns including issuance of Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) which is under the NCIP-6. This form is required for application for the Community-Based Forest Management Agreement for the 10 member organizations.

A priority project in Forestland Management Project will be harmonizing

on management of the three sub-watersheds of Jalani-Alibunan in Calinog town, Suege-Magaya in Janaway town and Ulan-Tanabayan in Lambunao town.

"The success of our project implementation lies in the harmonization of our respective mandates," said Sampunsa, adding that the DENR-6 will lead the effort.

DENR-6 Assistant Secretary for Jesse Veyra was also designated as the regional coordinator of NCIP-6 with the NCIP-6.

Western Visayas Regional Office of DENR-6 is located at the Regional Office of DENR-6, 10th Floor, 10th Avenue, Iloilo City. For more information, call (033) 833-1111 or visit the DENR-6 website at [www.dnr.gov.ph](http://www.dnr.gov.ph).



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# The Manila Times

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## Govt order on GMOs seen killing farmers

THE left-leaning Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) on Wednesday criticized the Aquino administration for rushing new rules pertaining to genetically modified organism imports in response to the December 2015 ruling of the Supreme Court (SC) on the BT eggplant that also temporarily stopped the government from approving permits for field testing, propagating, and commercialization.

The SC decision effectively nullified Administrative Order No. 8 series of 2002 or the "Rules and Regulation for the Importation and Release into the Environment of Plant and Plant Products Derived from the Use of Modern Biotechnology."

But last week, the National Commission for Rare and Endemic Crops (NCREC) issued a department circular under the Department of Science and Technology, Department of Agriculture, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Health and Department of Interior and Local Government for the "Rules and Regulation for the Research and Development, Handling and Use, Transboundary Movement,

Release into the Environment and Management of Plant and Plant Products Derived from the Use of Modern Biotechnology."

The government targets the new circular to be signed on February 16 as import permits of animal feeds and other GM products are set to expire.

"While the landmark Supreme Court decision on the BT eggplant [B] yet to be implemented and enjoyed by farmers, local producers and consumers, the government is railroad[ing] a new 'super circular' in the interest of multinational GM companies and importers and traders of GM products," Rafael Mariano, KMP chairman, said.

He added that farmers and local producers, the backbone of the country's agriculture, were not at all informed or consulted by the agencies who led the meetings.

"This super AO will deliver a killing blow to the ailing domestic agriculture," Mariano said.

"With regard to the implementation of the SC decision, what will happen to farmers severely affected by GM field testings and trials, what will happen to agricultural farms and the immediate

environment exposed to GMOs and accompanying chemicals and inputs? What will be the liability and redress for agrochem and GM companies for the negative impacts brought by GMOs?" the peasant leader asked.

Instead of rushing a new circular, the government should instead address these issues, Mariano said.

"The scientific community has issued harsh reactions to the SC ruling, but did not address the uncertainties and the possibilities of irreversible and serious harm posed by GM crops and products referred by the SC decision," he noted.

"Maybe scientific studies have prospered for the interest of foreign companies like Monsanto and Syngenta but farmers remained poor, in debt and landless," Mariano said.

"Based on our thorough social investigation, the commercial propagation of BT corn in the country more than a decade ago, caused irreparable socio-economic damages to millions of corn farmers as well as negative impacts on consumer health and the environment," the peasant leader also noted.

**NEIL A. ALCOVER**



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### Illegal lumber seized

BUTUAN CITY – The anti-illegal logging task force of Police Regional Office 13 (PRO 13) seized fitches and lumbers of “mancono,” which is considered to be the hardest wood tree in the Philippine, police reported yesterday. A composite team from Lianga Municipal Police Station (MPS), San Agustin MPS, Special Operating Team (SOT) of Surigao del Sur Police Provincial Office (PPO) and Quick Response Force (QRF) and Forest Rangers of Surigao del Sur PPO flagged down a green Mitsubishi Fuso van at a PNP checkpoint in between the national highway of the municipalities of Lianga and San Agustin and found the more than 3,000 board feet of “mancono” fitches and lumbers. Initial investigation conducted by the joint police team disclosed that the said banned forest product was found in the van which was allegedly owned by Renato M. Diamante Jr. from Cagayan de Oro City and driven by Ronald Cervantes Y. Villamata, 34 of Purok Greenland, Mankilam, Tagum City. The said the lumber came from Sitio Pokto, Barangay Manyayay, Lianga, Surigao del Sur and will be transported to Davao City when detected by the police team, the Public Information Office (PIO) of PRO 13 said. (Mike U. Crismundo)



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## Cloud-seeding appeal

Lawmakers asked yesterday the government to conduct cloud seeding operations in places affected by El Niño phenomenon. Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez and his younger brother, ABANTE Mindanao party-list Rep. Maximo Rodriguez Jr. urged the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau on Soil and Water Management to conduct cloud seeding operations in Cagayan de Oro City to mitigate the impact of El Niño phenomenon. They expressed concern that as early as May 2015, 15 barangays in Cagayan de Oro have been placed under state of calamity due to the effects of El Niño and damages to agriculture almost reached ₱60 million. (Charissa M. Luci)



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## Climate change losses for Southeast Asia well above previous estimate — ADB

**P**ARIS — Economic losses from the impacts of climate change in Southeast Asia could be 60% higher than previously estimated, reducing the region's gross domestic product (GDP) by up to 11% by 2100, according to a new Asian Development Bank (ADB) study. The analysis is an update to a 2009 ADB report that estimated a 7% annual reduction in economic output due to climate change.

"The economic costs of not reining in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are more serious than we previously estimated," said ADB Chief Economist Shang-Jin Wei. "At the same time, this new study also shows that reducing emissions and stabilizing the climate will produce benefits and avoid losses for Southeast Asia, which in the long run sharply outweigh the costs of action."

An ADB Brief which summarizes these findings, Southeast Asia and the Economics of Global Climate Stabilization, was released during the COP21 conference on climate change in Paris. The study looks at the economic impact of climate change across a range of scenarios, including business-as-usual, and another which sees countries take steps to limit their GHG emissions to keep temperatures from rising above 2 degrees Celsius.

The global analysis focuses on the region's five largest economies, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam, which account for 90% of the region's emissions.

The study quantifies the net benefits to the region from acting to stabilize the climate, which are estimated at as much as five to 11 times more than the net costs. It assessed direct benefits from less climate change, such as improved crop yields, as well as the effects of improved air quality and better transportation that come directly from steps to reduce emissions. Those steps are also found to cost less as a share of GDP than the region has already been spending on energy policies, such as fossil fuel subsidies.

Reducing emissions will require action on a number of fronts, including a sharp reduction in the rate of deforestation, which accounts for the majority of Southeast Asia's current emissions. Averting deforestation represents the lowest cost opportunity for emissions reductions and could generate half of the cumulative regional mitigation through the mid-2030s.

The region must also step up efforts on energy efficiency with technologies that improve and reduce power use, which is found as the biggest source of long-term emissions reduction. The study notes that without changing existing energy use patterns, which include



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICES

p.2 Climate change losses for Southeast Asia well above previous estimate - ADB



Climate Change? (Photo by Richard Williams and licensed for reuse under Creative Commons License)

fast growing use of coal and oil, GHG emissions are likely to be 60% higher in 2050 than in 2010.

Reducing emissions is also contingent on developing and introducing low-carbon energy technologies, which would allow the GDP cost of decarbonization to peak within 20 to 25 years.

Carbon capture and storage is a key technology to reduce emissions that the region should explore further.

The study notes that costs of climate stabilization will rise by 60% in 2050 if a global climate agreement to curb carbon emissions is delayed by just a decade.



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## New warning issued on climate change

MOSCOW – On December 12, 2015, the landmark COP 21 treaty made it clear that average global temperatures must be kept “well below” 2 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial temperature levels. A new climate change report published Monday takes the warnings a step further, detailing that petroleum and natural gas are better left in the ground.

According to scientists and environmentalists, the risk remains that the continued development of carbon-rich deposits around the world will harm the planet, increasing temperatures and negating all efforts at mitigating climate change.

Fossil fuels should no longer be extracted, refined, burned or combined with other compounds, whether in products or as fuel, states the “Keep It in the Ground” report prepared by Sierra Club, Greenpeace, and 350.org.

“With the historic climate accord set in Paris last year, nearly 200 nations from around the world set an expiration date for fossil fuels,” said Lena Moffitt, director of the Sierra Club’s Beyond Dirty Fuels campaign. “Now we must rise to the occasion by transitioning to 100 percent clean and renewable energy sources, and leave dirty fuels where they belong—in the ground.”

To mitigate the effects of an ongoing environmental catastrophe, greenhouse gas emissions in China, the US, Russia and the Arctic must be limited, and coal and oil reserves “must all remain unused,” the study stressed.

One measure to begin the end of fossil fuel use, stated by executive director of the Sierra Club Michael Brune, suggests that, “Instead of blindly allowing destructive fracking to continue in our communities, we should extend state-wide fracking bans, like the one in New York, and moratoriums, like the one in Maryland, that will keep dirty, climate-polluting fossil fuels like fracked gas in the ground and invest in truly clean, renewable sources of energy that don’t come with the threat of poisoned drinking water and climate disaster.”

The 350.org executive director May Boeve echoed Brune’s assertions, adding that it’s crucial to stop burning fossil fuels, and prevent fossil fuel companies from expanding oil and gas exploration and extraction.

“At this point, continuing to burn fossil fuels is truly lethal,” Boeve said. “The effort by fossil fuel companies to dig up and burn coal, oil and gas despite the consequences is the biggest threat our planet faces. All around the world people are now mobilizing to keep fossil fuels in the ground.”

“Climate change is already bringing flood waters and wildfires right to our doorsteps,” she added.

Greenpeace US climate director Kelly Mitchell stressed the necessity of a coordinated global effort to leave fossil fuels in the ground, especially in areas, “from Arctic oil to Powder River Basin coal.” (PNA/Sputnik)



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## Bagong departamento itatag, ipansalag sa climate change

Inirekomenda ni Pasig City Rep. Roman Romulo na ikonsidera ang pagbuo ng bagong departamento na mangunguna sa pagpapagaan ng impact lalo na sa mga komunidad na inaasahang matinding mapupuntirya ng climate change.

Ayon sa solon, dapat maging sentro sa preparasyon ng implementasyon ng Paris Agreement na napagkayarian noong Disyembre ng nakalipas na taon ang pagtatatag ng bagong kagawaran na espesyal na tututok sa problema ng pagbabago ng klima.

"I totally agree that only an integrated, all-government and all-of-society approach, can effectively deal with the challenges posed by what the United Nations has described as an 'age of megacrises'," pagpupunto ni Romulo.

"This is why I have long been advocating for the creation of a new department that would focus on preparing our communities, responding to their needs, and rebuilding if necessary when disaster strikes," dagdag nito.

Binanggit ng mambabatas ang isang pag-aaral na kinomisyon ni UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon na nagsasabing ang mga bansa na peligroso at nakalawit sa mga kalamidad ay dapat magkaroon ng pondo na maaaring ilaan sa ano mang layunin kabilang na ang humanitarian response na hindi malalagay sa balag ng alanganin ang financial stability.

Binibigyang-diinuman sa naturang pag-aaral ang kahalagahan ng pagkakaroon ng lokal at pambansang kapasidad sa crisis prevention at pagtugon sa disaster risk reduction.

Iginiit nito na ang bagong kagawaran ay maaaring mag-absorb sa mga tungkulin gayundinsamgawaningibapang ahensya gaya ng NDRRMC at Climate Change Commission o maging ang PAGASA at Phivolcs.

"This age of megacrises requires us to think boldly, to imagine new ways that could effectively protect our people from the dangers that lie ahead, that threaten the very life of our planet," batay pa kay Romulo. (Aries Cano)



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### EDITORIAL

## Disaster-resilient PH

EVERY year, national disasters, like typhoons and floods, claim the lives of many people and destroy billions of pesos worth of property in various parts of the country.

Actually, this Southeast Asian nation is the fourth most disaster-prone country in the world, according to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Centre on the Epidemiology of Disasters.

Fortunately, however, Filipinos are blessed with excellent, highly-trained and dependable professionals, who play a stellar role in building a "disaster-resilient" Philippines.

These are the country's engineers and architects. Like nurses and medical doctors, they are in great demand in the Middle East and other manpower-importing nations because of their exceptional skills.

Leyte 1st District Rep. Martin G. Romualdez, a lawyer and banker by profession, urged these professionals to spearhead a move to amend the decades-old National Building Code (NBC).

A shared senatorial candidate of presidential hopefuls Vice President Jejomar C. Binay and Davao City Mayor Rodrigo "Digong" Duterte, Romualdez asked these professionals to convince their clients to adopt safety standards.

He said the safety standards must be beyond what is currently required by the outdated NBC.

And with the worsening of climate change, more destructive natural disasters may become the new "normal."

Thus, there's a need to build structures capable of withstanding the ferocity and increased frequency of weather disturbances in the country.

In urging the overhauling of the building code, the Visayan lawmaker, who is also head of the Philippine Constitution Association (Philconsa), said that what used to be "acceptable" is no longer adequate today.

Through our engineers and architects, let's ensure that all new homes and high-rises being built can withstand the fury of Mother Nature.



# The Manila Times

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## #Eleksyon2016: The Lumad and mining interests

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IF there is an issue that should be part of the decision to vote for anyone at all this coming elections, it is the Lumad killings, and the injustice that those who survive continue to live with. Thousands of Lumad are in evacuation centers, living on lugaw if there is food at all, away from the productivity of caring for their land, away from the schools that nurture their children, away from their homes.

The bigger picture we are looking at is that of mining, and how the next president must choose a side: the Lumad and their ancestral lands or the transnational mining firms and the business they bring in.

There is no in-betweens here. One cannot stand for one and not stand against the other.

### Binay, mining and policy

In September, soon after news broke that Lumad leaders were killed in Lianga town, Surigao del Sur on September 1, Vice President Jejomar Binay condemned the killing of Lumad leaders, expressing "concern over the mass displacement of Lumad in the CARAGA region because of alleged atrocities being committed by militiamen." (*The Standard* 10 Sept 2015) The VP also said: "The undisputed fact is that three persons have been killed, atrocities were committed and communities forced out of their homes. This alone cries out for immediate government action." (*The Standard*, 10 Sept 2015)

It is not clear though how this strong conviction to protect and seek justice for the Lumad might happen vis a vis his strong conviction in favor of mining operations in the country: "The mining industry could be the biggest contributor to the Philippine economy and could be the key

driver towards industrialization and jobs creation and the development of the countryside," he has said. (*The Standard*, 16 Sept 2015) Taking from the Chamber of Mines, the VP says "mining and biodiversity conservation can co-

exist," but also that it has been subjected to "catch and go policies" under the current administration. (*The Standard*, 16 Sept 2015) What VP Binay is talking about is the kind of taxes imposed on mining companies and the goal of milking profits out of this foreign investment.

But given the kind of environmental degradation they effect, given the biodiversity and natural resources that these inevitably endanger, should taxes really be our main concern? One also wonders how the VP would reconcile his stand in favor of mining given indigenous people's lands, and the rights of the Lumad and our IPs.

### Poe, mining and profit-sharing

Senator Grace Poe meanwhile seems to believe that what must go hand-in-hand with her stand in favor of mining, is the passage of the Freedom of Information Bill (FOI), as this would require government to "mandatorily disclose all mining contracts to the general public." (*The Standard*, 16 Sept 2014) The Senator's concern with mining is primarily about how profitable these mining interests in the country are, and the kind of sharing that happens across all pertinent sectors. "Our government needs the transparency report to help it compute the right formula for what constitutes as fair and equitable share for everyone involved." (*The Standard*, 16 Sept 2014)



RADIKAL CHICK

KATRINA STUART SANTIAGO

One wonders if the Senator realizes that as far as the Lumad and their ancestral lands are concerned, a discussion of shares is not even on the table. For the Lumad, the entry of mining companies is already unacceptable, the discussion about prices and profits absolutely irrelevant: they are not to mine these lands the way

transnational mining wants to do it. To speak of profit sharing as the major problem with mining is to fail at taking the Lumad's concerns into consideration.

And yet Senator Poe sought to have an inquiry about the "increasing gravity of alleged harassment, killings, forced evacuations and dispossession of ancestral lands in communities and tribal schools of Lumad areas, perpetuated by military." (*Interaksyon*, 8 Sept 2015) She aimed to "immediately put an end to the incidents, mete out the appropriate sanctions to those liable, and formulate legislative measures to further protect and improve the welfare and well-being of various indigenous peoples and tribes in the Philippines" (*Interaksyon*, 8 Sept 2015).

But at the heart of the dispossession of ancestral lands are the mining interests in this region. To the Lumad I have spoken to, the only reason military units are even in their communities is the presence of these mining interests; the reason there are paramilitary forces is the lure of these mining interests; the reason fear is being sowed in their communities enough for them to choose evacuation centers despite horrid—living conditions, is the same these mining interests.



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The Lumad and mining interests

### Roxas, Nickel Asia, Taganito Mining, SR Mining

Ex-DILG and DOTC Secretary Mar Roxas might be the only presidential candidate who has come face-to-face – at least to the public's knowledge – with the Lumad. In early September, he was in Tandag City Surigao del Sur and walked into a tent where displaced Lumad were temporarily staying. Roxas dared ask them: *"Ilang araw na kayo dito? Bakit hindi pa kayo bumabalik sa Lianga?"*

A Lumad man responded in his language (translated here via Bulatlat.com and Kodao): "Because there are still soldiers there, Sir." To which Roxas replied: "So ... *hindi ba sila nagbigay proteksyon sa inyo?"*

A Lumad woman responded: "What protection? They are the ones killing our families there." Roxas replies: "Sundalo?" To which the same woman says: "Who else? Bagani and the soldiers." (*Bulatlat.com / Kodao*, 10 Sept 2015)

If this piece of information truly surprised Roxas, then he does not deserve the presidency. Because he is also probably the only presidential candidate who has had his hands dipped in mining as a member of this administration. In September 2013, Roxas spoke about the opening of Nickel Asia in Surigao del Norte: "This facility, the second of its kind in the country,

is considered single largest foreign direct investment in the mining industry today, amounting to P65.8 billion. It will also strengthen the Philippines' foothold as a vital source of transition metals in the international market." (*Rappler.com*, 5 Sept 2013)

Along with its subsidiary firm Taganito Mining, there is documented evidence of the environmental problems that Nickel Asia has wrought in the areas where it has mines, and even as Roxas spoke about the opening of Nickel Asia in Surigao, the Church, our indigenous people's groups, and concerned sectors had already stood up against mining and its adverse effects, not just on the environment, but also on the societies and communities that they intervene in. (Environmental Justice Atlas, accessed 27 Jan, (*Mindanews*, 4 Aug 2010, 8 Feb 2009) There is a plunder case against SR Metals Inc., also in Surigao, owned by Miguel Alberto Gutierrez and Eric Gutierrez, "said to be close political supporters" of the President and Roxas. (*Inquirer.net*, 3 Mar 2015)

Roxas has defended the presence of the military in Lumad communities: "The government has to enter these areas by providing services, justice, fairness. <...> Indigenous peoples are in peril because they live in places that are rich in minerals and trees, timber. The reason why they are in peril is because the Left, as well as others who wish to exploit those minerals and natural resources are probably using or trying to use them. <...> As I said, what the Left fears are not the soldiers. Rather, what they fear are roads. As soon as you have government presence in those areas, indigenous peoples will no longer be taken advantage of, or used as pawns." (*Interaksyon*, 10 Nov 2015)

The anti-Left rhetoric notwithstanding, what might be worse than the failure of Binay and Poe to make the connection between the Lumad killings and mining interests, is the decision of someone like Roxas to ignore what the Lumad themselves have told him: that it is the soldiers that have pushed them to leave their homes.

The worst decision just might be having another President who does not know how to listen.



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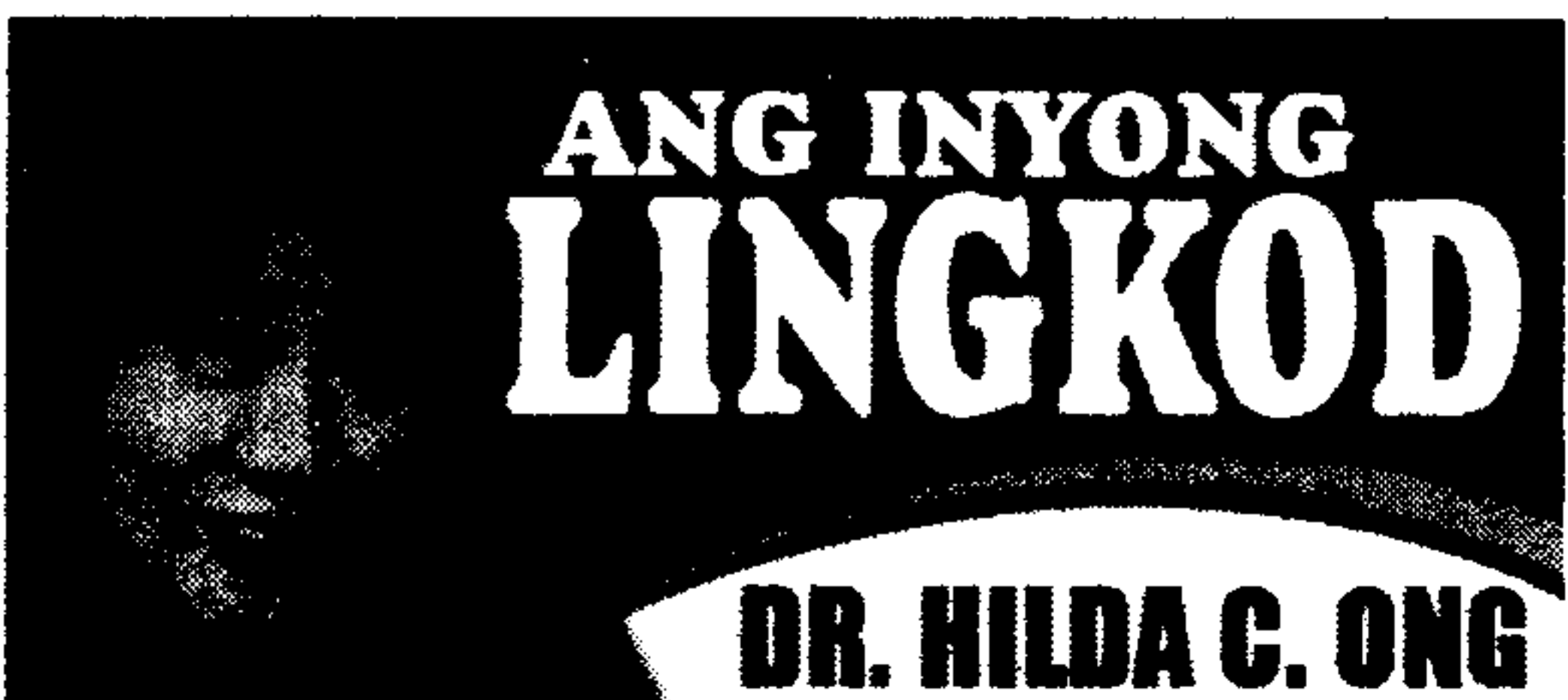
## PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

PORMAL nang ipinagkaloob ng Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) sa National Water Resources Board (NWRB) ang final output ng isinagawa nitong proyekto na "Establishment of an Integrated 3D Geographical Information System-based Water Resources Management System in the Province of Pampanga and Bulacan" o mas kilala bilang "Water Philippines GIS Project".

Ang proyekto ay tulong ng pamahalaan ng bansang Korea na nagkakahalaga ng US \$3.5 million na pinasimulan pa noong taong 2012 sakop ang GIS for river basin, dam automation, website for water resources information, at ang monitoring and evaluation system ng Ipo, Bustos at Angat dams.

Sinabi nga ni NWRB Executive Director Seville D. David, Jr. na ang proyektong ito ay pangarap lamang sa simula ngunit dahil sa tulong pinansiyal at teknikal na ipinagkaloob ng KOICA, unti-unti itong naging ganap na katotohanan.

Sa loob ng tatlong taon, nagkaloob din ang KOICA ng mga serye ng capacity-building activities na kinapaloban ng mga tauhan ng



### PROYEKTONG 'WATER PHILIPPINES GIS PROJECT' PINAKIKINABANGAN NA

NWRB, National Irrigation Authority (NIA), Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), Country Partnership Framework (CPF), National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA), University of the Philippines – Disaster Risk and Exposure Assessment for Mitigation (UP DREAM Program), Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA) at Bureau of Research and Standards (BRS).

Nauna nang binuksan noong nakaraang taong 2015 ang isang Data Center na lubhang makatutulong sa pagbabantay ng Angat Dam na isa sa mga

pangunahing pinagkukunan ng tubig ng mga naninirahan sa Metro Manila na sa pagtataya ay mayroong higit sampung milyong populasyon, para sa hydro-power supply para sa Luzon grid na nagbibigay ng kuryente, at irigasyon para sa mga sakahan sa lalawigan ng Bulacan at Pampanga.



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THE EXPONENTIAL GROWTH OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS SINCE 1900

# MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICES

# El Niño parches Asia Pacific, ruins crops, and dries up water sources

BANGKOK (Thomson Reuters Foundation) – Severe El Niño-linked drought has destroyed crops, killed farm animals and dried up water sources across East Asia and the Pacific, aid workers said, and UNICEF appealed for \$62 million to assist children impacted by various crises in the region.

Humanitarian agencies are monitoring and responding to droughts and food insecurity in an area from Indonesia and the Philippines, southeast to Papua New Guinea and the Pacific Islands.

“El Niño is peaking at the moment, and we expect the impacts to come up after the peak,” said Krishna Krishnamurthy, a regional climate risk analyst for the World Food Programme.

Krishnamurthy visited East Timor earlier this month and saw areas that were parched even though their rainy season was supposed to have started in November.

“Rivers are completely dry in several parts of the country,” he said, noting some hard-hit areas were deceptively

green.

“I saw green paddy fields, but it’s not rice – it’s weeds and grass. It’s difficult to monitor remotely (from satellite images). That’s why the post-harvest assessment will be quite critical.”

The El Niño phenomenon, occurring every few years and caused by unusual warming of the Pacific Ocean, triggers heavy rains and floods in South America and dry, scorching weather in Asia and East Africa, and usually lasts about one year.



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THE EXPONENTIAL GROWTH OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS SINCE 1898

# MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICES

### Australia foreign minister sees world support for Hague ruling

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON, DC, United States (AP) – An international arbitration case over the disputed South China Sea that has been boycotted by China will “settle once and for all” whether artificial reefs are entitled to territorial waters, Australia’s top diplomat said Tuesday.

Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said

China has built up several artificial islands to advance its sweeping territorial claims in the South China Sea, a major thoroughfare for world trade. China says its claims have a historical basis, but that has brought it into conflict with other claimants like the Philippines and Vietnam, and raised broader international concerns over Beijing’s intentions.

“In my mind that arbitration will settle once and for all the question of whether or not an artificial reef can create some kind of 12-nautical-mile buffer. Our belief is that it does not as a matter of international law,” Bishop told a seminar organized by the Center for a New American Security, a Washington-based think tank.

the ruling by the tribunal in the Hague in the case brought by the Philippines will be “extremely important” as a statement of international principle.

She said that although Beijing is saying it will not be bound by the ruling, which is expected later this year, the tribunal’s decision “will be embraced and upheld by all other nations with claims or interests in the region.”

►3

Australia is not among the claimant governments in the South China Sea, but Bishop said that like the US, it supports freedom of navigation and overflight. She sidestepped questions about whether Australia, a close US ally, would follow Washington in conducting a freedom of navigation mission close to China’s artificial islands.

She called on Southeast Asian nations and China to put in place a code of conduct on behavior of nations in the South China Sea – an initiative that has made little headway in the past dozen years.

“We want to see de-escalation of tensions in the region. We would hate for there

to be some kind of miscalculation that would lead to conflict,” Bishop said.



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# MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICES

## Scientists ID new genus of tree frogs long thought to be extinct

NEW DELHI – For more than a century, two mysterious tree frog specimens collected by a British naturalist in 1870 and housed at the Natural History Museum in London were assumed to be part of a vanished species, never again found in the wild. Until now.

A group of scientists, led by renowned Indian biologist Sathyabhama Das Biju, has rediscovered the frogs and also identified them as part of a new genus — one step higher than a species on the taxonomic ranking. Not only have they found the frogs in abundance in northeast Indian jungles, they believe they could also be living across a wide swathe of Asia from China to Thailand.

“This is an exciting find, but it doesn’t mean the frogs are safe,” Biju said, adding that he hopes the discovery leads to more awareness of the dangers of unfettered development to the animals. The frogs were found at high altitudes in four northeast Indian states,

underlining the rain-soaked region’s role as a biodiversity hotspot.

Some of the forest areas where Biju’s team collected frogs in 2007 and 2008 were already slashed and burned by 2014 for agricultural development. The region’s tropical forests are quickly disappearing because of programs to cut trees, plant rice, expand human settlements and build roads.

Industrial growth amid a decade-long economic boom has also increased pollution, to which frogs are particularly vulnerable. That same sensitivity to climate and water quality makes them perfect environmental barometers, putting them at risk when ecological systems go awry. Of the more than 7,000 amphibian species known globally, about 32 percent are threatened with extinction, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

“This frog is facing extreme stress in these areas, and could be pushed to

extinction simply from habitat loss,” Biju said. “We’re lucky in a way to have found it before that happens, but we’re all worried.”

Finding the frogs was an accident. The team had been searching the forest floor for other amphibians in 2007 when, one night, “we heard a full musical orchestra coming from the treetops. It was magical. Of course we had to investigate,” Biju said.

For the study of the new frog genus, *Frankixalus*, published Wednesday by the Public Library of Science journal PLOS ONE, Biju and his doctoral students teamed up with researchers from the central Indian state of Pune, Sri Lanka, Brussels and the American Museum of Natural History.

They looked at the frogs’ behavior, collected specimens and described their outer appearance and skeletal features. But it wasn’t until they had sequenced the frogs’ genetic code that they confirmed it as a new genus, and

surprisingly found another DNA match from a single tadpole specimen reported recently under a mistaken identity in China.

The frogs had long been considered lost to science, with the first — and only — previously known specimens collected in 1870 by British naturalist T.C. Jerdon in the forests of Darjeeling. Over decades, the frogs were reclassified at least four times in cases of incorrect identity as scientists drew conclusions from their enlarged snouts or the webbing between their toes.

Biju believes the frogs remained hidden from science so long because of their secretive lifestyle living in tree holes at heights up to 20 feet above ground. Most tree frogs live in shrubs or tree holes closer to the ground. But other experts suggest that, while the uniquely high habitat



This 2010 photo provided by biologist S.D. Biju shows a *Frankixalus jerdonii*, belonging to a newly found genus of frogs, seated in the wild. The frogs live high in the forest canopies of northeastern Indian jungles. (SD Biju via AP)

does make them hard to find, the frogs probably remained in obscurity simply because there are so few scientists working in the remote region. (AP)



# Business World

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

### Mt. Matutum gets new business buzz from coffee

**By Carmencita A. Carillo**  
Correspondent

GENERAL SANTOS CITY — Agricultural engineer Fred Fredeluces quit regular employment in 2007 and used his retirement money to partly construct a 100-square-meter processing plant for coffee, harvested in Mt. Matutum by the B'laan indigenous people.

"My father was already involved in Mahintana Foundation, a non-government organization that handles community projects, some of which involved the coffee growers in Mt. Matutum even before Green Tropics was established," said Francis B. Fredeluces, son of Fred and the marketing officer of Green Tropics Coffee Enterprise.

Green Tropics handles the processing and marketing of coffee grown sustainably by 40 B'laan families in a 405-hectare (ha) area they own, as well as those harvested from the droppings of civets (*Paradoxorus philippinensis*), also called *musang* or *bulos* by the B'laan. The civet coffee is popular among the company's foreign buyers.

Francis said Green Tropics started with the local market but has since partnered with a family friend based in Manila for wider distribution.

"A family friend from Manila asked me about possible coffee sources here as he was interested in civet coffee. When they saw the area in Mt. Matutum where the coffee is grown, they decided to partner with us," Francis told *BusinessWorld* in an interview at Green Tropics' processing area in General Santos City.

The company now has a loyal customer base for both its The



CARMENCITA A. CARILLO

**Fred Fredeluces, chief executive officer of Green Tropics Coffee Enterprise, displays civet coffee beans and a sculpture of a civet. After processing, the beans fetch P600 per 60-gram pack.**

Matutum Brew coffee brand made from arabica beans and the more expensive civet coffee — also known as *kopi luwak* — which costs P600 for a 60-gram pack.

"Our coffee is sold at Greenleaf Hotel in General Santos City, but we also have partners in Davao like Coffee for Peace," Francis said.

For civet coffee, about 40 kilograms per month are sent to dealers in Australia, the United States, and some countries in Europe.

In 2011, the company joined the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Food & Beverage Trade Mission at the ASEAN-Japan Center in Tokyo, which Francis said is considered a good

market for unique and organic coffee brands.

However, he continued, the company has yet to get organic certification due to the cost involved and the "complicated process."

He said Green Tropics also aims to expand operations, especially for the export market, but needs better access to financing.

The company received a P2 million from the Foundation for a Sustainable Society (FSSI) when they built the plant, but they now need more capital to purchase beans so the B'laan can expand their growing area to up to 2,000 ha.

October to March is coffee harvest time for the B'laan, who live on the slopes of Mt. Matutum, while the rest of the year is spent on vegetable farming.

#### PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Mayor Honey L. Matti of Polomolok town, located at the foot of Mt. Matutum, said the involvement of the B'laan in the coffee industry and the increasing popularity of civet coffee has improved the lives of the indigenous community and raised their concern, not only for the *musang* but also for the environment.

Philippine Coffee Board, Inc. has identified three main sources of arabica coffee in Mindanao, one of which is the Mt. Matutum Protected Area, parts of which are identified as the ancestral domain of indigenous peoples.

The two other areas are the foot of Mt. Apo, shared by North Cotabato and Davao del Sur provinces, and Mt. Kitanglad in Bukidnon.

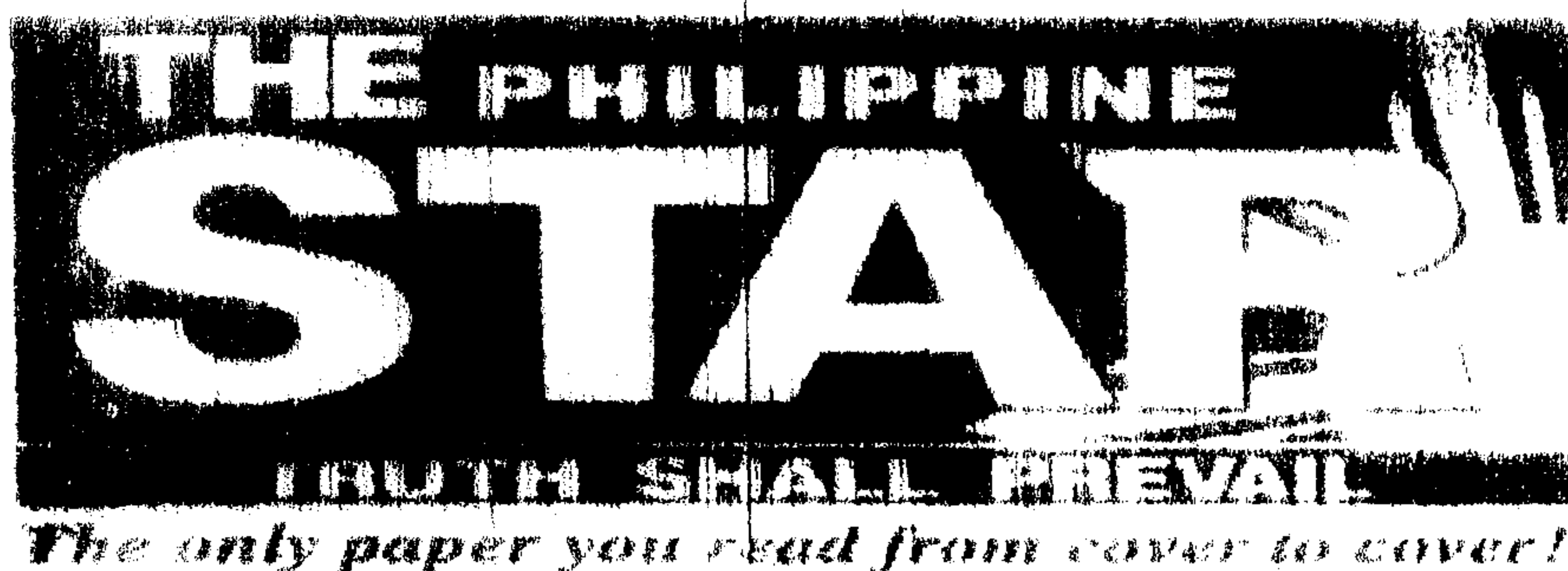
The local government of Polomolok and the Polomolok Water District launched in 2014 the Mt. Matutum Organic Coffee Production Project, aimed at generating income for households in the municipality through the production of organic arabica and robusta coffee, while supporting the Mt. Matutum Watershed Program and National Greening Program.

Ms. Matti said the Mt. Matutum Protected Landscape is faced with the problem of continuous deforestation, as a growing population resorts to destructive farming systems, the girdling of trees, and other harmful practices.

Companies like Green Tropics contribute to the program as they train the indigenous community in sustainable methods and at the same time provide the marketing opportunity for their coffee produce.



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**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**

# Cell-based tests promise respite for lab animals: study

PARIS (AFP) – Scientists in the United States said Tuesday they were developing a faster, more efficient way of gauging the toxicity of chemicals which may reduce the need for animal testing.

Using human cells in Petri dishes in the lab, they tested about 10,000 different types of chemical compounds including pesticides, industrial chemicals, food additives and drugs.

The results were used to build models to "predict" whether the compounds, or combinations of them, may be harmful to humans or the environment when used in new drugs or environmental chemicals.

Toxicity is one of the main reasons that new drugs fail, and it is hoped this library of toxicity data may spot unsafe chemical

compounds at a far earlier phase of research.

"Thousands of chemicals to which humans are exposed have inadequate data on which to predict their potential for toxicological effects," the study authors wrote in the journal *Nature Communications*.

Traditional toxicity tests using animals are expensive and species differences mean they do not always accurately predict a chemical's effect on humans.

They also raise ethical concerns about animal welfare.

The project, dubbed Tox21, is a joint effort involving three US federal agencies: the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

"An important goal of the US

Tox21 program is to use in vitro (Petri dish) data as surrogates for in vivo (live) toxicity to reduce animal testing," study co-author Ruili Huang of the NIH told AFP by email.

But to achieve this, cell tests have to be just as predictive, or more so, of human toxicity as animal tests.

After testing about 10,000 compounds, each in 15 different concentrations and on different cells, the team used their database to build predictive models for new chemical combinations.

They found that their models could predict toxicity for both humans and animals, and may be "a promising alternative to traditional animal toxicology studies."

Further work must be done to validate and improve the models, which Huang said may never completely replace animal testing.

It may, however, allow scientists to prioritize chemicals predicted to be most likely toxic for further tests using traditional methods, and so "significantly reduce the amount of animal tests required," he said.

Animal activists have welcomed the research.

"To understand more about human development and human diseases, the world's most forward-thinking scientists are developing and implementing methods that supersede the crude use of animals," Julia Baines, science policy advisor of the organization People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) said.

"PETA welcomes the wealth of advanced non-animal research methodologies that are creating a brighter future for animals and human health."



PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

(P1)

# Serious corruption problem plagues PHIL, TI survey says

By CAI U. ORDINARIO & CATHERINE N. PILLAS

**C**ORRUPTION remains a serious problem in the Philippines, according to the latest Transparency International's (TI) Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), which showed that the country's ranking in 2015 dropped to 95th from 85th in 2014.

CPI 2015 revealed that the country's public sector garnered a score of 38 from experts and institutions tapped by TI. The international non-governmental organization said countries that obtained a score of less than 50 have "serious corruption problem."

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People living in a country with a serious corruption problem



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A broader look at today's business

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### Corruption. . .

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"Not one of the 168 countries assessed in the 2015 index [got] a perfect score and two-thirds [scored] below 50, on a scale from 0 [highly corrupt] to 100 [very clean]. More than 6 billion people live in a country with a serious corruption problem," TI's report read.

CPI 2015 showed that the Philippines was among the two-thirds of 168 countries who got a score of below 50. The country is also tied in 95th place with three other countries—Mexico, Mali and Armenia.

Among its Asean-5 counterparts, the Philippines was second to the last in terms of ranking and score. Singapore led Asean-5, ranking 8th globally with a score of 85.

In Asean, Malaysia ranked 54th overall with a score of 50, while Thailand was tied in 76th place with Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, India and Tunisia with a score of 38.

Meanwhile, Indonesia ranked 88th with a score of 36 out of 100. Six other countries obtained the same score and ranking—Albania, Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Peru and Suriname.

Asia-Pacific countries averaged 48 out of 100, with New Zealand garnering the highest score at 88. North Korea was the laggard in the region, as it ranked 167th with a score of 8.

"This year's poor results demand that [Asia-Pacific] leaders revisit the genuineness of their efforts and propel the region beyond stagnation. They must fulfill promises, and ensure efforts aren't undermined in practice," the report read.

Guillermo Luz, National Competitiveness Council private sector chairman, said the Philippines's ranking is not "any better or worse" than the three other countries which also garnered a score of 35 and ranked 95th.

"The corruption index is [based] on 12 different surveys and it's not the same for all countries. Some of the reports take place over a two-year span. There's no single instrument for the index," Luz said.

The Philippines is targeting to improve its ranking and join the top-third of countries in the Corruption Perceptions Index for 2016. "We have our work cut out for us. We have to work very hard on achieving that goal."

Malacañang, for its part, said the Aquino administration has remained faithful to its *Daang Matuwid* (straight path) mantra.

"The government continues to strengthen public institutions so that civil servants imbibe the ethos of transparency and public accountability," Communications Secretary Herminio B. Coloma Jr. said.

Overall, Denmark took the top spot for the second straight year in CPI 2015, while North Korea and Somalia

were the worst performers, scoring just 8 points each. CPI 2015 ranked 168 countries while the 2014 edition involved 175 countries.

TI said top performers share key characteristics such as high levels of press freedom; access to budget information so the public knows where money comes from and how it is spent; and high levels of integrity among people in power.

It added that these leading countries have judiciaries that don't differentiate between rich and poor and are truly independent from other parts of the government.

The CPI is based on expert opinions of public sector corruption. Countries' scores can be helped by open government where the public can hold leaders to account, while a poor score is a sign of prevalent bribery, lack of punishment for corruption and public institutions that don't respond to citizens' needs.

**With a report from Dave Cagahastian**