

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

19 NOV 2016

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DENR

IN THE NEWS

THE STANDARD

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

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Nickel miner cleared to continue operations

GLOBAL Ferronickel Holdings Inc. said Friday it received a copy of the audit report containing the findings and recommendations of the mine audit conducted by the Environment Department.

FNI, the second largest nickel producer in the country and the largest single lateritic mine exporter in the world, said that based on the report, Platinum Group Metals Corp., the company's operating arm in Cagdianao, Surigao del Norte, was allowed to continue its operations because it was ISO 14001 certified and compliant with the policies, environmental laws, rules and regulations of the Philippine Mining Act and on the issued environmental compliance certificate.

"A series of interviews with local stakeholders including barangay officials, schoolteachers, farmers, fisherfolk and members of the Mamanwa tribal group also revealed social acceptability of the mine operation to be very high with several social development projects in place which are well implemented," FNI said.

The mining company said barangay officials provided a strong and unequivocal positive response to the contributions of PGMC through its social development and mining program in the delivery of livelihood, health, education and infrastructure projects in barangays Hayanggabon and Cagdianao.

"They view PGMC as a vital partner of the government to boost economic growth and development in the area," FNI said.

Anna Leah E. Gonzales

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South African mining firms won't pull out of PH

BAGUIO CITY—South African-owned mining companies operating in the Philippines will not pull out their investments in the country amid uncertainty over the Duterte administration's audit of over 40 mining firms here.

Godfrey Oliphant, deputy minister of the South Africa Department of Mineral Resources, said one of their companies, Far Southeast Gold Resources Inc., is considered in South Africa as a credible mining company "which is brave in infusing investments inside and outside their country."

FSGRI entered into a joint venture with Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. for the exploration and development of the company's Victoria gold project in Mankayan, Benguet.

"We just want certainty for the sustained operations of our company in their pending projects," Oliphant stressed on the sidelines of the Annual National Mine Safety and Environment Conference at Camp John Hay here.

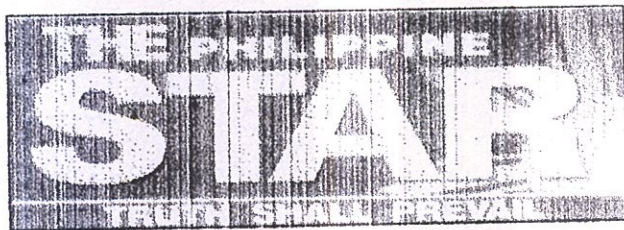
"Uncertainty in the country's mineral industry will definitely affect foreign investments in the rapidly growing industry,

that is why it is now up to the government to provide foreign investors with certainty so that there be liquidity in the infusion of fresh capital in the industry," the South African minister added.

Oliphant said the PH government must set the standards of the mining industry to help stabilize the contribution of mining to the economy, adding that in

South Africa, the contribution of mining to their economy is roughly 70 percent.

However, in the Philippines, mining contributes only 0.7 percent to the gross domestic product, which is considered by many sectors as insignificant. However, host and neighboring communities consider mining as a key economic driver in their respective areas. **Dexter A. See**



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DOE reviews plan for more mine-mouth plants

Even amid the push for cleaner power sources, industry players are still promoting the development of coal mine-mouth plants which they believe are viable investments to lower electricity costs and ensure supply security by stripping out importations and transportation of fuel to power plants.

The development of coal mine-mouth plants is being studied by the Department of Energy (DOE) since it allows the country to develop indigenous fuel sources and not rely on importation, Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi said during the Coal Business and Policy Forum yesterday.

"We have our own resources. So what I said is, let's use the natural resources of the country," he said.

Cusi said the agency would undertake a study on the con-

cept of putting up a coal plant near the mine site.

Coal mine-mouth plants are built close to a coal mine and this translates to lower electricity cost by removing the transport cost, Philippine Chamber of Coal Mines Inc. (PhilCoal) executive director Arnulfo Robles said in the same event.

"If the plant is separate from the mine site, there's handling that will add up to the cost of coal [power]. So if you put up the plant near or adjacent to the mine site, you remove that cost, and that basically reduces the cost for coal, which is the fuel for the power plant," he said.

Based on a study co-authored by Robles, the cost of generating electricity from mine-mouth plants is estimated between P2.61 per kilowatt-hour and P4.45 per kwh.

By DANESSA RIVERA

The study showed there are 10 potential mine sites for mine-mouth plants which are near the electricity grid and substations.

"The only way these mines can be viable is by putting up the power plant as close as possible," PhilCoal chairman Rufino Bomasang said in the same event.

"Otherwise, if you do not put up these mine-mouth power plants, these available resources will never be developed," he said.

However, the development of mine-mouth plants face transmission issues, since coal mines are usually located in remote areas, and public acceptance.

"Mines are site specific, normally they are in the remote areas where the power need is not huge. So what you do is come up with a transmis-

sion highway," Robles said. "The second is social acceptability. Those are the things you have to consider as well other than the cost of producing electricity."

Environment groups are urging the government not to allow the development of coal plants which are seen as a major contributor to carbon emissions and the degradation of the environment.

But Marcial Ocampo, a financial consultant for energy projects, said there is potential to shift from coal to renewable energy by developing mine-mouth plants.

He said mine-mouth power plants using circulating fluidized bed combustion technology and low calorific value lignite – a type of coal mostly found in the country – are convertible to biomass-fired power plants, which converts waste materials to energy.

PEOPLES JOURNALS

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NEWS

Global cooperation can mitigate climate change -- Lopez

ENVIRONMENT Secretary Gina Lopez has emphasized the importance of cooperation among nations in combating climate change and of economic development in efforts to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

In delivering the Philippine statement at the Joint High-Level Segment of the climate change summit in Marrakech, Morocco on Monday, Lopez said should the change in the temperature escalate to over 1.5 degrees, whatever economic gains will surely be lost.

"The planet simply cannot afford an indecisive ambiguity about what needs to be done. The situation is clear - anything more than 1.5 degrees will destroy possibilities for quality of life," Lopez said.

"We do not need to give up economic growth -- from clean energy, to sustainable transportation, to all facets of life. We need to have the courage to change the way we do things. We cannot and must not build an economy based on suffering,"

she added.

Lopez said the Philippines will embark on a massive expansion of mangrove and bamboo plantations to strengthen the ecological and economic resilience of local communities in the face of climate change and its devastating impacts.

"We will go heavily into mangroves because, as our experience with typhoon Yolanda showed, the islands with mangroves suffered 80-percent less damage to lives and property," Lopez pointed out.

"The thrust will not only save our islands but will create economic zones because of the resulting increase in marine life. If handled well, our people can get out of poverty," she stressed.

The DENR chief said the Philippines will plant millions of bamboos, which not only perform "superbly in sequestering carbon from the atmosphere but could also be used as material for buildings, low-cost housing, floor tiles and textiles, and for cleaning polluted waterways."

With the planned ex-



LOPEZ

pansion of its mangrove and bamboo plantations, Lopez said the Philippines will prove that climate change adaption and mitigation and inclusive economic growth do not necessarily have to be separate choices.

"These objectives can all be achieved given the right approach," Lopez said.

Lopez was tasked by Malacañang to attend the Marrakech summit, officially billed as the 22nd Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

It served as the first meeting of governments since the adoption of the historic Paris Agreement on Climate Change in December last year.

Cory Martinez

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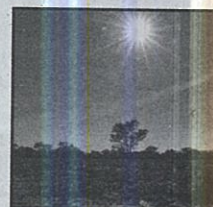
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STUDY

Climate change affects nearly all life on Earth



MIAMI, Florida, United States (AFP) — Most life on Earth is already being changed by the warming climate, even though the rise in global temperature 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 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 about one degree C of warming globally, major impacts are already being felt," said lead study author Brett Scheffers, 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.

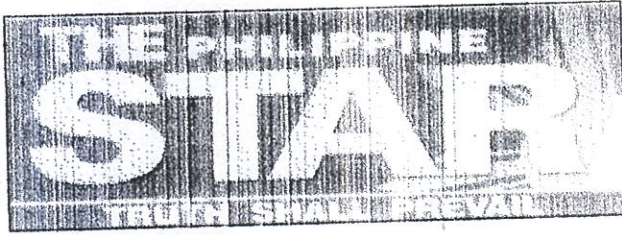
Increasingly warm oceans will no longer act as an effective buffer against temperature rise, and climate-related floods, sea-level rise and cyclones will get worse.

Since people depend on healthy ecosystems for food and clean water, the more the natural environment changes, the more people's livelihoods will be at risk.

"We are simply astonished at the level of change we observed, which many of us in the scientific community were not expecting for decades," said senior author James Watson from the University of Queensland and Wildlife Conservation Society, member of the IUCN Climate Change Specialist Group.

"It is no longer sensible to consider this a concern for the future, and if we don't act quickly to curb emissions it is likely that every ecosystem across Earth will fundamentally change in our lifetimes."

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DENR calls for mangrove, bamboo planting

By RHODINA VILLANUEVA

Environment Secretary Gina Lopez has called for the country to undertake massive planting of mangroves and bamboo to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change.

In a statement delivered at the Climate Change Conference in Marrakech, Morocco, Lopez said there is a need for more mangroves because the islands without mangroves suffered 80 percent damage in terms of lives and property due to typhoons and calamities that hit the country.

"This thrust will not only save our islands but will result in economic zones because of the resultant increase in fish, shrimps and other sea life. If handled well, our people can get out of poverty," she added.

Lopez also cited the importance of planting bamboo. She said bamboo is not only "superb in carbon sequestration" but also serves as good material in building strong six-story buildings and low-cost housing, in producing floor tiles and textiles and in cleaning polluted waterways.

"In essence, adaptation, mitigation and inclusive economic growth do not have to be separate activities or choices. These objectives can all be achieved given the right approach," she said.

"We do not need to give up economic growth – from clean energy, to sustainable transportation, to all facets of life. We need to have the courage to change the way we do things. We cannot and must not build an economy based on suffering.

At an increase of .8 degrees, we suffered Super Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda), which is the worst storm surge in the planet's history wherein more than ten thousand died. Ironical. So much to give. So much to lose," she added.

The Manila Times

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Four nations map course to carbon-free economies

FIVES SERVICE

MARRAKESH, Morocco: When it comes to purging fossil fuels from the global economy by mid-century -- our only hope of staving off catastrophic climate change -- it turns out that you can't get there from here without a good map.

That's the thinking behind detailed, long-term plans for switching from dirty to clean energy unveiled this week by the United States, Canada, Mexico and Germany at the United Nations climate talks in Marrakesh.

Overcoming sharp internal debate, the German government led the way with sector-by-sector scenarios that would remove up to 95 percent of its CO2 emissions by 2050, compared to 1990 levels.

Green groups said there were too many sops to big business, but it was a world-first.

The "three amigos" of North America jointly-released their blueprints on Wednesday, with the 100-page US "mid-century strategy" for the globe's largest economy taking center stage.

The US pledge to slash carbon-pollution by four-fifths from a 2005 benchmark dated from the chaotic 2009 Copenhagen climate summit, but had never been spelled out.

"The intent here is to think in the long term, not only in the short term," the Obama administration's top climate negotiator Jonathan Pershing told journalists ahead of the November 7-18 climate meet.

"At the moment, what we have from the world are commitments for 2025 or 2030, but we know that by 2050 we've got to have deep decarbonization."

Those medium-term, national CO2 reduction pledges -- annexed to the landmark 196-nation Paris

A fundamental change

The imperative for rich nations to stop burning fossil fuels within roughly four decades comes from the UN's top climate science authority, the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC).

Emerging juggernauts such as China and India, whose economies are still powered in large measure by coal, would have to follow suit toward the end of the century, it says.

"That is a dramatic transformation, one that requires a fundamental change in our infrastructure -- how we generate power, how we use it, what fuels we use, what vehicles we drive," said Jeffrey Sachs, a special adviser to UN chief Ban Ki-moon and director of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

"Because our infrastructure is so long-lasting, we have to start now to build that long-term transformation," he told Agence France-Presse.

Indeed, the 2025 and 2030 targets not only fall short, they could -- without a clear view of the long game -- lead countries into making disastrous choices, experts say.

To fulfill the Paris pledges, for example, moving from highly-polluting coal-fired power plants to cleaner natural gas -- a shift occurring in the United States and elsewhere -- would seem to make sense.

But if the mid-century objective is a carbon-neutral economy, spending hundreds of billions of dollars on equipment ultimately incompatible with that goal does not.

"You have to start thinking about the investments that you are doing now in long-lived infrastructure that is going to continue to be

Ignorant and hostile noises

Emissions from internal combustion engines can still be reduced, but the research and money needed for that may be better spent on improving electric and fuel-cell cars.

Three pillars of the US plan -- energy efficiency, electrification and removing fossil fuels from electricity generation -- were first detailed in the DDPP, a 16-nation effort that grew from a 2012 study in the journal Science laying out how the state of California could keep its pledge to cut greenhouse gas emissions 80 percent by 2050.

"Increasingly, that transformation is moving into the realm of market choice," said Williams, the lead author of the Science study.

Government clearly has a critical role to play, but in the United States, he added, most regulator decisions on energy take place at the state level.

Which means that even if US president-elect and avowed climate skeptic Donald Trump wanted to reverse the trend, he might not have the leverage.

"I don't expect California or a host of other states to slow down one iota because the federal government is making ignorant and hostile noises," Williams told AFP.

For the business sector, "long-term roadmaps" help provide certainty that governments are serious about moving to a low-carbon society, said Peter Baker, president and chief executive officer of the World Business Council.

"That's when finance will start to flow to these investments," he said in Marrakesh.

So far, 25 nations have expressed their intent to formulate 2050 plans, including China and India, Pershing said.

AFP

Development of sustainable, resilient structures urged

By Amy R. Remo
@amyremoINQ

The need to climate-proof homes, buildings, and infrastructure in general has never been more apparent than today.

Nor has it been more urgent for governments to adopt modern land-use and urbanization plans to help safeguard the safety of their people.

Every year, the havoc wrought by extreme natural disasters has forced 26 million people into poverty and has resulted in \$520 million in economic losses, according to the latest report released earlier this week by the World Bank and the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR).

In the Philippines alone, for example, an estimated one million Filipinos slid into poverty after the 2013 Typhoon

Yolanda (international name: Typhoon Haiyan) sapped \$12.9 billion from the national economy and destroyed over a million homes.

And that's just one typhoon.

"Severe climate shocks threaten to roll back decades of progress against poverty. Storms, floods, and droughts have dire human and economic consequences, with poor people often paying the heaviest price. Building resilience to disasters not only makes economic sense, it is a moral imperative," World Bank Group president Jim Yong Kim said in a statement.

The new report, entitled "Unbreak-

It also assessed, for the first time, the benefits of resilience-building interventions in the 117 countries studied. Such interventions included early warning systems, improved access to personal banking, insurance policies, and social protection systems that could help people better respond to and recover from shocks.

Limited ability

The sad reality is that disaster losses disproportionately affect poor people, who have a limited ability to cope with them.

Poor people are typically more exposed to natural hazards, losing more as a share of their wealth and are often unable to draw on support from family, friends, financial systems, or governments. Add the fact that not all governments have the necessary climate-

smart policies that better protect the most vulnerable.

And this is highly evident in terms of housing.

According to the report, households living in the slums or informal settlements constructed of wood, bamboo, and mud, and occupying steep slopes will suffer more damage from a natural disaster than the households whose homes are made of stone or brick. This only goes to show that, "housing vulnerability decreases with income."

In the Philippines this means that

mitigating the adverse effects of natural hazards and environmental changes. In China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam, wealthier households are more likely to invest in proactive ex ante adaptation measures."

Building resilience

Efforts to build poor people's resilience are already gaining ground, according to report. For example, two weeks after Cyclone Pam struck Vanuatu in 2015, the small island state received a \$1.9 million cash injection by way of the Pacific Catastrophe Risk Insurance Program (PCRAFI), the first program of its kind in the South Pacific.

In the Philippines, following Typhoon Yolanda, the government increased grants and temporarily lifted the conditions on a cash transfer program to provide

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RESILIENT STRUCTURES PAGE 2/3

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urgent human-
itarian support
to affected

households.

On top of these measures, however, several policies can be implemented to reduce exposure to disasters. The option most often discussed to reduce losses from natural disasters was to ensure that people do not live where they could be affected by disasters such as floods or landslides, according to the report.

The WB and the GFDRR also cited the need for the governments' land-use and urbanization plans to be risk-sensitive.

"Land-use regulations can help by ensuring that new development occurs in places that are safe or can be easily and cheaply protected. They can also avoid unchecked urban development that leaves too little porous green space, which further increases runoff and flood risk," the report stated.

"Implementing risk-based land-use plans remains challenging, however. Countries need strong institutions that can ensure that land-use plans are actually enforced. In most of the world today, risk-sensitive land-use plans face strong political economy obstacles and are only rarely enforced," it added.

One of the main obstacles, the report explained, was the asymmetry between the costs and benefits of risk-sensitive land use planning.

For instance, the costs of flood zoning are immediate, visible, and concentrated in the form of reduced land values for landowners and higher housing costs for tenants. By contrast, the "benefits are avoided losses—which nobody can see—some time in the future and for unknown people. In such a context, the opponents of flood zoning are usually vocal and well organized, whereas the beneficiaries are absent, making such poli-

remain efficient in spite of changes in climatic and environmental conditions.

The report further pointed out that building norms and stronger infrastructure are critical. One reason, it said, that "poor people lose a larger share of their assets and income is that they live in buildings with low resistance to natural hazards." And many factors influence building vulnerability.

"One factor is the lack of clear and effectively enforced land and property rights, which discourages poor households from making more robust and durable—but also costlier—investments in their homes. Facing

the permanent risk of eviction, they are unlikely to invest in the physical resilience of their homes, such as retrofitting to strengthen homes against disasters," the report explained.

"Another factor is the quality of construction and the role of building regulations. The world will see the construction of 1 billion new dwelling units by 2050. However, this growth may lead to a rapid increase in risk," it added.

Local initiatives

In the Philippines, many local property developers have long been advocating for sustainable, green, and environment-friendly architecture. And this is evident

in their thrust towards creating more resilient communities and townships.

Rockwell Land Corp. for instance, earlier commissioned a study for the 100-year flood cycle history of the land where all its developments sit, while Century Properties previously reported of putting in place a cluster-wide flood-prevention and mitigation system in one of its projects, and securing an extensive flood risk analysis for another development.

Ayala Land Inc., through its 19 estates, has also demonstrated how it remained a true steward of the environment, as it makes it a point to study the impacts of their projects on the environment, society, and economy.

ArthaLand Corp. meanwhile has the Arya Residences, which is currently regarded as the benchmark of green structures in the Philippines by the Philippine Green Building Council (PhilGBC), and is the first and only top-end development to be registered under the US Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program.



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DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE, RESILIENT STRUCTURES URGENT



STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Herald Suites employees planting rambutan, narra, calamansi, in Tanay Rizal.

HERALD SUITES ANNUAL 2016 TREEPLANTING

PLANTING WITH PURPOSE

The recent annual tree planting CSR activity saw 98 Herald Suites employees participating including DENR staff and the local community. The treeplanting was conducted in Brgy San Andres Tanay, Rizal (KM52 Marcos Highway) and covered an area of 4 hectares. The area is a protected watershed.

Guided by participating members of the local community, everyone grouped into pairs to plant the trees. Each person planted 20 trees.

Despite the difficult ground conditions at the site due to it being the rainy season, the entire activity was completed according to schedule. The Herald Suites treeplanting site is profiled and monitored several times within the year hence the activity becomes an ongoing social responsibility endeavor and reinforces each employee's commitment to do their small share in environmental protection for future generations.

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Bill filed to shield key river system

BAGUIO CITY—Cordillera lawmakers joined a colleague from Cagayan province in filing a bill in Congress that would ensure protection of the Chico River Basin, one of the major river systems in the Cordillera Region.

Kalinga Rep. Allen Jesse Mangaang and Cagayan Rep. Randolph Ting are proposing the creation of the Chico River Basin Development Authority to guarantee the protection and management of the Chico River watershed and water system.

Mangaang said the would-be agency aims to provide focused management and intervention in the development, preservation and sustainability of the Chico River. It will “coordinate and implement programs that will ensure the participation of all stakeholders, government and non-government groups and individuals.”

Meanwhile, Agriculture Secretary Manny Pinol has recommended a “serious study” for the de-silting and dredging of the Chico River and Cagayan River, which caused damages in the province of Kalinga and Cagayan during Typhoon Lawin.

From its headwaters in the tri-boundary of Ifugao, Benguet and Mountain Province, the Chico River Basin covers an

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Gatchalian bats for 'nuclear policy' prior to BNPP repowering

By MYRNA M. VELASCO

Without institutionalized nuclear policy first, Senate Committee on Energy Chairman Sherwin T. Gatchalian indicated that he is not supportive of the Department of Energy's (DOE) move on the immediate repowering of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP).

His stand leans on urging the department to instead "commission a comprehensive feasibility study on the prospects of utilizing nuclear power in the Philippines before pushing ahead with the construction or refurbishment of any nuclear plants, including the BNPP."

Gatchalian averred "we cannot jump into nuclear energy on a piecemeal basis," expounding that the feasibility study will be "critical to objectively assess the merits of adding nuclear power to our energy mix."

The lawmaker views nuclear technology as part of the country's energy future – but such must only be advanced with all the imperative policy and

regulatory frameworks as well as the requisite human skills, safety and security of nuclear power operations.

"We need to do our homework first before pulling the trigger on BNPP or any other nuclear project," he said.

Energy Secretary Alfonso G. Cusi jolted industry sensibilities when he announced to the media that he already secured the go-signal of President Rodrigo Duterte to finally bring to commercial operation the long-mothballed Bataan nuclear facility.

The plant's refurbishment was anticipated to cost \$1.0 billion, although some experts who already assessed it earlier noted that such scale of investment may not be enough.

Gatchalian's take on the proposed feasibility is to involve independent international experts on geology, nuclear physics, engineering and other key fields "to independently assess the prospects of nuclear power in the Philippines." Such shall also rope in environmental and community safety as fundamental concerns.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

SAFETY ISSUES

REVIVAL OF BATAAN NUCLEAR POWER PLANT NOT YET DEFINITE

By Leila B. Salaverria
@LeilasINQ

There is nothing definite yet about the revival of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP) while the \$1 billion needed to activate the mothballed facility is not included in the 2017 budget, according to Sen. Loren Legarda.

Legarda, defending the budget of the Department of Energy (DOE) Thursday evening, said the proposal to use nuclear power still had to undergo an intensive study.

Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi was just keeping an "open mind" about the idea of using nuclear power in the country, Legarda added.

Earlier reports said the President had allowed Cusi to proceed with plans to revive the BNPP, but also to pay special attention to safety and security aspects of the plant's operation.

The DOE has created the Nuclear Energy Program Implementing Organization that would undertake a comprehen-



Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi checks the still neatly sealed and labeled control buttons of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant. The facility was completed in 1984 at a cost of \$2 billion but was mothballed and never produced a single watt of electricity. —CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

sive study on the use of nuclear power, guided by the conditions listed by the International Atomic Energy Agency for developing a national infrastructure for nuclear power.

But quoting Cusi, Legarda said the energy secretary "had no clear direction from the President saying that opening

BNPP is a clear priority."

She said energy officials had realized that there were both political controversies and technical issues that might arise from the proposal to put the BNPP to work.

"So No. 1, it is not provided for in the 2017 budget. It will take intense studying and time

to be able to answer whether this is a roadmap we want to take," she said, under questioning from Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian.

Legarda also said it was difficult to determine when the study of the BNPP revival would be completed, pointing out that it would be a complex and technical process.

"[It is a] preliminary study and he is to convince all of us," she added.

One of the things to be considered is the location of the facility near a fault line, which some said could make its operation dangerous for the Philippines. But there are those who say that the fault line was too far away to pose a threat.

Gatchalian, who chairs the Senate's energy committee, pointed out that Vietnam had junked a 2,000-megawatt nuclear power plant project due to cost and safety concerns.

"With global sentiments over the nuclear source of energy, they were being cautious, so I think we should take note of that," he added. INQ

The Manila Times

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QC BENEFITS FROM REGULATED PLASTIC BAG USE

QUEZON City Mayor Herbert Bautista said the city is beginning to reap benefits of an ordinance that regulates the use of plastic carry-all bags. Bautista made the statement after turnover of 1,500 chairs manufactured from plastic materials recovered from trash bins to Pasong Tamo Elementary School. The mayor, with Frederika Rentoy, head of the Quezon City Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department, and School Division superintendent Elizabeth Quesada accepted the school chairs donated by Robinson's Supermarket.

A Commission on Audit (COA) report released in July took notice of the drop in Quezon City government's garbage hauling expenses with the reduced volume of trash. The COA report said Quezon City paid P768,305,831 for "environment/sanitary services" in 2015 that was P246 million or 24.2 percent less than the P1.014 billion spent the previous year. Quezon City was the biggest spender in garbage hauling in Metro Manila in 2014.

JING VILLAMENTE