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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Rafflesia consueloae: The newest and smallest Rafflesia flower di

In March 2011, while walking through a heavily denuded rain forest in the Pantabangan-Carrangalan watershed in Nueva Ecija, a botanist researcher accidentally tripped over a mass of rotting leaves. When he turned back to observe, he noticed an unusual red-orange bloom, which is a typical *Rafflesia* species, but strangely small, compared to its large-flowered relatives. This caused a frantic spreading of the news in the local botanical world and prompted the immediate monitoring for the new *Rafflesia* species. The research team, which is part of a long-term biodiversity conservation and monitoring program at the Pantabangan-Carrangalan Watershed, then installed motion-activated camera to observe the life cycle of the newly discovered *Rafflesia* species.

The *Rafflesia*, commonly known as "corpse flower" due to its distinctive foul floral scent that is similar to that of a rotting corpse, usually attracts its insect pollinator, the carrion fly. The genus contains approximately 23 species, with a few unnamed species, all found in southeastern Asia, in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines. The *Rafflesia* is a parasitic plant that usually infects and obtains its water and nourishment from the root of a forest vine, the *Tetrastigma*. The *Rafflesia* is an icon of plant conservation efforts, like that of the Panda bear in animal conservation. This plant group has one of the world's largest flower, the *Rafflesia arnoldii*, which measures three feet wide, weighing up to 10 kilograms of rotting flesh.

The newly discovered *Rafflesia*



NORBY BAUTISTA



afflesia consueloae, which was named after Consuelo Rufino Lopez, the spouse of industrialist and Conservationist Oscar M. Lopez. It is currently the smallest *Rafflesia* flower discovered. It is 9.6 cm in diameter, about the size of a softball. Jokingly, its discoverers commented, "Thankfully, it smells like coconut." The plant was described and illustrated by John Michael M. Galindon and Perry S. Ong of the University of the Philippines Diliman and Edwino S. Fernando of University of the Philippines Los Baños. The discovery was reported in the journal *PhytoKeys*. It is the 13th *Rafflesia* species discovered in the

Philippines and the 31st species in the world.

As Mr. Perry Ong said in an email, "The discovery of a new species of *Rafflesia* is very important as it shows that just because an area is degraded does not mean it should be written off. Many hidden treasures like the *Rafflesia consueloae* are waiting to be discovered, appreciated and protected."

The plant group has raised curiosity in the botanical world and there are still questions as to their evolution, the way they begin life, how they are associated with their plant host, their pollination, fruit formation and seed dispersal. Most of these plants only

grow in the forest; never in cultivation in the garden. If ever one would want to try to grow them in their backyard, they would also have to grow the *Tetrastigma* vine host together with the seeds of the *Rafflesia*. Truly, they are very interesting and intriguing plants to study.

For us here in the Philippines, to have 13 species of these strange plants is a wonder and a blessing. Our rain forest is certainly amazing! It just goes to show that forests still contain a lot of useful, strange and weird plants that may still be unknown to science. It is therefore our duty to help conserve and protect our forests

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900

MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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ENVIRONMENTAL WARRIORS — A teacher and some pupils at San Fablan East Central II Elementary School in Dagupan City, Pangasinan, have their souvenir photo taken with one of three sea turtles they release yesterday on the Lingayen Gulf. Prior to setting the endangered species of turtles free at the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources-National Integrated Fisheries Technology and Development Center, the students fondly named them, 'Digong,' 'Mar,' and 'Jojo' — after the nicknames of the three male presidential candidates. (Jojo Rinoza)

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UP HIGH '66 SUPPORTS BANTAY PAWIKAN: As part of their 50th year anniversary celebration, members of the UP High Class '66 recently visited the Pawikan Conservation Center in Morong, Bataan to tour the facilities and participate in the release of turtle hatchlings. The activity is part of the support of the class to Bantay Pawikan Inc. in line with helping promote environmental conservation. Class members led by Maline Flores also turned over their class donation to Manolo Ibias, chairman of Bantay Pawikan as part of their advocacy.

BusinessMirror

A broader look at today's business

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ACB eyes closer collaboration with UN heritage site body

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

THE Asean Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) is eyeing to forge closer partnership with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) Heritage Parks Committee to strengthen the Asean Heritage Parks (AHP) Programme.

ACB Executive Director Roberto V. Oliva said a meeting with the UN heritage parks body is in the works to, among others, exchange views to boost the management of AHPs in Southeast Asia. "We are initiating a meeting with Unesco for possible collaboration," Oliva said.

ACB acts as the secretariat of the AHP Program, which essentially aims to aid Asean member-states in the management of protected areas that are considered as biologically important to the region.

"We are hoping to strengthen the management of AHPs, and learn from the Unesco World Heritage Site Program," Oliva added.

The Philippines currently has a total of eight AHPs and six World Heritage Sites.

The Unesco World Heritage Sites include the Baroque Churches of the Philippines, Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park, Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras, Historic Town of Vigan, Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park and Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary.

The eight AHPs are Mount Apo Natural Park, Mount Kitanglad

"We are hoping to strengthen the management of AHPs, and learn from the Unesco World Heritage Site Program."—OLIVA

Range Natural Park, Mount Malindang Range Natural Park and Mount Hamiguitan Wildlife Sanctuary, and Mounts Timpoong-Hibok-Hibok Natural Monument (MTHNM), all in Mindanao; Mounts Iglit-Baco National Park in Occidental Mindoro; Mount Makiling Forest Reserve in Laguna; and Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park in Palawan.

The Unesco heritage site body has been known to be strict in maintaining the status of World Heritage Sites.

A Unesco World Heritage Site can be removed from the list, as a result of failure to conserve or protect and mismanagement or neglect that lead to destruction or degradation, which are essential matters that the ACB hopes to learn from for possible adoption in the AHP Program, Oliva added.

"We are studying if removing an AHP from the list is possible. Pinag-aaralan namin yan and we are hoping to learn from UN," he said.

Meanwhile, Oliva added that the ACB is eyeing to put up AHP markers in all the 37 AHP sites in Southeast Asia.

This, he said, will add prestige to the AHP after having been declared as among the "best of the best" pro-

tected areas in the region.

In the Philippines Environment and Secretary Ramon J.P. Paje had ordered the installation of AHP markers in all eight sites, starting with the MTHNM in Camiguin, the 37th in Southeast Asia and eighth in the Philippines.

The AHP marker for MTHNM was unveiled during its official launching as an AHP on March 16. The ceremony was attended by DENR officials led by Environment Undersecretary for Field Operations Demetrio Ignacio and local government officials led by Camiguin Governor Jurdin Jesus Romualdo. "Secretary Paje wants to put up markers for all AHPs in the Philippines. This is going to happen very soon," he said.

"The environment secretary wants visitors to read the declaration which highlights the importance of biodiversity, [and] to encourage the people to be biodiversity champions," Oliva said.

ACB promotes the sustainable development and management of AHPs in partnership with various stakeholders primarily led by the Protected Area Management Boards.



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Suspensiyon ng DENR official, iginiit

Hiniling ng prosekusyon sa Sandiganbayan First Division na suspendihin ang isang regional director ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at dalawang tauhan nito na kinasuhan dahil sa umano'y pagkakasangkot sa maanomalyang rehabilitation project na nagkakahalaga ng P1 milyon noong 2003.

Isinumite ng prosekusyon ang mosyon na humihiling na suspendihin si DENR Regional Office 1 Director Joel Salvador at dalawang tauhan nito na sina Perlita Mauri at Rolando Reyes, na kinasuhan sa paglabag sa Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act (RA 3019) at Illegal Use of Public Funds.

Pinaalalahanan ng mga state lawyer na nakasaad sa Section 13 ng RA 3019: "Any incumbent public officer against whom any criminal prosecution under a valid information under this Act or under Title 7, Book II of the Revised Penal Code or for any offense involving fraud upon government or public funds or property...is pending in court, shall be suspended from office."

Inakusahan ang tatlo sa umano'y ilegal na paggamit ng pondo ng bayan na nagkakahalaga ng P1,114,771.34, para sa rehabilitasyon ng Regional Directors' Office and Environmental Information Center noong 2003.

Sinabi ng Office of the Ombudsman na nakasaad sa batas na tanging sa pagpapatupad ng Ecological Waste Management Project at maintenance and operating expense lamang maaaring gastusin ang naturang pondo.

Bukod dito, ipinamalas din ni Salvador ang kanyang pagpabor sa dalawang kontratista nang ipagkaloob niya ang kontrata sa rehabilitasyon ng naturang tanggapan nang hindi dumaan sa public bidding.

Hindi rin, aniya, nai-deliver ang mga construction material bagamat nabayaran na si Mario Ang, may-ari ng Pyramid Hardware and Construction Supplies, ng P758,998.07, ayon pa sa Ombudsman.

Binayaran din ang kontratistang si David Domingo ng P33,779.14 bilang retention fee sa kabila ng maraming depekto sa proyekto.

Jeffrey G. Damicog



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LAND SCAM SA CALAPAN IBINUKING

ISANG heredero ang determinadong ipaglaban ang mahigit sa 100 ektaryang lupain ng kanyang angkan sa Oriental, Mindoro.

Ayon kay Charlemagne San Agustin, anak ni Fernando San Agustin at apo ng mag-asawang Harrison Fletcher at Carmen San Agustin, ang kanilang lupain ay kinamkam sa pamamagitan umano ng makailang administratibong rekonstitusyon ng mga titulo nito matapos masunog ang Calapan Registry of Deeds noong Agosto 1977.

Ang nasabing sunog ay ginawa aniyang dahilan upang ang 'registration decrees' at orihinal na 'certificates of titles' ng kanyang mga ninuno ay maisantabi nang hindi nalalaman ng mga tagapagmana.

Sinabi ni San Agustin

na ang reconstituted title RT-28 (T-6375) na nasa pangalan umano nina Erlinda Espiritu at Rosita Arce Ignacio ay ipinalit sa Registration Decree No. 1494 at OCT No. 19 na nasa pangalan ni Fernando San Agustin na sumasakop sa lupaing may lawak na 68.8 ektarya.

Samantala, ang reconstituted title RT-29 (T-13350) na nasa pangalan naman umano ni Arturo Arce ay ipinalit sa Registration Decree No. 90904 (OCT 141) na nasa pangalan ng mag-asawang Fletcher at San Agustin na sumasakop sa lupaing may sukat na 55.48 ektarya.

Dagdag pa ni San Agustin, batay sa mga sertipikasyon mula sa Land Registration Authority at Land Management Bureau ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources, ang mga 'reconstituted title' ay mula sa mga non-existing survey plan at nagpapatungkol sa lupain na ang lokasyon ay sa Guimba, Nueva Ecija at hindi sa Calapan City.

Bukod dito, napagalaman pa, aniya, sa LRA na ang mga 'reconstituted title' ay pawang mga peke dahil hindi umano dumaan sa anumang korte.

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Gov, 7 others can't leave PH

PANGASINAN Gov. Amado Espino Jr. and seven others accused of graft for illegal black sand mining in Lingayen Gulf have been barred from leaving the country without court permission.

The Sandiganbayan Sixth Division issued a hold departure order (HDO) yesterday, directing the Bureau of Immigration to stop Espino or any of his coaccused at the airport should they attempt to leave the country.

The others covered by the HDO are Pangasinan province's former administrator Rafael Baraan and former housing and urban development coordinating officer Alvin Bigay, both of whom have been dismissed by the Ombudsman; Cynthia Camara and Lolita Bolayog of Alexandra Mining and Oil Ventures Inc., and Michael Ramirez, Gina Alcazar and Avery Pujol of Xypher Builders Inc.

Espino and the others were charged with graft by the Ombudsman last week for conducting illegal black sand mining operations from 2011 to 2013 in the Lingayen Gulf, an environmentally critical area.

The Ombudsman's investigation showed that Alexandra Mining was issued in June 2011 a small-scale mining permit that was later cancelled, so the firm was told to vacate the Lingayen Gulf area.

Criminally liable

In August 2011, Espino entered into an agreement with Xypher Builders to remove the metallic materials from the stockpile left behind by Alexandra Mining.

The Ombudsman said that Espino, Baraan and Bigay were criminally liable for issuing permits and transacting with Alexandra Mining and Xypher Builders when the firms were not accredited contractors and were not qualified to undertake mining activities or a supposed golf course development in the area.

The extraction of the black sand or magnetite took place from 2011 to 2013 in an area that was enclosed by the provincial government with a 2-kilometer-long 5-foot-high concrete wall spanning the coastal barangays of Sabangan, Estancia and Malimpucc.

According to resident Rolando Rea, 72, who filed the complaint with the Ombudsman, the provincial government made it appear that the wall was part of a planned golf course along the Lingayen coast.

He said the wall actually served to block the residents' view of the illegal mining.

He said the wall was still standing and continued to deprive local residents, especially the fishermen, of access to the sea.

Dona Z. Pazzibugan

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Gov. Espino, 13 others charged over black sand mining issued HDOs

By JEFFREY G. DAMICOG

The Sandiganbayan Sixth Division has issued hold departure orders (HDOs) against Pangasinan Governor Amado T. Espino, Jr. and 13 of his co-accused in the alleged illegal mining of black sand in the Lingayen Gulf area in 2011.

The anti-graft court issued the HDOs to the Bureau of Immigration (BI), which has been directed to place Espino and his co-defendants in the hold departure list.

With their names in the hold departure list, Espino and his co-accused cannot leave the country without permission from the court.

His co-accused placed in the HDOs include provincial administrator Rafael Baraan and Provincial Housing and Homesite Regulation officer Alvin Bigay; Alexandra Mining and Oil Ventures Inc. board of directors Cesar Detera, Edwin Alcazar, Lolita Bolayog, Denise Ann Sia Kho Po, Annlyn Detera, Cynthia Detera-Camara, Glenn Subia and Emiliano Buenavista; and Xypher Builders Inc. board of directors Michael Ramirez, Gina Alcazer and Avery Pujol.

The Office of the Ombudsman filed against Espino two counts of violating Section 3 (e) of Republic Act 3019 (the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act).

Under the charges, Espino and Baraan were accused of having conspired in issuing Small Scale Mining Permits (SSMP) in 2011 to Alexandra and Xypher even though the



ESPINO

two companies lacked the necessary clearance certificates and accreditation.

The Ombudsman learned that the SSMPs were issued to conduct "soil, magnetite and mineral extraction activities" in Barangay Sabangan in Lingayen Gulf, Pangasinan even though the two companies were not duly accredited or registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB).

Apart from this, the Ombudsman also found that the two companies have no clearance from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) nor possessed the required business permits from the municipality of Lingayen.

The Ombudsman also discovered that Espino issued a Mineral Ore Export Permit to Xypher which allowed the company to sell the illegally extracted minerals to DH-Kingstone Holdings Co. Ltd. based in China in the amount of ₱10.750 million.

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Albay gears up to implement SD goals

ALBAY now gears up to implement its own Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), a new, localized and expanded set of programs aimed at completely wiping out within the next 15 years the lingering problems related to poverty, health and education, among others, in its area.

The SDGs pick up from where the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) had ended, and for which Albay had earned national recognitions and awards for their early realization. In 2011, Albay received its second of three Galing Pook Awards for best health practices that enabled it to realize early its MDGs.

To sustain the momentum, the Albay Provincial Board recently adopted 17

ENVIRO-WATCH

SDGs, based on global targets and indicators on which UN member countries are expected to frame their development agenda and policies for the next 15 years starting this year. Albay Gov. Joey Salceda has tasked the Albay Sustainable Development Goals Office (ASDGO), formerly the Albay Millennium Development Goals Office, to pursue the program. In an executive order, he directed the ASDGO to rally the entire provincial government towards completing the MDGs' unfinished business and the realization of the 17 SDGs.

As an initial step, Albay recently held a two-day Orientation and Localization of Sustainable Devel-

opment Goals conference for its officials and personnel. The conference tackled and explored various options on how best to expand Albay's social services and development agenda and realize their objectives.

The 17 SDGs are: 1) End poverty in all its forms; 2) End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture; 3) Promote health and well being for everyone; 4) Ensure equitable access to quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; 5) Achieve gender equality and empower women and girls;

6) Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanita-

tion for all; 7) Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all; 8) Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, productive employment, and decent work for all; 9) Build resilient infrastructures, foster innovativeness; promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization;

10) Reduce inequality within and among countries; 11) Make cities and human settlements safe, resilient and sustainable; 12) Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns; 13) Take urgent action to adapt to climate change and address its impacts; 14) Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and their marine resources for sustainable development.



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Earth now one degree Celsius hotter

The Earth is now one degree Celsius hotter than at the start of the 20th century, halfway to the critical two-degree threshold, as the record-breaking

trend has continued in 2016, the United Nations (UN) weather agency warned. In its 2015 annual report on

By PIA LEE-BRAGO

the status of the climate, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) also warned that the national climate

change plans adopted so far may not be enough to avoid a three-degree temperature rise WMO Secretary-General

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Earth

From Page 1

Petteri Taalas said the carbon dioxide concentrations in the air would be five times the current level in 500 years if no limits are placed on fossil fuel use, which means the planet would be seven to eight degrees Celsius warmer by that time.

He said it would then take up to 100,000 years to restore the normal level, noting the urgency of substantially cutting greenhouse gas emissions in the coming few decades.

"Many people now think that the problem is solved since we reached a nice agreement in Paris last year... but the negative side is that we haven't changed our behaviors," Taalas said.

According to the WMO Statement on the Status of the Climate in 2015, the year made history with shattered temperature records, intense heat waves, exceptional rainfall, devastating drought and unusual tropical cyclone activity.

The WMO Statement was released ahead of today's

ment the Paris Agreement on climate change and cut greenhouse gases now before we pass the point of no return," Taalas said.

The worst-case scenario, he added, could be averted by far-reaching measures to cut carbon dioxide emissions.

The WMO said the global average surface temperature in 2015 broke all previous records by a wide margin, at about 0.76 degree Celsius above the 1961-1990 average, because of a powerful El Niño and human-caused global warming. With 93 percent of excess heat stored in the oceans, ocean heat content down to 2,000 meters also hit a new record.

The record-breaking trend, the WMO said, has continued in 2016. January and February 2016 set yet more new monthly temperature records, with the heat especially pronounced in the high northern latitudes.

Arctic sea ice extent was at a satellite-record low for both months according to

and significant 400 parts per million threshold.

"The startlingly high temperatures so far in 2016 have sent shockwaves around the climate science community," said David Carlson, director

of the World Climate Research Program, which is co-sponsored by WMO.

But Carlson said that it is premature to determine that 2016 would extend a record-breaking streak.

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World halfway to 2-degree threshold

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE WORLD is halfway to the critical 2-degree threshold as record temperatures in 2015 meant the earth was warmer by one degree Celsius than at the start of the 20th century, according to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

Last December, representatives of 195 nations that gathered in Paris for the United Nations Climate Change Conference agreed to keep the increase in global temperature at below 2 degrees Celsius—considered the threshold that separates humanity from the most destructive and dangerous effects of global warming.

The Paris Agreement pegged global efforts toward limiting the increase in temperature to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

In a statement on the Status of the Climate in 2015 released yesterday, the UN agency WMO said that last year saw temperature records shattered by a wide margin—attended by intense heat waves, exceptional rainfall, devastating drought and unusual tropical cyclone activity.

In 2015, the strong El Niño as well as human-caused global warming pushed the global average surface temperature to 0.76 degree Celsius above the average observed in 1961-1990.

In the Philippines, the Department of Agriculture put the loss in food crops attributed to the current El Niño at P3.4 billion in 2015—excluding farm damage caused by strong typhoons which also reached billions of pesos.

“Our planet is sending a powerful message to world leaders to sign and implement the Paris Agreement on cli-

mate change and cut greenhouse gases now before we pass the point of no return,” WMO secretary general Petteri Taalas said in a press statement.

Taalas said the worst-case scenarios could be averted by taking urgent and far-reaching measures to cut carbon dioxide emissions.

He said that in addition to mitigation, governments must strengthen climate change adaptation by investing in disaster early warning systems, as well as climate services like drought, flood and heat-health management tools.

According to the WMO report, droughts must be addressed more proactively through integrated drought management, which involves guidance on effective policies and land management strategies as well as best practices for coping with drought.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

First PH-made satellite launched today

By Jovic Yee

THE PHILIPPINES is sending a third satellite into space today, taking the Filipino scientific community to new heights.

Diwata, the first Filipino-made and codeveloped microsatellite, officially called the Philippine Scientific Earth Observation Microsatellite (Phil-Microsat), will be launched into space at

10 a.m. (Manila time) from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida.

Science Secretary Mario Montejo said Diwata was part of around 3,375 kilograms of science and research, crew supplies and vehicle hardware that would be brought to the International Space Station (ISS) by Orbital ATK's Cygnus spacecraft as part of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (Nasa) fifth resupply

mission to the ISS.

The spacecraft, according to Nasa's website, is expected to arrive at the ISS on Saturday.

Montejo said the launch of the microsatellite would further cement the belief, especially in the Filipino community, "that our scientists and engineers can be at par" with their foreign counterparts.

FIRST / A6

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The Philippines first had a satellite in space, the privately owned Agila 1, in 1996. It was acquired from Indonesia, which launched it from Cape Canaveral in 1991.

The second Philippine satellite was Agila 2, also for communications, privately owned and launched from Sichuan, China, in 1997. It is now called ABS-3, after Mabuhay Satellite Communications, a subsidiary of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., sold it to Bermuda-based Asia Broadcast Satellite Holdings Ltd. for P400 million in 2009.

Carlos Primo David, executive director of the Philippine Council for Industry, Energy and Emerging Technology Research and Development, said that once Diwata is aboard the ISS, it will first be housed in the Japanese Experiment Module before it will be released into orbit between April 4 and 7

"By the time Diwata has been released into orbit, we will have full control of it. Initially, this will be controlled by our Filipino engineers who are stationed at Tohoku, Japan," David told the INQUIRER yesterday.

He added that control of Diwata will later be transferred to the Philippine Earth Data Resources Observation (Pedro) in Subic, Zambales province, which will receive and store data sent by the satellite.

It is expected that Diwata, which will stay in orbit for around 20 months, will take an average of 3,600 high-resolution images of the Philippines daily using its four cameras.

Phil-Microsat program head Joel Marciano Jr. explained that Diwata is equipped with a high-precision telescope capable of determining the extent of damage from disasters; a spaceborne multispectral imager with liquid crystal tunable filter that could monitor changes in

vegetation and ocean productivity; a wide-field camera that could observe cloud patterns and weather disturbances; and a middle-field camera, an engineering payload that would be used to assist in determining the location of each image captured by the other optics.

"The whole DOST family eagerly awaits the launch of the Cygnus rocket carrying Diwata. In a few days, our satellite will be in space and soon a piece of equipment carrying our flag will be orbiting Earth taking valuable imagery of our country," David said.

Diwata's launch comes more than two months since Filipino scientists and DOST officials turned over the microsatellite to their counterparts at the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, who sent the device to Nasa after conducting final tests on its spaceworthiness.

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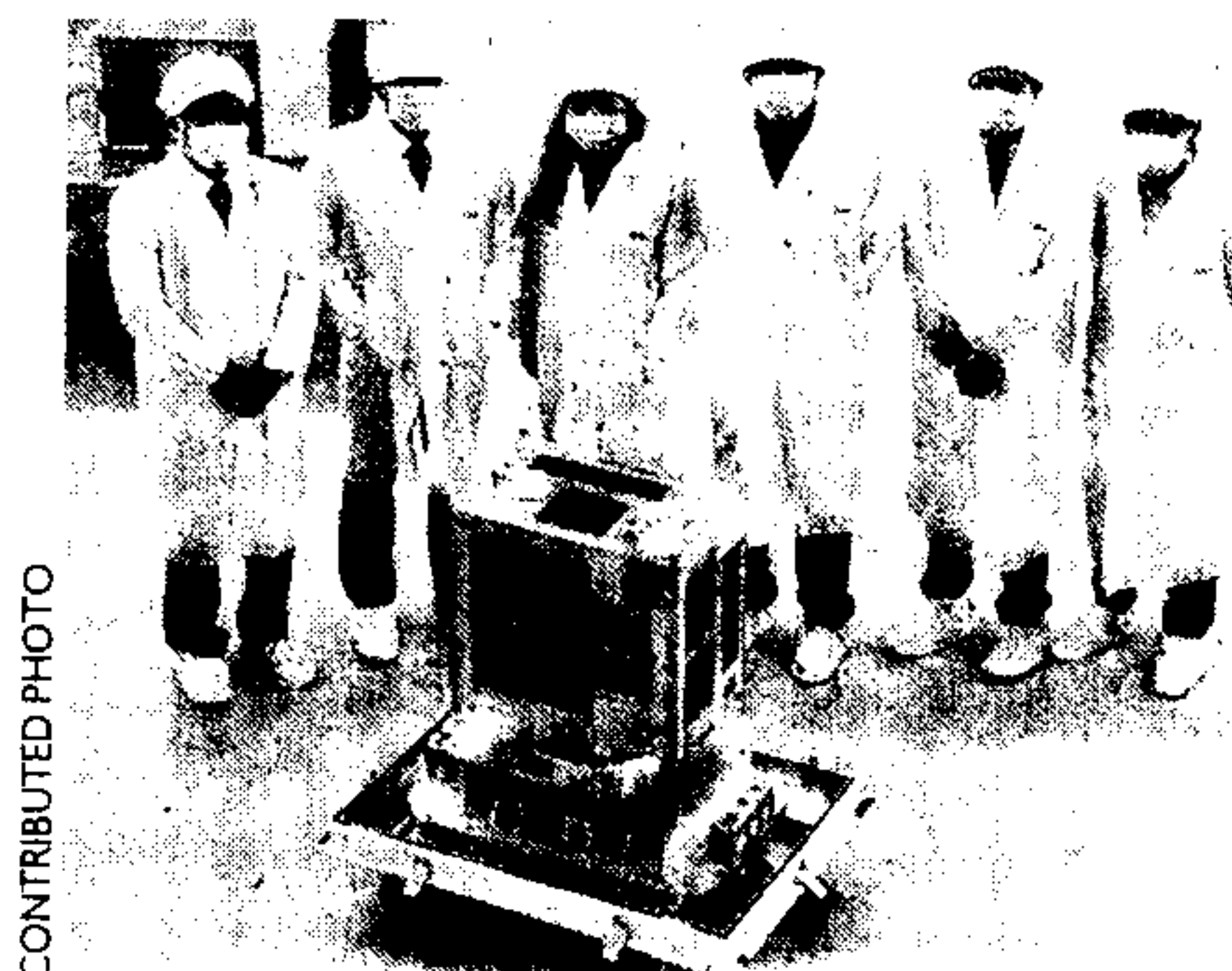
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First Ph-made satellite launched today

Science Undersecretary for Research and Development Amelia Guevara and Marciano will be overseeing the launch in Florida, while David and other DOST officials will be watching the live feed of the launch at the University of the Philippines.

Montejo earlier said that through the 50-kg *balikbayan*-box-sized microsatellite the government would soon have at its disposal essential data on weather systems "crucial for our farmers to adjust planting methods and procedures in light of climate change." *With a report from Inquirer Research*



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

SCIENTISTS from the University of the Philippines and Department of Science and Technology officials turn over Diwata, the first Filipino codeveloped microsatellite, to their counterparts at the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency in Tsukuba City, Japan.