

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

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# DENR

## IN THE NEWS

# The Manila Times

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## DENR-ARMM to sue LGUs not complying with solid waste management law

**COTABATO CITY:** The chief of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (DENR-ARMM) said his office will file charges against local government units (LGUs) in the region that do not comply with Republic Act (RA) 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

DENR-ARMM Secretary Kahal Kedtag said the LGUs will be charged administratively based on RA 7160, or the Local Government Code of 1991.

"We appeal to the LGUs to comply with the law. We need to impose the law," Kedtag said. He added his office will coordinate with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG-ARMM) to compel the LGUs to implement the provisions of RA 9003.

DENR-ARMM also encouraged the LGUs to submit their comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) as mandated by RA 9003. The National Solid Waste Management Council ordered all LGUs to

submit their 10-year SWMP not later than November 30.

RA 9003 defines the policy framework, institutional mechanisms and mandate for LGUs to achieve a 25 percent waste reduction target through an integrated SWMP based on the 3Rs—reduce, reuse and recycle.

Based on a study, the country generated 10.6 million tons of solid waste in 2012 and that volume is expected to double in 2025. This makes the government consider solid waste management a major environmental issue.

The Environment and Management Bureau (EMB)-12 recently conducted a two-day learning activity on ecological solid waste management that was participated in by EMB-ARMM in Cotabato City.

"Waste mismanagement has serious environmental effects (and that resulted in) the passage of RA 9003, we need to implement it at the soonest time possible. The department can provide technical assistance to the LGUs in the formulation and implementation of their SWMPs," Kedtag said. **JULMUNIRI JANNARAL**

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## Coral cure in Bagac, Subic

By Butch Gunio

**B**ALANGA, Bataan—The Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARRD) of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and the Bataan Peninsula State University (BPSU) are implementing a coral reef restoration project in the coastal towns of Bagac, Bataan and Subic, Zambales.

The project involves a roll out of coral transplantation technology using asexually reproduced

corals to improve productivity of coral resources.

Dr. Hermogenes Paguia, BPSU

OIC Vice President for Research, Extension, and Training Services and project leader, said the university conducts the monitoring aspect of the project while the Sangkalikasan Producer Cooperative plants the corals.

He said PCAARRD provides the funding that started in 2014 and set to be completed this year.

He added 25 coral fragments were being planted in one square meter area.

A coral nursery was established under the sea.

Paguia is the project leader in monitoring Bagac area.

On the other hand, BPSU on leave VP for Research, Extension,

and Training Services Prof. Rudy Flores is the monitoring project leader in Subic.

Sol Rosano, support staff, said members of BPSU team involved in the project underwent formal training in diving, and are now certified divers.

Paguia said seminars were being conducted to affected communities educating them on the value of coral restoration in climate change mitigation, sustainable fisheries, and underwater tourism.

He said the communities are also educated on the effects of destructive fishing practices to marine resources.

He pointed out the involvement

of the community was an integral component of the project.

Philippine coral reefs are in serious deterioration and continue to suffer massive decline in abundance, diversity and habitat structure due to anthropogenic activities such as pollution, overfishing, destructive fishing practices using dynamite or cyanide, collecting live corals for the aquarium market and mining coral for building.

Natural factors such as typhoons, cyclones and hurricanes have also contributed to the destruction of coral reefs as these produce strong waves that break apart or flatten large coral heads, and scatter fragments.

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## AFTER DRAWING FLAK, TOURISM EVENT PROMOTING HUNDRED ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK PROBED

DAGUPAN CITY—The city government of Alaminos is investigating the environmental impact of a promotional event last week which drew flak for allowing 5,000 balloons and 5,000 sky lanterns to, according to environmentalists, pollute the Hundred Islands National Park.

It is also looking into the legality and benefits of the Spark Hundred Islands undertaken by the Triple 8 Travel and Tours, said Sol Tablang, city tourism officer.

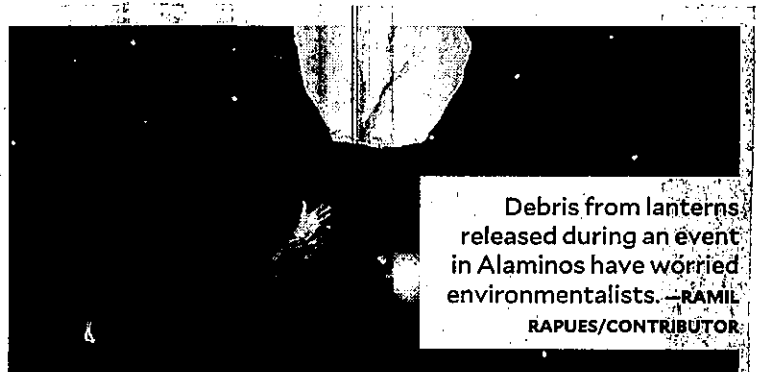
The Oct. 29 event, however, was endorsed by the Alaminos government, and was cleared by

the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Hundreds of people, many of them tourists, released the sky lanterns and balloons at the Luciao Wharf, the gateway to the national park.

Environmentalists criticized the event, saying the balloons could have landed in the sea and been eaten by marine animals like dolphins. Balloons may be toxic to sea animals, they said.

Tablang said they let loose balloons and lanterns in a trial on Oct. 28, a day before the event, and organizers had de-



Debris from lanterns released during an event in Alaminos have worried environmentalists. —RAMIL RAPUES/CONTRIBUTOR

termined that the wind would push the balloons inland.

After the event, government workers went around coastal villages to check if balloons and

lantern debris fell there, but residents did not report finding any, he said.

Venus Balsa, city information officer, said the city gov-

ernment and the organizer would address all concerns and would abide by recommendations of the DENR and the tourism office.

In a statement posted online, the Triple 8 Travel and Tours said the company and the city government "understand the environmental effects and with the use of existing waste disposal of the city both in land and sea, we went ahead with the project."

A permit was issued by the Pangasinan provincial environment and natural resources office on Oct. 28. "Because the Hundred Islands is one of the

first national parks in the Philippines, extreme measures were planned even before the event to guarantee zero to minimal environmental damages," the company said.

It said the hydrogen gas used to inflate the balloons transformed into water vapor when released into the air. Balloons that would fly toward the city center would be easier to collect and dispose, it said.

It added that the materials used for the sky lanterns were "completely biodegradable and the paper and the base were all nontoxic." —YOLANDA SOTELINO

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### ROADTALK

#### SOUTHERN SOUJOURN 3:

## Cebu via the southwestern corridor

Text and photos by Bernard L. Supatran



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Roadtalk, we took you to a land trip around the gentle city of Dumaguete and the beguiling province of Negros Oriental. To continue the two-province inter-island loop, we'll take you back to the Queen City of the South via the southwestern coast of Cebu.

Recent travel advisories notwithstanding, this corridor is one of the most interesting and scenic you'll come across with. When I first passed this 25 years ago, it was a rough and dusty six-hour ride, but the wayside panorama was so enticing that you wanted to come back once the highway tasted concrete.

The biggest plus for the land trip is that it is cheaper than a fast craft, more than double the price.

#### Pit Stop No. 1: Samboan

Bato port in Samboan has been the traditional crossing point from Tampi wharf in Amalan, Negros Oriental, especially for roll-on roll-off (roro) barges.

The multi-tiered Aguinid Falls, a few hundred meters away from the provincial road,

#### Pit Stop No. 2: Ginatilan

This lesser-known municipality is the birthplace of San Pedro Calungsod, the second Filipino saint, where a chapel has been erected in his honor. Several century-old ancestral homes made of hardwood stand proudly, withstanding the ravages of time.

#### Pit Stop No. 3: Malabuyoc

Tucked in the interiors is Mainit Hot Spring, a series of natural thermal pools where you can get a rejuvenating dip, an old-fashioned hilot massage,

and a back-to-basics but sumptuous lunch prepared by the locals.

There is a series of small cascades uphill which can provide a relaxing hydromassage.

#### Pit Stop No. 4: Badian

This bucolic town has shot up to prominence from obscurity with the recent introduction of canyoneering adventure deep into the jungles. Extreme adventure-lovers jump a series of falls in between the gorges that end at Kawasan Falls, a

After an adventure-packed journey, you can call it a day and hie off to Badian Island Resort and Spa, one of southern Cebu's pioneer star-rated lodgings. Situated just a few minutes away from the mainland, this eight-hectare patch of land is an eco-tourism hideaway, wellness destination with its signature therapeutic massages, aquasports haven and scuba diving spot, and gourmet getaway with its luscious cuisine and well-appointed facilities.

Those on a budget can settle at the Lambug Beach Homestay, which offers a front row seat to a mile-long beach of powdery sand and gin-clear water. Think of Boracay 30 years ago, minus



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Mainit Springs of Malabuyoc



Canyoneering in Badian by Johnny Manabat

the crass commercialism and madding crowd.

For mountaineers, Badian is the entry point to Osmena Peak, the highest point in the mountain ranges of central Cebu.

### Pit Stop No. 5: Moalboal

This resort town is one of my new favorite haunts because of its wondrous waterworld-the talcum-fine shores of White Beach in Bgy. Savedra and the amazing marine life beneath the surface. Its name might sound grotesque, but believe me, it has among the most enviable shores in Cebu province.

With more than a dozen validated dive sites, Moalboal's claim to fame is the Panagsama

House Reef just across Savedra Dive Center, the leading dive shop in the area. Located just a few meters away from the shore, the reef is home to the sought-after "sardine run" where tens of thousands of sardines run back and forth in this aquatic playground, mesmerizing even the most seasoned divers and underwater photographers. This unique "rush hour" can be seen in the shallow

now world-famous scenic Bojo River. A community-based tourism project, guests are treated to a relaxing 1.4-kilometer river cruise amidst the mangroves that is habitat to rare flora and fauna. The one-hour tour aboard an outrigger paddleboat empties into Tanon Strait facing Negros.

Visitors are given a red carpet welcome with engaging folk songs and dances rendered by the women's organization, and a sumptuous home-cooked buffet lunch.

In 2015, the Bojo River Village Tour project was accorded the prestigious Best Community-Based Initiative Award by the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), and recently by the Global Top 100 Sustainable Destinations.

Aloguinsan also offers a quick tour at the Farmhouse which includes a walk around the vegetable farm, livestock area, chicken coop, vermiculture, and tilapia pond for organic back-to-nature practices, capped with naturally-grown snacks and delicacies.

For a glimpse of the town's history, swing by Baluarte, the remnants of a fortification atop



The writer and wife at the Bojo River Cruise in Aloguinsan

Due to the presence of foreigners, the Panagsama area has become a food strip for international dining, among them Marina Cucina Italiana, a part of the La Tegola group, one of Cebu's prominent resto chains that takes pride in its authentic Italian cuisine.

### Pit Stop No. 6: Barili

Cebu's mountainous terrain has gifted it with a plethora of waterfalls that can give you an overload. Situated just a few kilometers from the road is Mantayupan Falls which has one of the more developed trails, visitor picnic cottages, and recreational activities.

### Pit Stop No. 7: Aloguinsan

From a narrow junction in Barili, take a detour to this obscure town which is home to the

From here, you can conclude your suroy and head directly to Cebu via the scenic Trans-Central Highway.

To fully enjoy the sights along the way, plan out the route using a reliable tourist map or guide book. Avail the service of tour operators and coordinate with municipal tourism authorities. Hiring reputable tour guides is highly-recommendable for a worry-free sojourn, and to avoid snags along the way that may derail an otherwise enjoyable road trip.

In the next Roadtalk episode, we'll circumnavigate the rest of Cebu, including the touristic islands of Camotes, Bantayan and Malapascua, reminiscent of the Suroy Sugbo tours. And you don't even need to have your own car to enjoy the allure of Conde Nast's fifth best island in the world.



Badian Island's Sandy White Beach

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## Climate affecting nearly all life

MIAMI—Most life on Earth is already being changed by the warming climate, even though the rise in global temperatures since pre-industrial times has been rather slight, researchers warned on Thursday.

The study in the journal *Science* found that 82 percent of key ecological processes—including genetic diversity and migration patterns—are being altered by global warming.

These effects extend to land, oceans and freshwater environments, even though the temperatures have risen just about 1.87 degrees Fahrenheit (1 degree Celsius) over pre-industrial times due to fossil fuel burning.

"We now have evidence that, with only a about one degree C of warming globally, major impacts are already being felt," said lead study author Brett Scheffers, a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature Climate Change Specialist Group and assistant professor at the

University of Florida.

"These range from individual genes changing, significant shifts in species' physiology and physical features such as body size, and species moving to entirely new areas."

These changes will affect humans by causing disease outbreaks, inconsistent crop yields and cutting down on fishery productivity, threatening food security, experts said.

The study, which analyzed 94 ecological processes as documented in peer-reviewed literature, also warned that the more ecosystems change, the less likely they may be to guard against the harshest effects of climate change.

Unhealthy forests will no longer be able to sequester large amounts of carbon, for instance.

Increasingly warm oceans will no longer act as an effective buffer against temperature rise, and climate-related floods, sea-level rise and cyclones will get worse. AFP