

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

DATE : 25 NOV 2016

DAY : Friday

DENR

IN THE NEWS



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Lopez reappointed as DENR chief, says Medialdea

ES SERVICE

By EDITH REGALADO

DAVAO CITY – President Duterte has reappointed Environment Secretary Gina Lopez after the Commission on Appointments by (CA) passed her confirmation.

Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea told **The STAR** that Lopez's name would be submitted to the CA for confirmation.

"She (Lopez) is reappointed," Medialdea said during the arrival ceremony for the President Wednesday night here at the Davao International Airport after he attended the 24th Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation leaders' summit in Lima, Peru.

Lopez was among the Cabinet officials that the CA bypassed last month after Congress adjourned session and went on recess.

Medialdea said Lopez's name would be added to those that the Palace already submitted as having been reappointed for confirmation by the CA.

Isabela Rep. Rodolfo Albano III, who is CA majority leader, earlier said Lopez's absence in the list of 15 Cabinet members resubmitted to the body "means that she was not reappointed."

"The President can still issue her a new appointment, but that will be a regular and not an ad interim appointment, since Congress is already in session. That means that she cannot assume office until the CA confirms her," Albano said.

Lopez has launched a crusade against destructive mining operations in the country and has ordered the closure of some firms for alleged violations of law.

allocation for the current year, was sponsored and defended by Senate finance committee chair Sen. Loren Legarda.

The budget increase is attributed to the agency's poverty alleviation programs that put priority on massive reforestation and climate change initiatives upon which the government's thrust to promote inclusive and sustained economic growth hinges.

Earlier, Lopez said that a bigger budget would help the department fulfill its commitment to social justice through the implementation of environmental programs, notably the National Greening Program (NGP).

"Our main challenge is to raise the quality of life in communities that are the primary stakeholders and pursue measures that will optimize their growth potentials," Lopez said.

According to Lopez, the budget increase "mirrors the administration's push for social justice where majority of the Filipino people truly benefit from the country's natural resources."

NGP is a six-year massive forest rehabilitation program that aims to cover 1.5 million hectares of degraded forestland with trees by the end of 2016. But it was extended until 2028 through an executive order issued November 2015 in a bid to rehabilitate 7.1 million hectares more.

As of November 2016, the NGP has created more than 3.29 million "green jobs," benefiting individuals hired as workers in producing almost 400 million seedlings.

DENR programs include forest protection with an allocation of P674 million; integrated natural resources and

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Senate OKs DENR budget

THE Senate on Tuesday approved the P28.67-billion 2017 budget of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

DENR said the 31-percent increase in budget - from P21.8 billion this year - will help finance the agency's massive reforestation and climate change initiatives.

Regina Lopez, DENR secretary, had pushed for a bigger budget to enable the agency fulfill its commitment to social justice through the implementation of environmental programs, notably the National Greening Program which is expected to get P9.4 billion.

"Our main challenge is to raise the quality of life in communities that are the primary stakeholders and pursue measures that will optimize their growth potentials," Lopez said in a statement.

Other DENR programs such as the forest protection program will get P674 million; Integrated Natural Resources and Environmental Management Project, P966 million; Forestland Management Project, P1 billion; biodiversity conservation program, P763 million; coastal and marine rehabilitation project, P633 million; and the Manila Bay cleanup project, P80 million.

Some P3.37 billion was earmarked for DENR's two line bureaus. The Environmental Management Bureau will get P2.2 billion to implement projects on solid waste management, clean air and clean water while the Mines and Geosciences Bureau will get P1.15 billion for its mining regulation services and geohazard assessment and mapping.

The National Mapping Resource and Information Authority will get P1.37 billion, P394 million of which will be used for the government's unified mapping project.

The Palawan Council for Sustainable Development will get P92 million while another P129 million will go to the National Water Resource Board for the implementation of the comprehensive water resources assessment in major river basin and the establishment of monitoring stations in water constrained

Lopez:
'Our main
challenge is
to raise the
quality of
life in com-
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The Energy Development Corporation (EDC) recently partnered with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for the protection of several forest sites. USAID Environment Office director Jeremy Gustafson (2nd from left) links hands with EDC president and COO Richard Tantoco (center) and DENR Undersecretary Jonas Leones (fourth from left) after a signing event to formalize the partnership.

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PARTNERSHIP FOR FOREST BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION – The Energy Development Corporation (EDC), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) recently forged an agreement for the enhanced protection of the country's biodiversity. The agreement among the three entities creates a partnership, called the Global Development Alliance (GDA), to apply the LAWIN Forest and Biodiversity Protection System in selected EDC forest sites. LAWIN is an innovation that was jointly developed by DENR and USAID to address threats to the country's biodiversity. Jeremy Gustafson (2nd from left), Director of USAID's Environment Office, links hand with EDC President and COO Richard Tantoco (center) and DENR Undersecretary Jonas Leones (fourth from left), after signing the agreement. Witnessing the event are Dr. Efrain Laureano (left), Chief of Party of the B+WISER Program; and Mayumi Quintos-Natividad, Assistant Director of the DENR's Forest Management Bureau.

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EDC, DENR, USAID ink accord on forest, biodiversity protection

The Energy Development Corporation (EDC), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and the US Embassy in the Philippines' United States Agency for International Development (USAID) recently forged an agreement for the enhanced protection of the country's biodiversity.

The agreement among the three entities creates a partnership, called the Global Development Alliance (GDA), to apply the LAWIN Forest and Biodiversity Protection System in selected EDC forest sites.

LAWIN is an innovation that was jointly developed by DENR and USAID to address threats to the country's biodiversity. It enables forest and biodiversity protection authorities to regularly monitor, analyze and respond to threats to the natural forests.

LAWIN is being spearheaded by the DENR as part of the national strategy for forest and biodiversity protection in the Philippines. EDC, the country's largest geothermal energy company, is the first corporate partner that will use the system for watershed protection.

Under the GDA partnership, nearly 24,000 hectares of natural forest within EDC's areas of operation will be placed under improved protection through LAWIN. The covered EDC sites included three conservation areas - Mount Apo in North Cotabato, Leyte and Negros Occidental.

EDC will also contribute more than P2 million in cash to support the protection and conservation efforts, while USAID will provide over P2 million in the form of technical assistance to help establish and implement LAWIN.

LAWIN combines science-based planning, user-friendly technology, and indigenous knowledge to protect forests and enable communities and

Leones, the government adopted LAWIN on March 10, 2016, as part of the national strategy for forest and biodiversity protection. "LAWIN improves the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of the forest protection efforts," said Atty. Leones.

To date, more than 2,000 DENR personnel and community forest guards responsible for forest protection nationwide have been trained to apply the system and help protect the remaining natural forests in their respective regions.

Through LAWIN, more than 3,000 kilometers of patrol distance have been covered and over 2,000 sightings of 17 pre-defined forest threats recorded. Analysis of these patrol data show, that the top three threats to natural forests are illegal tree cutting, annual perennial farming, and the establishment of huts or houses in forest areas. Under the LAWIN system, appropriate responses are developed to effectively address observed threats.

Mr. Gustafson welcomed the agreement. "We believe, that partnerships with the private sector are a key part of the solution to address the complex issue of forest and biodiversity conservation," said Jeremy Gustafson, Director of USAID's Environment Office. "For USAID, we see this partnership as a significant milestone contributing to the sustainability of LAWIN and demonstrating its capacity to connect dif-

thermal energy in the country with 1,169 megawatts in installed geothermal capacity," said Tantoco. "Harnessing geothermal energy requires water, and since adequate water supply depends on healthy forests, forest protection is a paramount EDC priority," Tantoco added.

EDC's goal of ensuring a sustainable supply of renewable energy aligns with USAID's strategic development objective in the Philippines to protect natural forests and the biodiversity within.

For EDC, the partnership provides opportunities to strengthen the sustainability of the company's renewable energy resources, and enhance environmental competitiveness of business practices. "I am proud to be associated with LAWIN and with this partnership," concluded Tantoco.

For DENR and USAID, the partnership helps to expand the implementation of LAWIN in three selected conservation areas which strengthens

forest protection measures in the Philippines.

The agreement will preserve the forest's ability to provide local communities with water, be a source of

and livelihood opportunities, increase communities' climate resilience. As such, the partnership provides a win-win solution for all.

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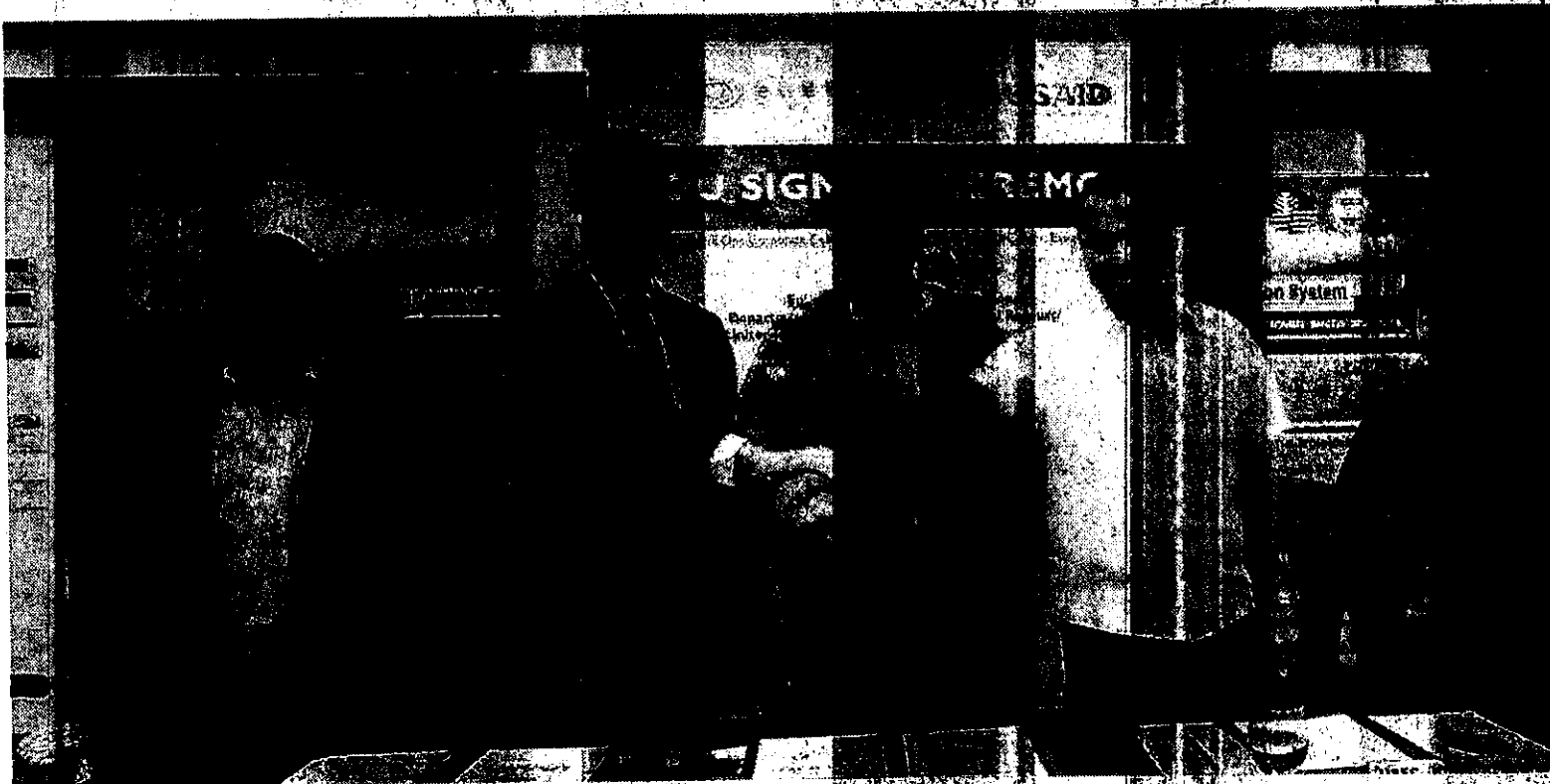
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BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION. Energy Development Corp., the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the United States Agency for International Development signed an agreement for the enhanced protection of the country's biodiversity. The agreement creates a partnership called the Global Development Alliance and Biodiversity Protection System in selected EDC forest sites. Shown during the signing ceremony are (from left) Dr. Efraim Laureano, chief of party for USAID director of environment office Jeremy Gustafson, EDC president and chief operating officer Richard Tantoco, Environment undersecretary Jonas Le Bureau assistant director Mayumi Quintos-Natividad.

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EDC, DENR, USAID ink partnership for forest biodiversity protection

THE Energy Development Corp. (EDC), the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and the US Embassy in the Philippines's United States Agency for International Development (USAID) recently forged an agreement for the enhanced protection of the country's biodiversity.

The agreement among the three entities creates a partnership, called the Global Development Alliance (GDA), to apply the Lawin Forest and Biodiversity Protection System in selected EDC forest sites.

Lawin is an innovation jointly developed by the DENR and USAID to address threats to the country's biodiversity. It enables forest and biodiversity-protection authorities to regularly monitor, analyze and respond to threats to the natural forests.

Lawin is now being spearheaded by the DENR as part of the national strategy for forest and biodiversity protection in the Philippines. EDC, the country's largest geothermal energy company, is the first corporate partner that will use the system for watershed protection.

Under the GDA partnership, nearly 24,000 hectares of natural forest within EDC's areas of operation will be placed under improved protection through Lawin. The covered EDC sites

included three conservation areas—Mount Apo in North Cotabato, Leyte and Negros Occidental.

EDC will also contribute more than P2 million in cash to support the protection and conservation efforts, while USAID will provide over P2 million in the form of technical assistance to help establish and implement Lawin.

Lawin combines science-based planning, user-friendly technology and indigenous knowledge to protect forests and enable communities and the governments to focus conservation efforts in areas where they are needed most.

Lawin is part of a larger DENR-USAID project, called the Biodiversity and Watersheds Improved for Stronger Economy and Ecosystem Resilience (B+Wiser) program. Signatories to the agreement were Jeremy Gustafson, director of USAID Environment Office; Richard Tantoco, EDC president and COO; and Jonas Leones, DENR undersecretary for international affairs and foreign assisted programs. Witnessing the event were Dr. Efraim Laureano, chief of party of the B+Wiser program; and Mayumi Quintos-Natividad, assistant director of the DENR Forest Management Bureau.

Leones said the government adopted Lawin on March 10, as part of the national strategy for forest and biodiver-

sity protection. "Lawin improves the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of the forest protection efforts," Leones said.

To date, more than 2,000 DENR personnel and community forest guards responsible for forest protection nationwide have been trained to apply the system and help protect the remaining natural forests in their respective regions.

Through Lawin, more than 3,000 kilometers of patrol distance have been covered and over 2,000 sightings of 17 pre-defined forest threats recorded. Analysis of these patrol data show that the top 3 threats to natural forests are illegal tree cutting, annual perennial farming and the establishment of huts or houses in forest areas. Under the Lawin system, appropriate responses are developed to effectively address observed threats.

Gustafson welcomed the agreement. "We believe that partnerships with the private sector are a key part of the solution to address the complex issue of forest and biodiversity conservation," said Gustafson, director of USAID Environment Office. "For USAID, we see this partnership as a significant milestone contributing to the sustainability of Lawin and demonstrating its capacity to connect different stakeholders in pursuit of concrete actions to address

BusinessMirror

CONT. EDC, DENR, USAID INK PARTNERSHIP FOR FOREST
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environmental challenges," he said. Tantoco said, "EDC is the largest producer of geothermal energy in the country, with 1,169 megawatts in installed geothermal capacity," Tantoco said. "Harnessing geothermal energy requires water, and since adequate water supply depends on healthy forests, forest protection is a paramount EDC priority."

EDC's goal of ensuring a sustainable supply of renewable energy aligns with USAID's strategic development objective in the Philippines to protect natural forests and the biodiversity within.

For EDC, the partnership provides opportunities to strengthen the sustainability of the company's renewable-energy resources, and enhance environmental competitiveness of business practices. "I am proud to be associated with Lawin and with this partnership," Tantoco said.

For the DENR and USAID, the partnership helps to expand the implementation of Lawin in three selected conservation areas, which strengthens forest protection measures in the Philippines.

The agreement will preserve the forest's ability to provide local communities with water, be a source of energy and livelihood opportunities, and increase communities' climate-change resilience. As such, the partnership provides a win-win solution for all partners.



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28th Phl Eaglet bred in captivity hatched

DAVAO CITY – Another Philippine Eaglet bred in captivity has been hatched at the Philippine Eagle Center in Malagos, Calinan in this city.

It is the 28th eaglet produced by the conservative breeding program of the Philippine Eagle Foundation, which runs the non-profit Philippine Eagle Center.

The eaglet was hatched on Nov. 4 with minimal assistance after 56 days of incubation, according to the PEF.

As of yesterday, the new eaglet was said to be four to five inches tall and weighed 488.3 grams.

The new chick is the third successfully hatched offspring of the Philippine Eagle pair,

MVP (male) and Go Phoenix (female).

Eagles MVP and Go Phoenix are the adopted eagles of PLDT and Edisy Trading.

The PEF produced Eagle Pag-asa in 1992, the first Philippine eagle in its captive breeding program, and the latest of which are Sinag and Chick 27.

PEF animal keeper Colin Santander said Chick 28 showed no signs of deformities.

"It is active, and in fact, has a big appetite," he said. "It is just three weeks old but its growth is exceptional."

The birth of Chick 28 highlights the continuing success of what was once thought as a lost cause.

"In the midst of continued

mortality and persecution in the wild, this hatching success underscores the importance of conservation breeding as a way of securing this species' gene pool," said PEF executive director Dennis Salvador.

The PEF continues to serve its mission in saving the great Philippine Eagle from extinction.

It firmly believes that, with concerted effort, the critically endangered Philippine Eagle will someday fly freely in the wild.

The PEF also embarks on a community outreach program in areas adjacent to known Philippine eagle habitats.

The Malagos eagle center is said to have in its custody 36 Philippine eagles.



Handout photos from PEF show the eaglet at the Philippine Eagle Center in Davao City.

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Regulate small gold mines, too

November is Children's Month in the Philippines and the state of child rights in the country is under scrutiny. On Nov. 7, the Department of Labor and Employment warned that child labor remains alarmingly high, with 1.8 million children toiling in hazardous conditions.

I have seen with my own eyes how Filipino child laborers are risking their lives in one of the most hazardous work sectors—gold mining. I interviewed children who were diving underwater to mine gold ore, digging gold in unstable pits, and processing gold with toxic mercury.

One of them was "Michelle," a 15-year-old girl from Camarines Norte who has been processing gold with mercury since she was 8, unaware that mercury can have permanent damaging effects on health, especially for children. She described to me how she mixes the mercury into the gold ore to create an amalgam, and then holds the amalgam over a torch to burn off the mercury and retrieve the raw gold. She now often suffers spasms, which can be a symptom of mercury poisoning. In her village, I saw a white stream of mercury-contaminated water flowing into the local river.

Mining work is dangerous not only for

COMMENTARY

JULIANE KIPPENBERG

recognized this and ordered an audit of major mining firms active in the Philippines. The audit has suspended 10 nickel mines and recommended suspending another 20—a move that has sent shock waves through the business community. Oddly, though, Lopez's Department of Environment and Natural Resources is paying little attention to artisanal and small-scale gold mining and its harmful effects on children.

Gold is a major source of income for the Philippines. In 2014, the country produced about 18 tons of gold at a market value of over \$700 million. Most of this gold comes from artisanal and small-scale mines, almost all of which operate without a government license. Yet, the government is doing little to ensure that environmental regulations, and mining and child labor laws are enforced, and to transition these mines toward formal recognition. The government also has done far too little to ensure that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas—the country's central bank

If children like Michelle are to have a chance for a better job, and a better life, they need to go to school or get vocational training. Those who are 15 years or older could also work part-time, but in safe jobs, not hazardous ones like mining. The government should help children in mining areas make this transition, and should ensure that the government's livelihood assistance programs reach the poorest families in mining areas, so they don't have to send their children to work.

Companies sourcing gold from artisanal mines in the Philippines should also act. They need to put in place strong safeguards along their whole supply chain, in line with their own human rights responsibilities, to ensure that they are not contributing to child labor in mines that provide them with gold. The Philippines needs a safe and child-labor-free artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector that contributes to the economic and social development of communities—and to the wellbeing of the country's children. To achieve this, the government—and specifically the DENR—should regulate and formalize artisanal and small-scale mining. An important place for Secretary Lopez to start is to include artisanal and small-scale mines in the mining audit.



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17 held for illegal quarrying in Rizal

SEVENTEEN persons were arrested by members of the National Bureau of Investigation-Environmental Crime Division (NBI-ENCD) for illegal quarrying in Rodriguez, Rizal.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and Natural Resources Mines and Geosciences Bureau (DENR-MGB) have earlier requested the NBI to investigate the alleged illegal quarry activities in Barangay San Rafael, Rodriguez, Rizal.

The suspects were identified as Nomer Santos, Jeffrey Manahan, Rodrigo Alutaya, Jaymark Dangel, Jose Dangel, Eliseo Habla, Mario Blas, Angelito Pan-

ganiban Jr., Antonio Dapitan, Wilfredo Asuncion, Eduardo Dapitan, Eddie Tagapan, Rajohn Hermo, Peter Jason Lozada, Romar Cascayan, Roger Tablac and Juan Dapitan.

The DENR said Radthien Builders Corporation was allegedly conducting quarry/mining operations without an operation agreement.

A cease and desist order (CDO) was issued by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau Region 4-A against its proprietor Benjamin dela Cruz for utilizing heavy equipment or backhoe and dump truck to quarry in the area.

However, the company continued to operate which is in violation of

Section 103 of R.A. 7942 or the Philippine Mining Act of 1995, based on the surveillance conducted by the NBI-ENCD operatives.

Last Wednesday, members of the Philippine National Police and a joint team of the NBI-ENCD and DENR-MGB Regional Office IV-A went to the area and arrested the illegal miners.

The authorities were told the buyers of the extracted materials do not have any ore transport permits from the DENR and no operation agreement was shown to them.

Some P72,000,000 worth of heavy equipment, tools, vehicles, and earth materials were seized in the raid. **Hector Lawas**

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NBI nabs 17 illegal miners

THE National Bureau of Investigation said on Thursday operatives of NBI-Environmental Crime Division have arrested on November 23 a total of 17 people engaged in illegal quarrying in Rodriguez, Rizal.

The NBI identified the arrested suspects as Nomer Santos, Jeffrey Manahan, Rodrigo Alutaya, Jaymark Dangel, Jose Dangel, Eliseo Habla, Mario Blas, Angelito Panganiban Jr., Antonio Dapitan, Wilfredo Asuncion, Eduardo Dapitan, Eddie Tagapan, Rajohn Hermo, Peter Jason Lozada, Romar Cascayan, Roger Tablac and Juan Dapita.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau reported that Radthien Builders Corp. was quarrying and mining in Barangay San Rafael, Rodriguez, Rizal without an operation agreement.

A cease and desist order was issued by the MGB against Benjamin dela Cruz, proprietor of Radthien Builders Co., for stripping activity utilizing heavy equipment or backhoe and dump truck. However, Radthien continued to operate in the said area.

Sandy Araneta



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'Let DILG decide on Ilocos pols' suspension'

VIGAN CITY – The decision to implement a suspension order against Mayor Roque Verzosa Jr. of Tagudin, Ilocos Sur and Councilor Arthur Chua now depends on the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

Gov. Ryan Luis Singson said the provincial government served the order on Verzosa and Chua on Wednesday.

By ARTEMIO DUMLAO

Singson ordered the officials suspended for refusing to honor quarry permits issued by the provincial government and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The provincial board recommended a two-month suspension for each official after the local DENR office

accused Verzosa and Chua of grave misconduct, insubordination, abuse of authority and conduct unbecoming of public officials.

After the complaint was filed, the municipal government of Tagudin stopped the quarry operations in the area.

The provincial board rejected the municipal government

decision, noting it was meant to get back at the complainants.

"The Local Government Code provides that the provincial government and not the mayor has the authority to cancel or revoke quarry permits," Singson said adding Verzosa abused his power for stopping the quarry operations.

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19 families forcibly evacuated in Koronadal due to landslides

The city government of Koronadal City forcibly evacuated some 19 families from an upland village due to a series of landslides triggered by heavy rains on Wednesday night.

Cyrus Urbano, city administrator, said yesterday they monitored "pockets of landslides" in portions of Sitio Olom-Lao, Oloclofe and Lower Ladol of Barangay Assumption that closed down roads and threatened communities in the area.

He said the situation was aggravated by the strong water current from upstream in a creek traversing the village.

Owing to this, he said they implemented the forced evacuation of residents at a portion of Sitio Lower Ladol at around 8 p.m. Wednesday.

"Based on our assessment, the situation in the area is very delicate due to the pockets of landslides," he said in a radio interview.

Urbano, who heads the City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office, said the forced evacuation was facilitated by rescuers from the Bureau of Fire Protection.

The affected residents, which comprise 40 individuals, are currently taking temporary shelter at an evacuation center in Purok Ramos in Barangay Sta. Cruz, he said.

The official said the city

government provided food and other assistance while concerned residents donated cooking utensils and related items to the evacuees, who are mostly from the B'laan tribe.

Urbano said personnel from the City Engineer's Office were deployed in the area yesterday morning to clear the affected roads of debris.

He said they have yet to decide whether the affected residents would be allowed to return to the site.

Citing their assessment, he said most parts of Barangay Assumption are considered as high-risk to landslides.

He said the local government is currently looking for potential relocation areas for residents settled in the identified landslide-prone areas.

Several possible resettlement sites were earlier considered but most of them have conflicts in terms of ownership, he said.

Urbano said they are also facing difficulty in terms of relocating the tribal residents due to their cultural attachment to the area.

"They lived there for decades and have adopted to the place," he said.

As temporary solution, Urbano said they trained residents on alert systems and response measures in case disasters would hit their communities.

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Payatas PPP gets green light

By Rio N. Araja

WITH the closure of the Payatas controlled landfill in 2019, the 38-member Quezon City Council has given Mayor Herbert Bautista the green light to put up a multimillion-peso waste-to-energy facility in Barangay Payatas under a public-private partnership.

The city council passed a resolution to establish an integrated facility to hasten the closure of the Payatas dump, handle 2,000 to 3,000 tons of wastes a day, and generate 30 to 35 megawatts of power.

Despite the project being originally proposed by tycoon Manny

V. Pangilinan of the Metro Pacific Investments Corp., the city government will still invite other infrastructure firms through an open competitive bidding procedures, City Administrator Aldrin Cuña said.

"We will publicize the bid and invite other parties. There will

be a Swiss challenge," Cuña told the Standard.

Under the resolution, the city government shall ensure the project configuration of the proposed waste-to-energy facility complies with existing laws and regulations, "including but not limited to the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, Clean Air Act, Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes Act, Renewable Energy Act of 2008, and guidelines governing the establishment and operation of waste-to-energy technologies for solid wastes."

Bautista said he has already convened the city's public-private partnership selection committee to oversee the pre-selection and selection of private

sector proponents for the project.

If plans do not miscarry, the city government "is projecting additional revenue if the power generated from the soon-to-be-developed waste-to-energy facility is sold to electric companies" such as the Manila Electric Co., the mayor said.

Apart from powering Barangay Payatas, savings derived from the sale of the electricity would fund the construction of more school buildings, health centers, hospitals and multipurpose halls, Bautista said.

The mayor also expects a reduction in the power consumption of

ing P1 billion a year for solid waste management, including hauling services, post-closure care and maintenance of the Payatas dump, special operations and toxic or hazardous waste collection, treatment and disposal.

In June 2013, Pangilinan offered to develop a 15-hectare portion of Payatas and build a waste-to-energy facility in three years' time. It would also house a shopping mall and other commercial establishments. He brought up the proposal again recently.

Jose Ma. Lim, Metro Pacific Investments Corp. president,

Daily Tribune

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Duterte orders DENR to dismantle large fish pens in Laguna Lake

By Ted Tuvera

Illegal fish pens along the Laguna Lake should disappear at once or else.

President Duterte issued an ultimatum to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to flex its muscles to dismantle fish farming cages situated at the Laguna Lake before the Christmas season reaches its peak because if they won't, military force will be utilized.

"You make arrangements with DENR. Limit your area, you can fence it. But you have to give the bigger share to the so many fisherfolk. I'm directing the DENR, it's under your authority. If you cannot do the job, by the second week of December, I will order the military to destroy it and this time no more arrangement of... what will be your area," Duterte said at a press conference Wednesday night in Davao City.

"*Kung ayaw ninyong litan, isirain ko* (If you don't trim your fish pens, I will destroy them). So you lose your investments and I don't care. You can go to the Supreme Court. You can go to the whatever you want, Ombudsman, and file your cases here, but it will be my direct order and I will assume full responsibility for them," the President added.

The President said that fish pens limit the operation of small

fishermen, not only in Laguna, but as well as in the whole country.

"I do not propose to deprive you of your livelihood. But in all of those who have fish pens across the country, *maski saan ka magpunta* (wherever you go), you have deprived the man with a paddle and *bangka* (boat) of their even *pagkain* (food)," he stressed.

As of May 4, the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) has granted permits to 195 fish pen applicants; 142 of those are corporations, 46 are individuals while 7 are fisherfolk cooperatives.

The militant fisherfolk group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalalakaya) backed the President's initiative, saying that fishers have been adversely affected since vast tracts of fish pens proliferate in Laguna Lake waters.

"Large fish pens congest Laguna Lake; it narrows the traditional fishing grounds of the small fishermen that used to be communal before. But now, the 90,000-hectare brackish lake is partitioned by the tiny fraction of corporations and rich individuals. What happens to the small fishers is that they are huddled over the small portion left," former Anakpawis partylist Rep. Fernando Hicap, Pamalakaya chairperson, said in a statement.

Hicap also noted that

fisherfolk are being harassed by fishpen security guards every time the former comes close to the fish pens.

"Now is the time to declare

Laguna de Bay as a 'no fishpen zone.' Laguna Lake fishers have suffered long enough from this corporate occupation of Laguna de Bay," he added.

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Tempo

Davao fishpens set to be dismantled

DAVAO CITY — President Rodrigo R. Duterte has ordered the dismantling of fishpens as these were affecting the livelihood of other fisherfolk.

President Duterte made the statement during his arrival honors at the Francisco Bangoy International Airport after his landing Wednesday night.

Duterte also gave an ultimatum of until the second week of December for fishpen operators to make an arrangement with the proper agencies such as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Bureau of Fisheries.

"If you cannot do the job, by this second week of December, I will order the military to destroy it," Duterte said.

Duterte said he was authorizing the DENR to delineate the fish pen

operations of existing areas.

However, he lamented that there were people in high places who were operating fish pens at the expense of poor fisherfolk.

"Itong fishpens, marami to... governors, mayors, brgy captains, military, police, retired or active duty, lahat, pati mga presidente noon. Talagang pinipiga ang mga pilipino," said Duterte. "You are depriving them and everybody of the need not even to live at this time but to survive," he said.

Mr. Duterte challenged those who were against the order to go to the Supreme Court and even the Ombudsman if they wanted to oppose the order.

"Kung ayaw ninyong liitan, sisirain ko. So you lose your investments, I don't care," he said. (Yas D. Ocampo)



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800 attend 3rd International River Summit

BY GERRY LEE GORIT

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY – Around 800 environment experts and advocates attended the three-day third International River Summit to discuss the state of the country's river systems held in a hotel here Thursday.

The summit, with the theme "Healthy watershed, clean rivers, safer communities," brought together leaders and stakeholders to share knowledge and best practices to formulate a blueprint of needed actions to address pressing issues affecting river basins and communities.

Archbishop Antonio Ledesma, chair of the Cagayan de Oro River Basin Management Council, said everybody must work together and engage in the mitigation, adaptation and even anticipation of future calamities.

Ledesma, who's also the head of the archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro, said it is important to learn from past disasters like what Typhoon Sendong brought to this city and Iligan City in 2011.

Mayor Oscar Moreno said the devastation by Sendong has made the Cagayanons resilient as he redefined resiliency to mean emerging stronger and

building back better.

For his part, Raoul Geollegue, former Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) official and president of the Watershed Management Coalition, said massive reforestation of the Cagayan de Oro river basin located mainly in Bukidnon must be undertaken.

The present state of the CDO river basin has reached a critical level in that another weather disturbance akin to Sendong could lead to a killer flood that will leave thousands affected, Geollegue said.

The Cagayan de Oro river basin, covering 1,379 square kilometers of forest lands located in the city's upland, Bukidnon and some parts of Iligan City, is in danger of producing another disaster as portions of it are already without trees that will hold water that would prevent massive flooding.

The CDO river basin is one of the 18 major river basins in the country, eight of which are found in Mindanao.

The river basins in Mindanao are in: Cagayan de Oro, Tagoloan, Ranao (Agus), Mindanao, Agusan, Tagum-Libuganon, Davao, and Buayan-Malungong.

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Climate collision: Paris accord will be first flashpoint

CLIMATE change is likely to be the first issue where US domestic and foreign policy, or the new administration of President-elect Donald J. Trump, collide with the international community.

The policies of President Barack Obama had America among the countries leading the way on this issue, dominating in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change agreed in Paris last year. Obama's administration's actions with respect to environmental issues were mixed, but basically consistent with US intentions to proceed with efforts to reduce America's carbon emissions to meet future targets.

The positions that Trump took during the campaign, presumably to be implemented once he takes

office in January, appear to go in the opposite direction. Not only did he say he would withdraw America from the pact, he also made promises to the electorate, including to bring coal and steel back, that would put America in a position of nonobservance of its previous commitments, and also have it doing serious damage to the global campaign against climate change in general.

The just-completed conference on implementation of the Paris agreement in Marrakesh, Morocco, put the world's dilemma on the subject under the spotlight. The whole world is, of course, aware of America's previous commitments. It is also, of course, fully aware of Trump's stated positions relevant to the subject. The representatives of the current US administration at the conference

were in the position of being unable to commit the country they represented to anything.

One interesting aspect is that China, the world's No. 1 polluter—America is second—showed itself at Marrakesh to stand ready to pick up the banner of world leadership on this important issue if the United States, under Trump, wants to walk off the field of play.

Another complicating factor is that state officials in California and other West Coast states have indicated that they intend to proceed with participating in the world effort to take steps to stop or roll back global warming, no matter what position a Trump administration in Washington may take. To drop out of the Paris accord would take four years, but Trump's government could sim-

ply stop carrying out any action to implement for the four or five years it is in power.

Part of the confusion over the American position comes from statements in the United States that believe that climate change is inevitable, or cyclical, as opposed to man-made and subject to control based on that hypothesis. The case that the world—in the best sense of the term—is capable of withstanding a century of dog-paddling on climate for four or eight years, given the time frame of the phenomenon.

Whatever US policy ultimately turns out to be, it will be a contention for the United States, a Europe led by German Chancellor Angela Merkel and an Asian Chinese President Xi Jin-



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G20 nations urged to increase commitments to Green Climate Fund

MARRAKECH, Morocco – Former Senator and former Secretary of the Philippine Climate Change Commission Heherson T. Alvarez here, called on G20 countries not only to fulfill their financial commitments to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) but to substantially raise it, to be able to make significant assistance to climate-vulnerable countries that are the first casualties of the impacts of climate change, like the Philippines.

Speaking before the Tri-Continental Dialogue, De-Carbonization to Defy Disasters With Climate Solutions, an official side event in the COP 22, Alvarez said that the contributions of the G20 countries to the GCF is measly compared to the national wealth that they have created when they industrialized by using fossil fuels, thus, historically emitting the biggest amount of global greenhouse gas emissions (GHG).

The GCF which was formally established at the 2010 UN Climate Change Conference in Cancun (COP16) set a goal of raising \$100 billion a year by 2020. It is meant to help climate change vulnerable countries cope with disasters caused by climate change. So far, a total of \$10.3 billion has been pledged by 47 countries. The US pledged \$3 billion to the Fund in 2014.

Alvarez, who is also chair of the Advisory Board of Washington DC-based Climate Institute, explained that on average, the GDP of G20 countries is \$4000 billion making the \$100 billion contribution towards climate finance as miniscule. The European Union (average GDP: \$18,398 B) would only have to contribute 0.54 percent of this amount, while the United States whose GDP on average is \$17,416 billion would only have to contribute 0.57 percent.

"If you look at the destructive impact of climate change, noting in particular super typhoon Haiyan in my country, US\$300 million worth of onslaught happened," Alvarez said. He stressed that the Philippines averages 20 typhoons a year and damages costs the country four percent of its annual GDP.

Alvarez's call echoed the apprehension of Philippine President Rodrigo Roa Duterte on the commitments made by developed nations in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC).

During the announcement of Duterte in Manila that he will sign the Paris Agreement after much deliberation with his Cabinet, the President said that he is "not comfortable with it."

"Read again (and again) because even in the matter of contributing the money to a common fund you will find that it does not say about payment of damages that you will incur in a storm or a typhoon like Yolanda," Duterte said.

According to Alvarez, "The UN Green Climate Fund should also help us develop fully the capacity to manage the peoples' grief. For, while we need more technological capacity building assistance for developing countries and more carbon reduction from developed countries, and we have somehow managed physical destruction, it is always far more difficult to address the invisible impact of disasters like the trauma of children who have lost their parents, of families who have lost homes, and of the many other people who have been emotionally dislocated."

"Unless these values are changed so that they become responsive to the threatened climate disaster, the meeting in Marrakech would be just another meeting. It will not be a watershed as many have expected since Paris," Alvarez concluded.

The COP22 Side Event South-South Dialogue served as a platform to deliberate on what vulnerable countries expect in the implementation of the Paris Agreement on climate justice along the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Joining Alvarez in the panel were Ugandan Member of Parliament Cecilia Barbara Atim-Ogwal, lead scientist and founder of WeatherRisk Explore Inc., Dr. Chi-Ming Peng, Debra Boudreaux, vice president of the Tzu Chi Foundation, and Viktor Sebek, chairman of SSCC. It was organized by the Philippine Earthsavers Movement UNESCO Dream Center as the lead convener in partnership with Tzu Chi Foundation, Climate Institute, South-South Cooperation Council (SSCC), WeatherRisk Explore Inc., The International Theatre Institute (ITI-CIDC), Social Change Network and Ugandan Member of Parliament.

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Man stages own 'kidnap'

By NONOY E. LACSON

ZAMBOANGA CITY — A government employee has been found to have staged his own kidnap scheme, drawing police to resolve the problem, and in the end being located. All that, he said was done to get away from his live-in partner, investigation found.

The staged drama started when Gracechelle Mae S. Gubantes, 22, a bank employee in Pagadian City called the police and reported that her live-in partner, Joshua Jear Elia, 23, an employee of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) had been kidnapped Monday afternoon at the bus terminal in Sergio Osmeña town.

Gubantes said that Elia was kidnapped by unidentified men who demanded P150,000 for his freedom. The message was sent through a text message last Monday, at 5:21 p.m. "Ready nyo ang 150,000 within 2 weeks magtext kami after 1 week," the message said.

The police said Gubantes received pictures showing Elia naked with his hands tied, through chat messages in the "Joshua Elia" account.

With the help of new technology, police found the location of Elia. The team raided the GV Hotel in Ozamis City on Wednesday night, and rescued him. But they were in for a surprise. During the interrogation, Elia told the policemen that he concocted the scenario to free himself from Gubantes.

Elia is now in the custody of the police in Ozamis City.

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'Marce' threatens VisMin areas

By Jason Faustino

Several areas in the eastern part of the Philippines were placed under storm signals as tropical depression "Marce" continued its approach.

State weather forecasters said Marce was posited some 160 kilometers east-northeast of Hinatuan, Surigao del Sur with maximum winds of 45 kph and gusts of up to 55 kph.

It was last seen moving west-northwest at 17 kph.

Tropical cyclone warning signal no. 1 was hoisted over the following areas, which can expect up to 60 kph winds within the next 36 hours: Romblon, Cuyo Island, Leyte, Southern Leyte, Bohol.

Cebu, including Bantayan and Camotes Islands, Siquijor, Negros Oriental, Negros Occidental, Iloilo, Capiz, Aklan, Antique,

Guimaras, Surigao del Norte, including Siargao Island, Surigao del Sur, Dinagat Islands, Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Misamis Oriental and Camiguin.

Marce is expected to traverse Visayas over the remainder of the week and exit the Philippine Area of Responsibility early Monday morning.

Core members of the Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council of Iloilo convened for a Pre-Disaster Risk Assessment (PDRA) meeting as preparation for Marce.

Joseph Paul Nogra, chief of the operations unit of the Office of the Civil Defense (OCD) in Iloilo City, said that they would be hearing the preparations of various government agencies as well as technical interpretations of experts on the various warnings raised in anticipation of the



Storm watch Weather specialist Obet Badrina closely monitors the tropical depression "Marce" which was last eyed at 240 km east northeast of Hinatuan, Surigao del Sur. Marce has maximum winds of up to 45 kph near the center, and gustiness of up to 55 kph.

ANAL LABOR

tropical depression.

The Mines and Geosciences

Bureau will apprise members of the possible impact of rains

Daily Tribune

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MARCE threatens VisMin areas

brought by the typhoon. Also, it would like to know how many persons are residing along the path of the weather disturbance.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) will also discuss the necessary relief preparations for the residents who might be affected.

The PDRA meeting will gather representatives of the Department of Interior and Local Government, Department of Science and Technology, Department of Education, Philippine National Police, OCD and DSWD.

In Misamis Oriental, members of the provincial disaster risk reduction and management office (PDRRMO) "scrambled" as Misamis Oriental Gov. Yevgeny Vincente Emano ordered an alert after weather officials raised signal no. 1 in the entire province Wednesday evening.

Emano issued the order in

anticipation of heavy rains that might induce flash floods and landslide in certain areas in the province.

Head of the PDRRMO, Francisco Dy Jr., said his office is always on alert for any untoward incident in the province.

He said that the PDRRMO has established communication with all critical areas in Misamis Oriental where personnel provide situation reports on a regular basis.

According to Dy, the PDRRMO has equipment and personnel who could be deployed to any part of the province at any given notice.

He also said that the provincial social welfare office has enough relief goods that could be distributed to any disaster-stricken area in Misamis Oriental.

Provincial health personnel are also on standby for any emergency, he added.

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China called on to prohibit their fishermen from Panatag

By GENALYN D. KABILING

President Duterte has called on China to prohibit their fishermen from venturing inside the Scarborough Shoal just like the action taken by the Philippines.

The President maintained that the lagoon within the Panatag Shoal should be kept off limits to fishing activities to protect the vital spawning grounds of fishes.

"China should also give the same order not to fish on the spawning ground because kanila iyan rin, dapat guwardiyahan nila. Eh sabi nila kanila (China should also give the same order not to fish on the spawning ground because that's also theirs. They should guard it since they say it's theirs)," Duterte said during a media interview in Davao City.

"Eh ako, akin iyan eh, sabihin ko huwag mong sirain iyan kasi pagkain iyan ng Pilipino (For me, that's ours so I say do not destroy the source of food of Filipinos)," he added.

Duterte said even if there had been no territorial dispute, it was "common sense" for nations "not to destroy the source of the life" in the sea.

The President earlier proposed to declare the vast lagoon inside Panatag Shoal a marine sanctuary effectively banning fishing activities. An executive order on the proposed marine sanctuary is expected to be issued soon.

Duterte's sanctuary proposal was raised in his meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Peru early this week.

The President said he has never denied the Panatag Shoal is part of the country's territory but has restricted local fishermen from operating in the area to ensure a healthy fish stock.

"I do not care what China says about their ownership of that. Me, as President, I claim that sa arbitral (in the arbitral court's decision) ..."