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29 JAN 2016

Friday

DENR

IN THE NEWS



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PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

Addressing air pollution from mobile sources

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Environmental Management Bureau in a statement said that motor vehicles emit 80% of air pollution while non-mobile or stationary sources such as factories and open burning fill in the remaining 20%.

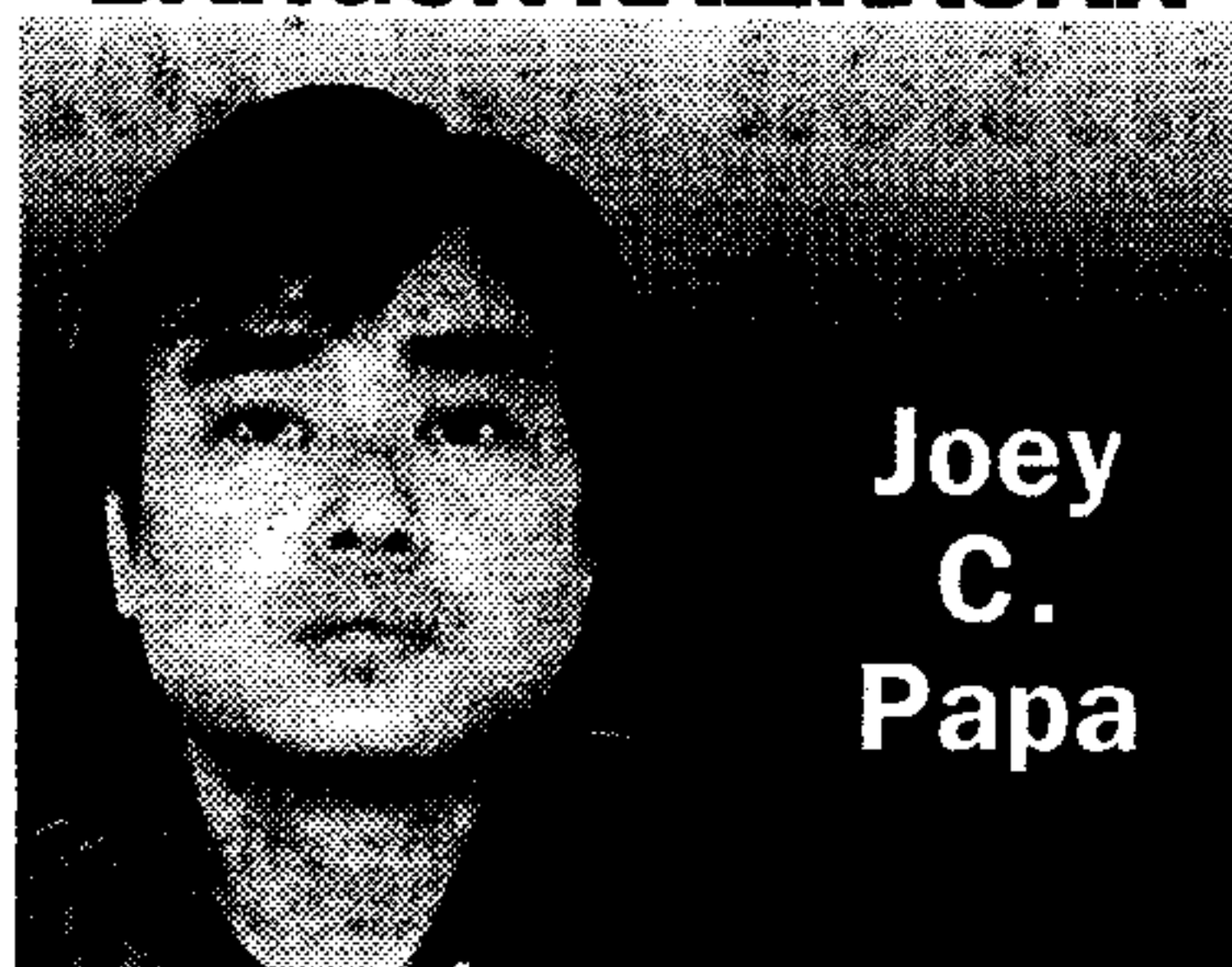
Reducing air pollution is one of the major commitments offered by DENR Secretary Ramon Paje under the Aquino administration.

Confirming that "air pollution coming from vehicular emissions are believed to be the major cause of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, and a major contributor to global warming and climate change," DENR-EMB officials led by Assistant Secretary Juan Miguel Cuna sought the cooperation of the transport sector in improving air quality in a meeting with major transport group leaders.

In addition to a list of strategies that were agreed upon, to reduce pollution especially in Metro Manila, a Memorandum of Agreement was also signed for free emission testing of public utility jeepneys or PUJs right in their garages or terminals.

The signatories, together with the DENR officials, were the Liga ng Transportasyon at Operators sa Pilipinas (LTOP), Alliance of Concerned Transport Organizations (ACTO), Federation of Jeepney Operators and Drivers Association of

BANGON KALIKASAN



Joey
C.
Papa

the Philippines (FEDJODAP), and Pangkalahatang Sanggunian Manila and Suburbs Drivers Association Nationwide (PASANG-MASDA).

"The purpose is not to apprehend public utility vehicles but to help our transport groups address their emissions and ensure that their vehicles comply with the law before they drive around major thoroughfares," Cuna explained.

A resolution was also signed to support the establishment and operation of air quality information systems in the National Capital Region, as well as the "non-contact apprehension of smoke belchers, closure of 'non-appearance' emission testing centers, and carbon sequestration through the government's National Greening Program."

Moreover, I recall that Secretary Paje issued in March last year a directive for the use of Euro 4 fuel

which has less sulfur content than Euro 4.

How about less of non-fossil fuel sources, with more of electric vehicles, and those powered by biodiesel, ethanol, hydrogen, for example? At this point when the climate challenge is really intensifying, much more is needed and sooner, to be done to convert to alternative sources.

Above all, how can the problem of excessive numbers of vehicles plying Metro Manila be addressed, causing demonic traffic? This really demands "drastic, dramatic, significant" solutions, as the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change called for almost 10 years ago, but movement towards that direction seems as turtle-paced if not as stationary as the traffic. Unfortunately, even as the mobile sources are forced to stop, emissions continue.

DENR needs all the help it can get, not just from the transport groups. Air pollution is everybody's problem.

Kailangang magsama-sama ang lahat ng sektor upang lutasin ang "demonyong trapik" na kamakailan lang ay inilarawan sa akin sa gano'ng mga salita ng isang environmentalist na araw-araw na "nakukulong" sa kalsadang "demonyong trapik." Habang lumalala ang "demonyong trapik" lumulubha naman ang "demonyong usok-lasong polusyon." (bangonkalikasan@yahoo.com).

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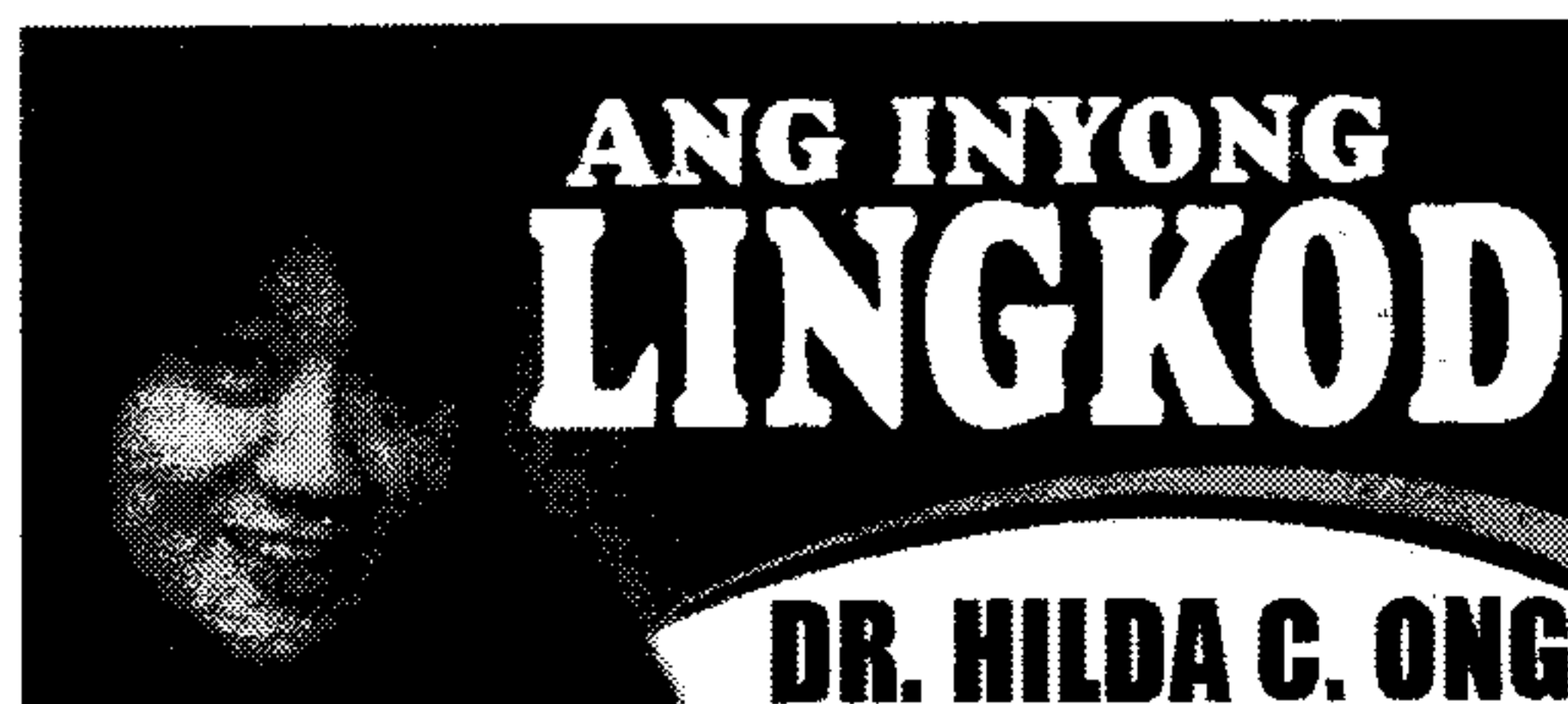
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AYON kay Executive Director Seville D. David, Jr., ang proyektong "Establishment of an Integrated 3D Geographical Information System-based Water Resources Management System in the Province of Pampanga and Bulacan" o mas kilala bilang "Water Philippines GIS Project" ang ipinagkaloob ng Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) sa National Water Resources Board (NWRB).

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.

Tamang-tama ang mga datus na makukuha buhat sa Data Center lalo pa't mabuting mamatyagan ng NWRB at iba pang ahensiyang kasama sa Technical Working Group ng Angat Reservoir Operations and Management ang kundisyon ng nasabing water reservoir.

Sa kabuuan, bukod sa nabanggit na inyong lingkod na kabutihang dulot ng



ANG INYONG LINGKOD

DR. HILDA C. ONG

TAMANG DATUS MAKUKUHA SA NWRB - KOICA DATA CENTER

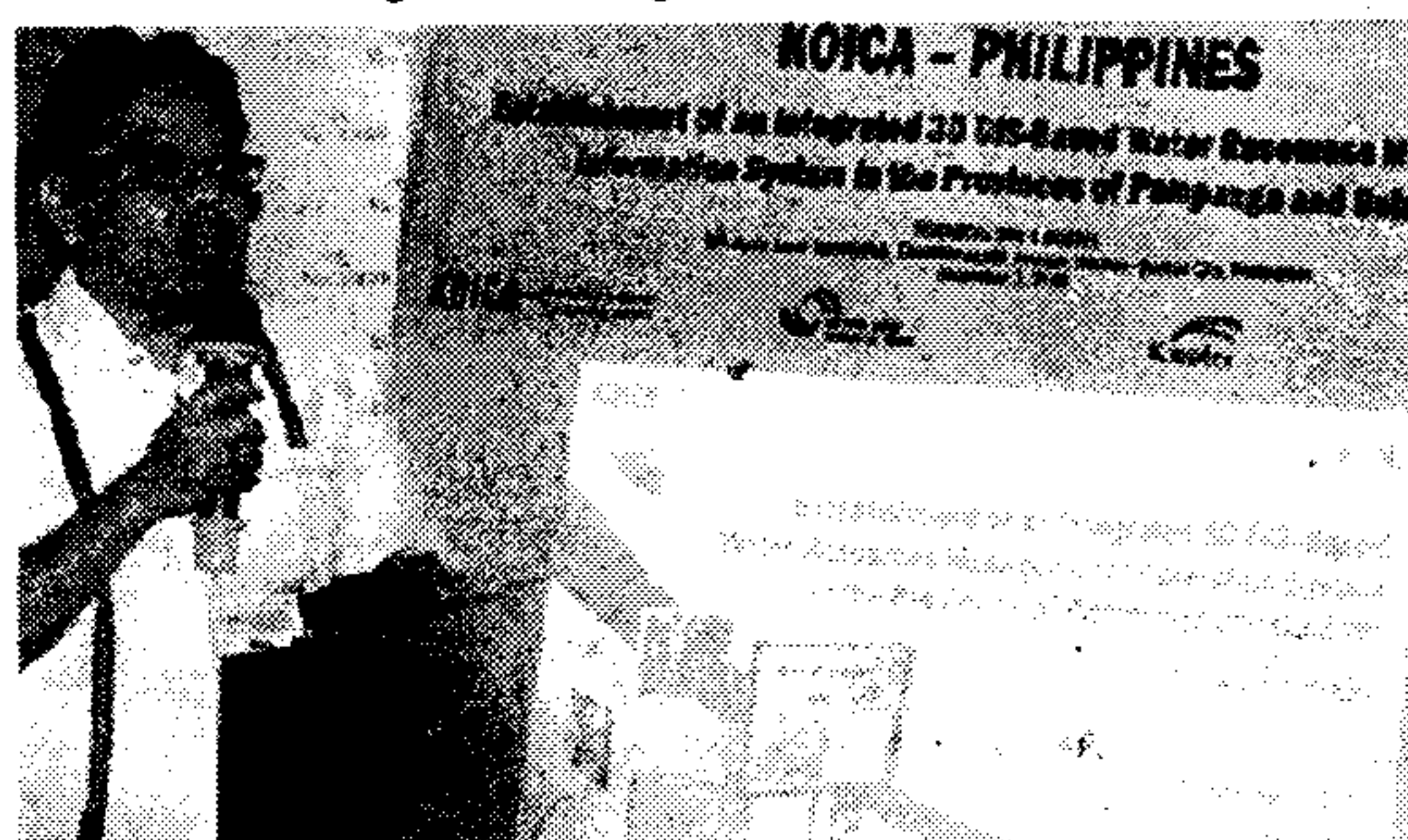
proyekto, malaki rin ang maitutulong nito sa automation ng water permitting system hindi lamang sa mga lugar kung saan isinagawa ang pag-aaral kundi sa buong bansa. Ipinaliwanag ni ED David na kahit saang bahagi ng bansa ay pwede nang makapag-apply ng water permit sa pamamagitan ng pagbisita sa website ng NWRB, ang www.nwr.gov.ph.

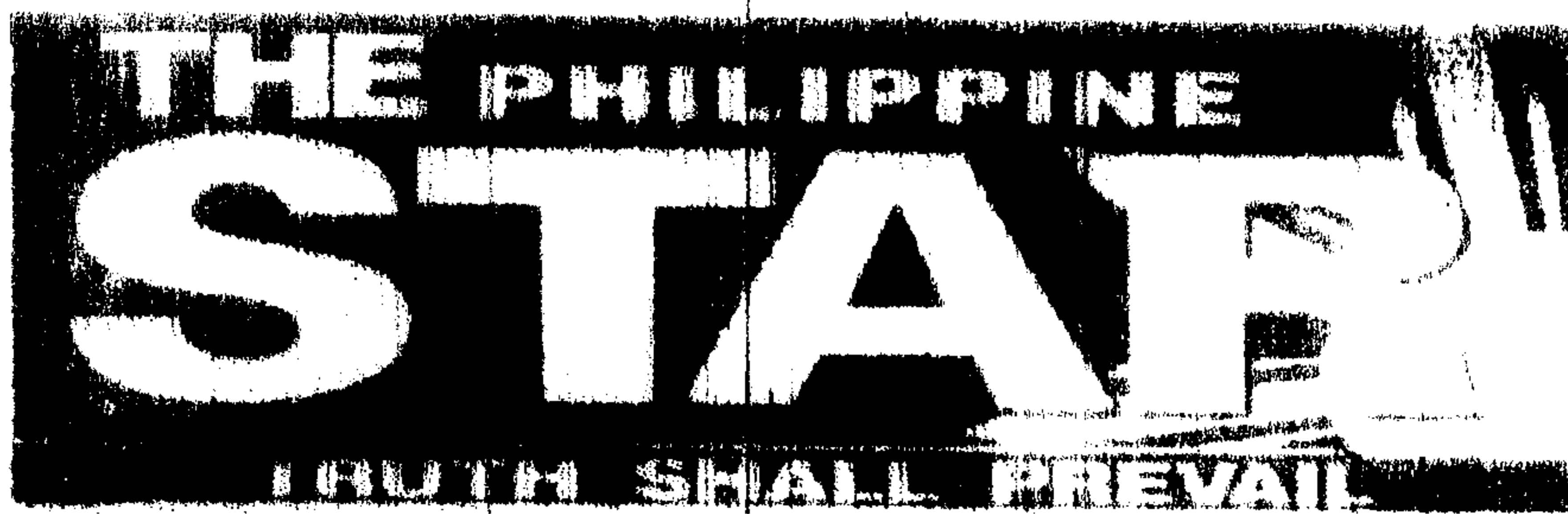
Malaking tulong din sa PAGASA upang dagliang matukoy ang mga maaapektuhang lugar sa mga lalawigan ng Pampanga at Bulacan sakaling umapaw at kinakailangang maglabas ng

tubig mula sa Ipo, Bustos, at Angat dams sa panahon ng matinding pag-ulan.

Sabi nga ni Prof. Myung-hee Jo, chief executive officer ng GEO C&I, "application and use of the project is more important than its construction." Magandang balita rin na ipagpapatuloy nila ang pagbibigay ng human capacity training hanggang sa tulu-yan nang maging eksperto ang mga tauhan ng NWRB at iba pang ahensiya.

Sana rin daw ay maisagawa ang kahalintulad na proyekto sa ibang bahagi ng bansa.





The only paper you read from cover to cover!

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Support pours in to save Philippine Eagle

DAVAO CITY – The Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) has received more donations for the protection and conservation of the Philippine Eagle.

A P1-million donation from the Marco Polo Hotels was turned over to the foundation in ceremonies recently held at the Marco Polo Hotel here.

Marco Polo Hotels, through its president-designate Jennifer Cronin, earlier handed over a check of P750,000 to PEF chairman Carlos Dominguez.

An additional P250,000 was raised during a fashion show held at the hotel.

Dominguez stressed the importance of saving the

Philippine Eagle, whose population is down to less than 500 pairs, including those in the forests of Mindanao, Samar, Leyte and the Cordilleras.

Dominguez said the PEF has been involved in a breeding program at its center in Barangay Malagos. He said 26 Philippine Eagles have

been bred and hatched in captivity since 1992.

"Beyond breeding eagles in captivity, the PEF has invested in protecting the species in the wild, restoring forests and working to improve the lives of indigenous cultural communities who share these forests with the eagles," he said.

"With so much yet to do, we invite everyone to join us in this noble endeavor to save our national heritage – the great Philippine Eagle," he added.

Dominguez said shooting and trapping as well as deforestation are the main threats to the survival of the Philippine Eagle.

– Edith Regalado

MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICES

Palawan solon rues move to delist 5 protected areas

By BEN R. ROSARIO

Palawan Rep. Douglas Hagedorn decried yesterday a move in the House of Representatives to exclude five

crucial locations, including the world heritage site Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park in his home province from the list of protected areas in the country. Hagedorn, who is vice chairman

of the House Committees on Natural Resources and on Ecology, chided his House colleagues for allegedly attempting to railroad the passage of House Bill 6328 that contained amendments that deleted the five crucial

Palawan areas from the list of protected areas. In last Wednesday's deliberation on the measure, Las Pinas Rep. Mark Villar proposed amendments that would delete certain parts of the proposed measure without mentioning the exact provisions, recounted Hagedorn. Hagedorn immediately rose to question Villar proposed amendment. It was only at this point that he realized that the Las Pinas lawmaker was proposing to strike off the five Palawan natural sites from the list of protected areas identified in the bill. The four other sites are El Nido Managed Resource

Protected Area, Malampaya Sound Protected Landscape and Seascape, Mt. Matalinghaga Protected Landscape and the Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary. "He was proposing the deletion of certain provisions from the bill without reading them. He was simply referring to them by their line numbers, so I got suspicious," Hagedorn said. The Palawan solon decried the move as a "shameless" act that apparently had the blessings of key officials of the provincial government.

"They have lost any respect for the democratic process. They disregarded the final report of the Committee on Natural Resources which sided with the commitment and principles of Palaweños and prominent environmentalists to maintain the protected areas of Palawan," Hagedorn said.

A short recess ensued as Villar and other lawmakers tried to pacify Hagedorn assuring him that the five Palawan areas would be restored in the measure once the bicameral committee is convened, to which the Palawan solon protested.

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Solons binira sa E-Nipas

Binatikos kahapon ni Palawan Rep. Douglas Hagedorn ang kanyang mga kasamahan sa House of Representatives dahil sa pagtatangka umanong idiskaril ang pagpapatibay ng Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (E-NIPAS) Bill noong Miyerkules ng gabi at hindi isinama ang limang krusyal na lugar sa Palawan.

Habang abala ang mga mambabatas sa pagsusug sa House Bill 6328, entitled "An Act Enhancing the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS), Providing for its Management and for the Purpose of the Act

No. 7586 as Amended" ay napansin ni Hagedorn na merong nagpanukalang tanggalin sa panukala ang ilang probisyon nito.

Nang hilingin ni Hagedorn na basahin ang pinatatanggal na probisyon, saka niya napagtanto na pinapaalis sa listahan ng mga protektadong lugar sa bansa ang limang lugar sa Palawan tulad ng El Nido Managed Resource Protected Area, Malampaya Sound Protected Landscape and Seascape, Mt. Matalin-haga Protected Landscape, Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park at Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary.

Ipinaliwanag ng ibang

mambabatas na ibabalik sa bill ang limang lugar kapag pinulong na ang bicameral committee pero tinutulan ito ni Hagedorn. "Bakit sila tatanggalin kung ibabalik din sa bicam version," tanong niya.

Bagaman hindi kinukumpirma ni Hagedorn kung merong mga opisyal ng Palawan na naglo-lobby para maalisan ang naturang mga lugar, sinabi naman ni environmental lawyer Ipat Luna ng Environmental Legal Assistance Center Inc. (ELACI) na ang mga ito ay isang grupo ng mga opisyal ng lalawigan na pinangunahan ng gobernador na merong stake sa industriya ng pagmimina. (*Butch Quejada*)



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PROBINSIYA

Sombrero Turtle, Sea Eagle Sanctuary bilang protected areas

Naghain ng panukala si Masbate 1st District Rep. Maria Vida E. Bravo na humihiling sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at sa Protected Area Superintendent Office (PASu), sa ilalim ng superbisyon ng Protected Area Management Board (PAMB), na maghanda ng 25-taong management plan upang maideklara ang Sombrero Turtle at Sea Eagle Sanctuary bilang protected area at critical habitat.

"It is incumbent upon Congress to declare the Sombrero Turtle and Sea Eagle Island Sanctuary as Protected Area and Critical Habitat in order to safeguard its ecological significance and protect the diminishing pollution of the Hawksbill Turtles (*Eretmochelys Imbricate*) and Green Sea Turtles (*Chelonia Mydas*)," ayon kay Bravo.

Aniya, ang Sombrero Turtle and Sea Eagle Island Wildlife Sanctuary and Critical Habitat ay sumasaklaw sa lahat ng lupain at tubig sa Barangay Iniwaran, San Pascual, Masbate.

Bert de Guzman

THE EXPONENTIAL OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
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Mt. Pulag records 3° Celsius, cold spell to prevail until 2nd week of February

BAGUIO CITY — Mt. Pulag, the country's second highest peak located in Kabayan, Benguet, dipped to 3 ° Celsius, beating the record in 2016 of 10.8 ° Celsius, said the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA)-Cordillera.

Danny Galati, of PAGASA-Cordillera admitted that they have difficulty establishing temperature patterns in the region, where low temperatures are recorded during the season.

He said that in the first three weeks of January, they recorded a temperature as high as 25° Celsius

but this dropped to 11.8° Celsius on Sunday.

He added that the low temperature is expected to be experienced until the second week of February, which will be followed by the onset of the heat brought about by the El Niño phenomenon until April. (Zaldy Comanda)

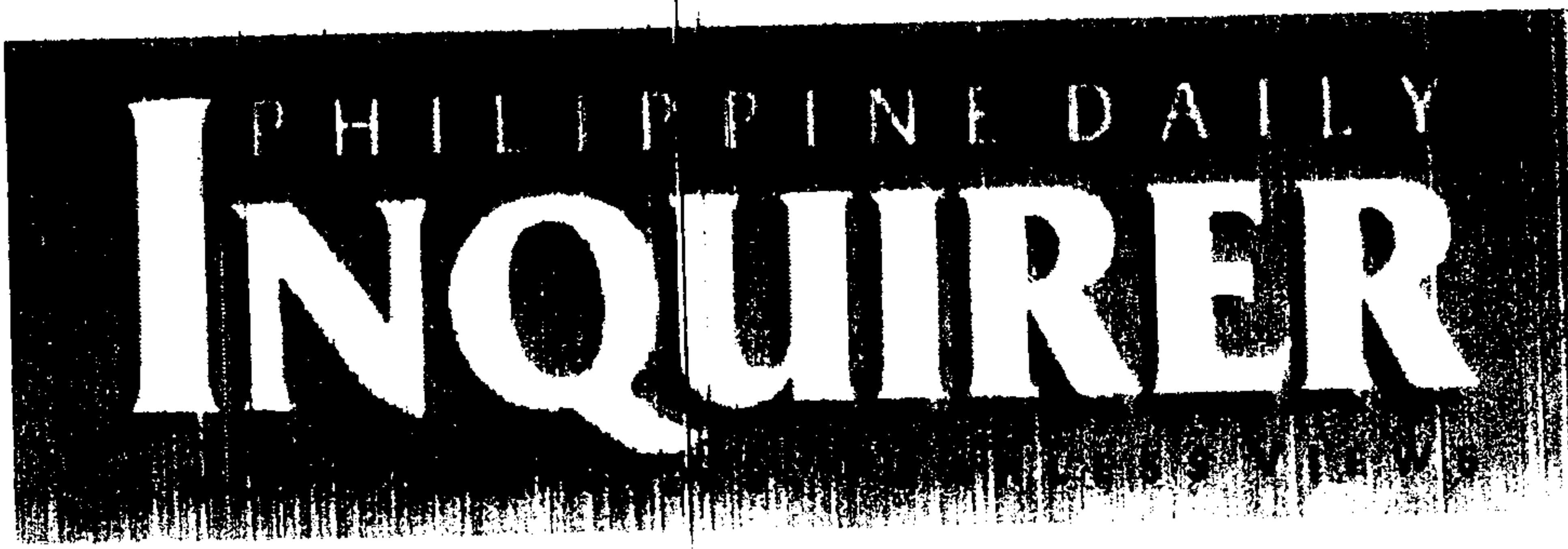
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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Tariff cuts on environment-friendly goods OKd

By Amy R. Remo

MEMBER economies of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) have firmed up their commitments to cut tariffs on environmental goods, a move seen to promote trade worth \$500 billion globally.

The tariff reduction is expected to unlock new sources of economic growth, while giving impetus to the Environmental Goods Agreement negotiations in the World Trade Organization which are set to continue this year.

According to the Apec Committee on Trade and Investment, member economies including the Philippines have published the implementation schedule for the tariff cuts covering 54 environment-friendly products.

The conclusion of this Apec initiative, the first multilateral tariff-cutting arrangement in 20 years, will help lower the cost of environmental products such as solar panels, wind turbines and air pollution control equipment. Along with emerging efforts in Apec to support service providers that use clean technologies, the tariff reductions will help the region meet

its target of doubling its renewable energy capacity by 2030 and reducing energy intensity by 45 percent by 2035.

"Each Apec economy has put forward an implementation plan detailing the progress of their work to cut tariffs on the region's list of 54 environmental goods," Marie Sherylyn D. Aquia, the new chair of the Apec, was quoted in the statement as saying.

"The reduction of tariffs under the Apec environmental goods initiative is an important step forward for trade and green growth. Transparent, easy-to-access information on tariff cuts ... will help businesses take advantage of new trade opportunities while promoting clean, efficient energy use and lower carbon emissions in the region," Aquia said.

The pursuit of an Apec environmental goods tariff reduction arrangement was set in motion in a declaration issued at the conclusion of the Apec Economic Leaders' Meeting hosted by the United States in Honolulu in 2011. The list of 54 environmental goods was endorsed in 2012 when Russia hosted the the meeting in Vladi-

vostok.

The Philippine government, for its part, issued in June last year an executive order to modify the tariff rates on certain environmental goods.

President Aquino approved Executive Order (EO) 185, which stated that certain environmental goods would be subject to the Most Favored Nation (MFN) rate of 5 percent.

The Manila Times

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

APEC cuts tariffs on environmental goods

BY VOLTAIRE PALAÑA
REPORTER

THE 21-member Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) group published on Thursday details of the implementation of tariff cuts on 54 environment-friendly goods, which are expected to boost trade and support the fight against climate change.

In their first multilateral tariff-cut deal in 20 years, APEC members are moving to reduce tariffs to five percent or less on certain goods like solar panels, wind turbines, and air pollution control equipment.

The tariff cut is in line with global talks under the World Trade Organization.

Along with efforts to support service providers that use clean technologies, the tariff reductions position the region to meet its target of doubling renewable energy by 2030 and reducing energy intensity by 45 percent by 2035.

In its official website, the APEC said the tariff reductions on its list of environmental goods would promote intra-regional trade worth around \$300 billion and

global trade worth \$500 billion.

This, the group said, would unlock new sources of economic growth while giving impetus to the Environmental Goods Agreement talks under WTO, which are set to continue this year.

"Each APEC economy has put forward an implementation plan detailing the progress of their work to cut tariffs on the region's list of 54 environmental goods," said Marie Sherylyn Aquia, the new Chair of the APEC Committee on Trade and Investment, the coordinating body for the initiative.

"The reduction of tariffs under the APEC environmental goods initiative is an important step forward for trade and green growth," Aquia explained. "Transparent,

easy-to-access information on tariff cuts within the sector made available by APEC economies will help businesses take advantage of new trade opportunities while promoting clean, efficient energy use, and lower carbon emissions in the region."

Half of the top ten global exporters of environmental goods and 12 of the top 30 are APEC economies, according to the International Trade Centre.

The total market for environmental goods and services is expected to double to \$2 trillion within five years, fueled by increasing global energy consumption, demand for greater efficiency, and environmental regulation, the APEC said.

The group added that the progress of implementation work and next steps to further develop the environmental sector would be points of discussion when the region's officials meet in Lima on February 20 to March 4 to open Peru's year as chair of APEC this year.

For the Philippines, Most Favored Nation (MFN) tariffs of products included in the APEC Environmental Goods Initiative are at 5 percent or below except for

six tariff lines whose tariffs are to be reduced to 5 percent subject to the issuance of the implementing Executive Order by the President.

This process also requires the Philippine Tariff Commission (PTC) to hold public consultations and conduct investigations on petitions for tariff modification.

The PTC then submits the results of the consultations and its recommendations to the National Economic and Development Authority and an inter-agency committee, for deliberation.

Upon approval of the NEDA Board, which makes the final decision, the Tariff Commission prepares the EO to be signed by the President.

In details of implementation submitted by the Philippines, among the environmental products covered by the APEC tariff-cut deal are: flooring panels, parts of vapor-generating boilers, condensers for vapor power units, parts of steam or other vapor turbines, parts of industrial furnaces or ovens including non-electric incinerators, instantaneous or storage water, machinery for liquefying air or other gases, and filtering or purifying machinery for liquids.

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Bagong kagawaran na tututok sa climate change, itatag

Inirekomenda ni Pasig City Rep. Roman Romulo na ikunsidera 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 advo-

cating 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.

Iginiit nito na ang bagong kagawaran ay maaaring mag-absorb sa mga tungkulin gayundin sa mga kawani ng iba pang ahensya gaya ng NDRRMC at Climate Change Commission o maging ang PAGASA at Phivolcs. (Aries Cano)

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

More Pinoys have water, but many still lack toilets

By Jocelyn R. Uy

ABOUT 92 million Filipinos have access to improved water resources but at least 26 percent of the population still do not have clean and safe toilet facilities, according to the Department of Health (DOH).

Citing the 2015 Joint Monitoring Program of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef), the DOH yesterday reported that the Philippines had achieved its Millennium Development Goal on safe water and progressed toward meeting the sanitation target at 83 percent.

The report showed the country had managed to narrow the gap in access to safer sources of drinking water between the richest and poorest in rural areas, but greater disparity remained between the richest and poorest quintiles for sanitation.

Only 74 percent of the population have their own toilet facilities, while 26 percent, or roughly 26 million, still use unimproved facilities like buckets and open-pit latrines or do not have their own toilet facilities, of which seven million still defecate in the open—in fields, forests, bushes, bodies of water and other open spaces.

Health Secretary Janette Garin said the figures included victims of calamities on relocation or in evacuation centers.

To address the problem and continue to improve sanitation in Filipino households, particularly in the rural areas, the DOH yesterday launched the first National Sanitation Learning Exchange in partnership with the WHO and Unicef and the World Bank's Water and Sanitation Program.

"Sanitation problems and challenges continue to pervade the country. Some of these problems are open defecation, lack of appropriate sanitation facilities and improper hygiene behaviors, which all have a direct or indirect impact on health," said the DOH.

Poor sanitation often leads to contamination of water sources, contributing to incidences of deadly water-borne diseases such as diarrhea, cholera and typhoid fever and other illnesses like intestinal worm infection and malnutrition.

"We believe this advocacy can be strengthened through an aggressive campaign by the national government, local government units and with the support of our developmental partners, the private sector," said Garin in a statement from Geneva.

She said the public and private sectors must "create a demand" for sanitation and strengthen the supply and market for sanitation products and services and empower institutions to make them more accountable in the delivery of water, sanitation and hygiene (Wash) services.

Six years ago, the DOH adopted the National Sustainable Sanitation Plan, aiming to reach 9.5 million Filipinos living in unsanitary conditions. Latest data from the 2012 Family Income and Expenditure Survey showed this number had been slashed by roughly three million.

Garin yesterday said the DOH and its sanitation partners were seeing progress on the part of provincial and municipal governments in implementing sanitation programs in the last three years.

She noted that local governments passed ordinances, created technical working groups, crafted Wash plans and pioneered in innovative ways to address poor sanitation conditions in their areas.

The DOH also named yesterday the first 11 towns in the country to achieve "zero open defecation" status under the Zero Open Defecation Program.

These were Malungon, Sarangani; Buenavista, Quezon; President Roxas, North Cotabato; Arakan, North Cotabato; Agdangan, Quezon; Monreal, Masbate; Mercedes, Eastern Samar; and Mayorga, La Paz, Tunga and Pastrana towns in Leyte.

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Zambo cloud-seeding ops set to cushion dry spell



EL NIÑO'S SCOURGE - Withered flowering plants along a Davao City road are doused with water as the effects of the El Niño phenomenon has gripped large parts of Mindanao, affecting water supply and farm productivity. (Keith Saeonco)

By NONOY E. LACSON

ZAMBOANGA, CITY - The Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) is set to conduct cloud-seeding operations to address the ongoing dry spell in the City.

City Agriculturist Diosdado Palacat said the cloud-seeding operations are set to commence on February 15 and all costs and expenses for the operation will be shouldered by the state weather bureau.

Palacat said that data reaching his office indicated that agricultural

damage due to El Niño has reached ₱12.98 million, affecting 779 farmers and 14,903.84 metric tons of rice, corn, and assorted vegetables.

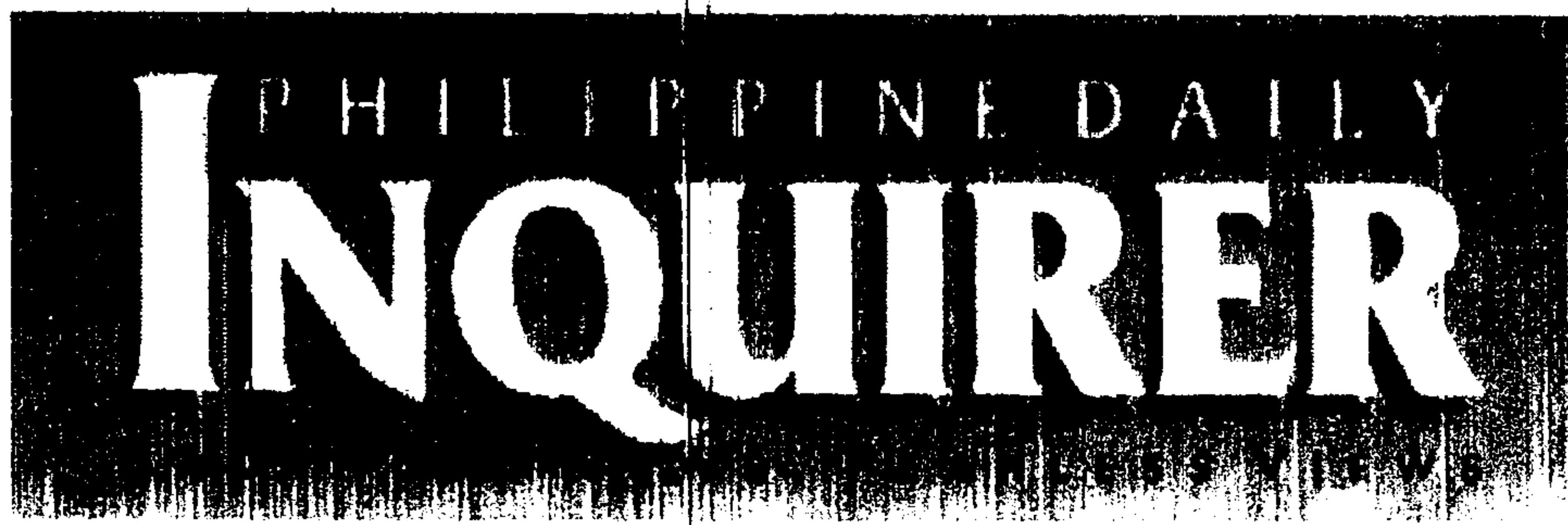
The damage covers a total of 716.07 hectares - of which only an estimated 43.79 hectares are expected to have a chance of recovery, Palacat said.

Palacat said the City Agriculturist Office (OCA) is considering the proposal of a German company based in Cagayan de Oro, which has expressed a willingness to donate solar water pumps to affected farmers in this city.

The ongoing dry spell has resulted in the implementation of a water rationing scheme at a critical level by the Zamboanga City Water District (ZCWD).

The ZCWD likewise forecasts an extended period of rationing with the decreasing water level and lack of rainfall to replenish the City's rivers.

The city has been placed under a state of calamity earlier this month through a City Council resolution based on the recommendation of the City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council.



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Cloud seeding plan worries veggie farmers

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Vegetable farmers here urged authorities to drop plans to seed clouds to deal with a drought that has dried up sources of water and is killing agriculture, saying the operation could actually do more harm than good.

Sheila Belen Covarrubias, city information officer, earlier said that cloud seeding operations were set to start on Feb. 15 at the behest of the city government, to help address the effects of the dry spell, one of the most common effects of the El Niño phenomenon.

"It will be very costly," Covarrubias said.

But Annaliza Pabayos, a vegetable farmer in Barangay San Roque, said that in the past, cloud seeding killed vegetables and she did not want a repeat of that.

"I prefer to fetch water from the river to my field," Pabayos said, narrating how her vegetables wilted last year and the previous years due to cloud seeding-induced rains.

Celestiano Ahamad, a farm caretaker in Barangay Dita, agreed with Pabayos.

"Cloud seeding dries up the leaves of corn, cassavas and sweet potatoes," Ahamad said.

Instead of spending for cloud seeding operations, he said the government should allocate fuel to farmers so they can use their water pumps to draw water from the rivers.

Maribel Enriquez, chief meteorologist of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration here, said cloud seeding, indeed, increases the salt con-

centration in rain.

"If (cloud seeding-induced) rainwater falls on farms and through osmosis, the leaves will wither," Enriquez said.

She said the problem could be avoided if rainwater from cloud seeding operations goes directly to water reservoirs or rivers because the unwanted salt could be eliminated by natural filtration processes.

In cloud seeding, chemicals like silver iodide and potassium iodide, which are all forms of salt, are used to induce rains.

Diosdado Palacat, the city agriculturist, said cloud seeding could still save some 49 out of 716 hectares of farms which had survived the onslaught of the prolonged dry spell.

Leonardo Ray Vasquez, the general manager of the Zamboanga City Water District (ZCWD), also agreed that cloud seeding could be harmful to farms.

Vasquez, however, said cloud seeding is needed to boost the city's water supply.

"Cloud seeding is not a sure hit due to wind movement but we have to fill the dam," he said.

ZCWD has resorted to water rationing for its 72,000 customers as the water level at the Pasonanca River, its main source, dropped below normal operating levels.

From 74.20 meters in December, the water level at the dam had gone down to "below 74 meters," according to Vasquez.

"A few weeks ago, we imposed a 12-hour rationing. Now it's seven to eight hours only. It's getting worse by the day," he said. *Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*

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EDITORIAL

BIKTIMA NG EL NIÑO TULUNGAN

SA ilang bahagi ng Mindanao gaya ng Cotabato at Zamboanga, kitang-kita na kung gaano nananalasa ang El Nino.

Libong ektaryang palayan at maisan na ang pinatuyo ng El Niño hanggang sa magkandamatay-matay ang mga palay at mais.

May mga ulat na ring sinisira ng El Nino ang mga malalawak na tubuhan sa Kabisayaan, lalo na sa isla ng Negros na kung tutuusin ay sento ng produksyon ng asukal sa buong bansa.

Bagama't malakas ang malamig na amihan ngayon, kinakabahan na rin ang mga magpapalay at magmamais sa katimugang Luzon.

Nangangamba silang muli nilang maranasan ang kawalan ng ani at magkandalugi-lugi hanggang sa umabot sa matinding kahirapan at gutom ang bunga ng El Nino gaya nang maganap ang El Nino noong mga taong 1977-78.

Pero hindi lang kakapusan ng pagkaing butil ang nakataya o inaambahan para sirain ng El Nino at tag-init.

Nariryan din ang mga ulam gaya ng galing sa mga palaisdaan, gulayan at hayupan.

May mga ulat nang fishkill sa Pangasinan, halimbawa, habang marami na ring gulay ang sira sa mga bitak-bitak na mga lupain.

Mayroon na ring mga pagkakasakit at peste sa mga manok at baboy dahil sa init ng panahon.

May masamang epekto ito sa pangangalakal at transportasyon at pagkalugi rin ng mga ito ang pinangangambahan.

Iba pa ang mga maraming sunog sa mga kabahayan at kabundukan at pagkakaroon ng mga brown-out at blackout dahil sa kakulangan ng kuryente sa paghina ng mga hydro power plant o kuryenteng nililikha ng mga dam.

Ano-ano na ang mga ginagawa ng pamahalaan upang masagip sa krisis at matulungang lumaban sa krisis ang mga magiging biktima ng El Nino?

29 JAN 2016

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