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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



Growth hubs outside NCR seen crucial vs disasters

BY SAMUEL P. MEDENILLA
@sam_medenilla

ASIDE from improving safety protocols, the government is also targeting to boost economic activity outside of the National Capital Region (NCR) as a way of minimizing casualties due to natural disasters in Metro Manila.

During a Cabinet meeting on Monday, officials pitched the idea of reducing disaster risks in the NCR by drawing people away from a region that houses a number of business districts, such as Makati City.

Providing incentives to improve economic activities outside of the NCR was proposed by Mitigation and Disaster Risk Reduction Chairman and Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy A. Cimatu and National Defense Secretary Delfin N. Lorenzana.

Presidential Spokesman and Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador S. Panelo said the proposal was approved by most members of the Cabinet.

"We approved the motion for that suggestion," Panelo said.

To further improve development

SEE "GROWTH HUBS," A2

outside of NCR, Panelo said Cabinet officials are now considering the recommendation of National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon to formalize the designation of the Cabinet Officers for Regional Development and Security through an executive order.

The administration is currently bracing for the so-called "Big One" or the anticipated movement in West Valley Fault in the NCR, which is expected to cause a 7.2-magni-

tude earthquake.

Based on government projections, fatalities from the incident could reach 31,000.

Panelo said Cimatu and Lorenzana have suggested legislation that will create the Department of Resiliency to operationalize government efforts aimed at making the country an "earthquake-resilient archipelago."

Until the creation of the new department, Panelo said they required all government agencies to come out with their public-service continuity plans in case the Big One happens.



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Cabinet cluster backs perks, incentives to decongest NCR

PRESIDENT Rodrigo R. Duterte will “most likely” issue an executive order to offer incentives to businesses locating outside of Metro Manila in order to help decongest the National Capital Region, as recommended by a section of the Cabinet, Malacañang said Monday.

In a statement, the President’s Spokesperson Salvador S. Panelo said Mr. Duterte’s Cabinet Cluster on Climate Change Adaptation, Mitigation, and Disaster Risk Reduction (CCAM-DRR) proposed during the Cabinet meeting Monday to decongest Metro Manila “by reducing its population density and incentivizing the economic activities outside of the region.”

Asked during a news conference at the Palace, Mr. Panelo said the Cabinet “approved” the recommendation.

“*Inaprubahan namin iyong ano eh, iyong motion to approve the suggestion,*” he said.

Whether an executive order will be issued, Mr. Panelo said: “Most likely.”

Mr. Panelo added that the CCAM-DRR also proposed “to require all agencies to submit their public service continuity plans should The Big One occur.”

He said the CCAM-DRR also wants the next Congress to pass the bill creating the Department of Disaster Resiliency that will serve as the government’s lead agency for the implementation of risk reduction policies, programs, and projects.

“Having an earthquake resilient archipelago was highlighted by Cabinet Cluster on Climate Change Adaptation, Mitigation and Disaster Risk Reduction Chairperson and Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, together with National Defense Secretary Delfin N. Lorenzana. They recommended that the Office of the President, through the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office, push for the passage of the creation of the Department of Resiliency in the 18th Congress,” he said. — **Arjay L. Balinbin**



₱19-M pondo para tamang pamamahala ng basura

NAGLAAN ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) ng kabuuang P19.95 milyon para sa 42 local government units (LGUs) sa rehiyon ng Bicol para sa kanilang ecological solid waste management program.

Sa isang panayam kay Director of DENR-EMB 5 (Bicol), Maria Socorro Abu kamakailan, ibinahagi nito na ang pondo ay mapupunta sa pagpapatayo ng material recovery facilities at pagbili ng mga kagamitan, tulad ng shredders, organic composter, at baler machine, at iba pang kailangan para sa pasilidad.

"The main objective of the grant is to minimize the wastes. Not all trash should be lodged at the disposal facilities, but only those residual wastes," ani Abu.

Bawat munisipalidad ay makatatanggap ng P475,000 bilang pinansiyal na tulong para sa implementasyon ng proyekto na ilalagay sa ilalim ng pamamahala ng project DENR-EMB.

"It will be monitored by our office in close coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government," dagdag pa ni Abu.

Kabilang sa mga bayan na magiging benepisyaryo ng programa ang Camalig, Jovellar, Rapu-Rapu, at Tiwi, sa Albay; Capalonga, Labo, Paracale, San Lorenzo Ruiz, San Vicente, Santa Elena, at Vinzons, sa Camarines Norte; Baao, Balatan, Bato, Bula, Camaliga, Canaman, Caramoan, Del Gallega, Gainza, Garchitorena, Goa, Lagonoy, Lupi, Nabua, Pamplona, San Fernando, at Siruma sa Camarines Sur; Bagamanoc, Baras, Bato, Caramoran, Gigmoto, Panganiban, San Miguel, Viga, at Virac, sa Catanduanes; Baleno, Cawayan, Monreal, Palanas, at San Jacinto sa Masbate.

Ang mga lokal na pamahalaang napili ay mga bayang hindi nakatanggap ng naunang ayuda mula sa EMB, at mga bayan na may hindi bababa sa 50 square meters na lupain. Isa pang kailangan upang maging bahagi ng mga benepisyaryo ay kailangan makapaglaan ng isang financial counterpart.

Noong nakaraang taon, ang EMB din ang nagkaloob ng pinansiyal na suporta para sa 33 lokal na pamahalaan sa kanilang waste management program.

PNA

'MAY BALIK SA PLASTIC'

VALENZUELA CITY GOV'T INTRODUCES TRASH FOR GROCERIES, GIFT CERTIFICATES SCHEME

By **Nikka G. Valenzuela**
@NikkaINQ

Valenzuela City's 400 street sweepers can now swap all the plastic waste they collect for groceries while public school students can win gift certificates for plastic sachets or beverage cartons they surrender to school coordinators.

The Valenzuela City government, in coordination with Nestle Philippines, launched earlier this week "May Balik sa Plastic" (Returns from Plastic), a residual management program aimed at reducing the amount of trash that ends up in landfills or oceans.

"It's high time that we intensify our efforts [in reducing waste]," said Kais Marzouki, Nestle Philippines chair and chief executive officer.

The multinational firm's first citywide program will serve as a model for residual management programs in other areas nationwide.

"Our ambition is that none of

our plastic packaging will end up in the landfill," Marzouki added.

Depending on the weight of the plastic waste they collect, Valenzuela's street sweepers will get corresponding grocery items like coffee, milk or other food items.

Students, on the other hand, will receive a coupon they can enter in a weekly raffle for every 30 used plastic sachets or five used beverage cartons. The winner will receive a P100 gift certificate from Sodexo.

200 new landfills by 2020

By 2020, the Philippines will need 200 new landfills, according to a study by Asian Development Bank and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

This is partly due to the sachet culture in the country as low-income families try to balance their budgets by buying food, toiletries and other necessities in limited quantities instead of in bulk.

One of Nestle's goals is to change into recyclable materials the packaging of all its products by 2025.

Right now, only 75 percent of its products come in recyclable packages.

Also present at the launch were representatives of Green Antz Builders, a social enterprise that makes eco-bricks from shredded plastic laminates, and Lingunan National High School, whose students turned 1,156 kilograms of plastic into eco chairs, tables and couches for their library.

"What we're offering is an end-to-end solution, from collection, segregation... Our raw materials [shredded plastic] are combined with cement materials," said Mark Yulores of Green Antz Builders.

The students of Lingunan National High School, on the other hand, showed off the tables and chairs they made from shredded plastic stuffed inside plastic soda bottles. INQ



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Valenzuela City, Nestlé launch plastics program

By Jun David

WITH a booming industrial economy, Valenzuela City, in collaboration with Nestlé Philippines Inc., Green Antz Builders Inc., and DepEd Valenzuela, launches a city-wide waste management program all with the help from one of the biggest sources of pollution: plastics.

Every year, 400 million tons of plastic is being produced by the industrial sector worldwide, where only 14 percent is recycled, while the remaining 86 percent are disposed into landfills.

The Philippines has an astonishing 163 million sachets of daily plastic waste, where local-level efforts must be doubled and projects must be enforced in commitment to save the environment.

"*May Balik sa Plastik!*", the first city-specific residual waste collection program by Nestle Philippines Inc., spearheads one of the many programs by the City Government focusing on solid waste management.

This program aims to decrease the amount of waste laminates in the Valenzuela landfill and transfer stations by sorting and collecting waste laminates for co-processing, recycling, or upcycling.

The awareness-driven project's Ceremonial Launch and Commitment Setting was held at the Valenzuela People's Park Amphitheater on Monday.



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Mayor Rex Gatchalian (right) chats with Nestlé Philippines Inc. CEO Kais Marzouki during the launch of the 'May Balik sa Plastik' program at the People's Park Ampitheater in Valenzuela City. **Jun David**



Kampanya para sa plastic recycling, inilunsad sa Vale

"MAY balik sa plastik!"

Ito ang kauna-unahang citywide residual waste collection program na naglalayong mag-recycle at mabawasan ang mga basurang plastik at mga karton na nakaimbak sa Valenzuela City landfill.

Katuwang ng city government ang Nestlé Philippines, Department of Education (DepEd) at Green Antz Builders, Inc., kasama ang Sangguniang Kabataan Federation, Liga ng mga Barangay, City Street Sweepers, public school students, teachers at mga magulang na nagkaisa para maisulong ang kalinisan sa lungsod na ginanap sa Valenzuela People's Park Amphitheater, nitong Lunes ng umaga.

Ayon kay Kais Marzouki, Nestlé chairman and CEO, malaki ang kanilang naging commitment para sa waste management dahil alam nilang estrikto ang lungsod pagdating sa waste segregation system na mayroon silang model

schools na nag-eenganyo at nagbibigay ng magandang halimbawa pagdating sa plastic recycling at environmental awareness.

Ibinida ni Mayor Rex Gatchalian ang programa na magbibigay ng aral sa mga kabataan na ilagay sa nararapat kalagayan ang plastic wastes at hindi ban ng plastics kundi dapat na i-recycle ito at muling gamitin.

Dagdag ni Marzouki, gumagawa sila ng innovative packaging solutions para mabawasan ang mga plastik na basura upang mai-recycle.

Ang ilang paaralan ay gumagawa ng kaniyang estilo na gamitin ang mga plastic para maging mesa at upuan.

Inilunsad na ang tatlong paraan ng pagtatapon ng plastic, una ay public school-based plastic wastes and cartons collection, ikalawa sa barangay-based plastic wastes and cartons collection, at ang informational activities na nagsusulong ng kaalaman at pagbabago.

Sa ilalim ng programa, ang mga mangongolekta at magbibigay ng plastic wastes at beverage cartons ay makakukuha ng insentibo mula sa Nestlé at sa local government ng Valenzuela.

Kasama rin dito ang street sweepers na nag-segregate ng mga basura ay makatatanggap ng regalo mula sa Nestlé habang ang public school students at mga guro na magdadala ng plastic waste ay makatatanggap din ng tseke sa isagawang weekly raffles.

Nabatid, ang mga nakolektang plastic wastes ay gagamitin ng Green Antz Builders para sa eco-friendly house bricks o sa paggawa ng cement kilns.

Layunin nito na maisulong ang school-based at barangay-based collection program at gawin ang pagre-recycle ng mga plastic na makakatulong sa isinusulong ng Valenzuela City na waste management cam-paign.

(ROMMEL SALES)



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Illegal loggers cut down 60-year-old tree

By **DANNY ESTACIO**

SARIAYA, Quezón — A 60-year-old Malauban tree in Mt. Banahaw was illegally felled and cut into timber.

A joint anti-illegal logging operation by Kasama ng Kalikasan (KnK) and Protected Area Superintendent of Mounts Banahaw – San Cristobal Protected Landscape

discovered the Malauban timber, cut into two-by-two, 12 feet long slabs as it was about to be towed by a horse in Barangay Sampaloc Bogon, and Pinagbakuran, this town, areas that have been declared protected by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The group learned that the tree was cut down by illegal loggers from the village of Sampaloc 1.

Area Superintendent Salud Pangan said her team was investigating illegal logging at the Banahaw protected area, and asked the villagers in Bogon to cooperate in the arrest of environment culprits.



'Good problem to have'

BIZ BUZZ



Almost two years ago, the **Wongchuking** family went through a challenging phase—to say the least—and sold its cigarette manufacturing business to Japan Tobacco Inc. as part of a deal with the government to settle billions of pesos in back taxes.

Many other business groups would have moped for a few years and licked their wounds while enjoying their billions, but not this family.

Biz Buzz learned that the family—led by brothers **Cesar** and **Alex**—is now into the real estate business in a big way.

But its initial foray into this sector isn't in the conventional property business that includes building housing units or high-rise condos (though who's to say that won't happen soon, with their billions in proceeds from the Mighty Corp. sale).

Instead, the family is now into industrial estates, with their first and flagship project having been inaugurated earlier this week.

We're talking about a firm called T12 Polo Land Inc., which has a sprawling 23-hectare site in the fast-growing municipality of Guiguinto, Bulacan, just 30 minutes north of Metro Manila.

The property is basically a sprawling compound occupied by large warehouses that the firm then rents out to tenants who need space for their logistics operations on a large scale.

Cesar, the younger of the

two Wongchuking brothers, is in charge of the project, as he believes there is a large upside potential in the logistics space given the rapid economic growth being experienced by the country. (His views echo those of billionaire entrepreneur **Edgardo "Injap" Sia II**, who launched his own logistics and warehousing business on a nationwide scale last year.)

There's obviously enough share of the pie for a few more operators of logistics facilities, but right now, the Wongchukings are counting on a tight supply of grade-A warehouses for large-scale industrial needs.

This early, they have already snagged a few brand name clients, including a local distributor of products sold in alibaba.com, a Norwegian furniture company, a distributor of consumer products, a couple of packaging firms and steel fabricators (names withheld due to confidentiality agreements, naturally) as well as Japan Tobacco Inc. for its raw materials.

At present, the facility has 24 large warehouses and an ice plant, with more real estate space for expansion.

So yes, it may have lost the firm that's been in its control since after World War II, but the Wongchuking family clearly has enough billions to help build a new empire. That's a good problem to have. —**DAXIM L. LUCAS**

New face of agriculture?

The agriculture sector has a new poster boy.

Known as one of Philippine

cinema's bad boys, action star **Robin Padilla** has volunteered to become the new face of agriculture, starting with selling and promoting mangoes at the Department of Agriculture's metro-wide mango program.

Veering away from his usual leather jacket back in his action days, Padilla sported a beret and a crisp polo during the event on Monday. He said the sector badly needed a face lift to encourage the youth to go into farming and not abandon food production.

To do this, Agriculture Secretary **Emmanuel Piñol** said the action star has agreed to film a documentary and appear in a TV program focusing on agribusiness for free.

During his days in the Bilibid prison (Padilla was arrested for illegal possession of firearms), Padilla also got his hands dirty—through simple gardening and other agriculture programs.

This, he said, was something he wanted to bring to the country's drug dependents especially with the ongoing drug war waged by **President Duterte**.

Will Binoy's marketing stunt be effective? Well, based on his appearance at the DA, the action star's charm has not waned. —**KARL R. OCAMPO**

Green initiative

The Aboitiz group is pushing its green initiative to new heights after announcing it was on track to reaching its target of planting nine million trees by 2020.

Nine years after the conglomerate announced its Simultaneous Tree Planting (STP) initiative in 2010, it has

already planted 6.6 million trees as of last year, or 73 percent of its target.

With still two years to spare, it's not impossible for the Aboitiz group to accomplish the task and even exceed its goal. This is not surprising considering that Aboitiz's biggest environmental program A-Park is part of a memorandum agreement with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to sustain ecological balance in the country.

The planting of nine million trees by the end of 2020 would mean the conversion of an estimated 189,000 tons of carbon dioxide into oxygen, or the equivalent of about 9,000 hectares of lush reforested areas. Hard to imagine? Let's just say that's 37 times the size of Bonifacio Global City in Taguig.

Since 2010, it has been a tradition for Aboitiz team member volunteers to plant indigenous trees in various parts of the country. This July, it's looking to increase its tree count by 95,000 with the help of DENR.

The agency helps the group in identifying possible tree-planting sites, planting and species-site matching, geo-tagging, plantation registry and mapping, among others—a perfect example of an efficient synergy between a public and private entity.

With almost half a billion pesos invested in carbon management program, we're sure the Aboitiz group sees greener pastures ahead, and we mean that literally. —**KARL R. OCAMPO** INQ



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Nickel Asia leads 'Plogging' for World Environment Day 2019

NICKEL Asia Corp. (NAC), and its subsidiaries — Cagdianao Mining, Dinapigue Mining, Hinatuan Mining, Hinatuan-Manicani Project, Rio Tuba Nickel, and Taganito Mining — once again takes the lead in "Plogging" for World Environment Day (WED) 2019.

It is the second year that NAC is conducting this sports activity simultaneously with its subsidiaries all over the country, with the theme: *Healthy Ka Na, Nakalinis Ka Pa*. Plogging is jogging while picking up trash.

The United Nations declares June 5 of every year as WED, declaring it as "a special day to draw awareness and encourage actions to pressing environment concerns" such as pollution. Like NAC, some 100 countries across the globe also participate in this global celebration.

The NAC-wide plogging was simultaneously conducted by NAC employees and their partners in their respective communities from the company's mining operations



Nickel Asia Corp. group during the World Environment Day 2019.

in Surigao Del Norte; Bataraza in Palawan; Cagdianao in Dinagat Island; Dinapigue in Isabela; and Guiuan in Eastern Samar.

Ploggers from Surigao City was joined by members of Surigao Runners Club, React, Tri-Sur, Bugsay Marajaw Surigao and other running enthusiasts.

Robert Francisco, NAC-Taganito Mining's environment manager, says "we are doing this activity every year to get the attention and the support of the communities to get involve in the discourse on environment protection and sustainability. We at NAC take these matters very seriously and our

everyday work involves discussions on issues pertaining to serious environment concerns such as plastic and air pollution and we want everyone on the communities to get in on the game."

The UN also calls WED as "the people's day for doing something to take care of the earth."



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MOST BAGUIO SMOKE BELCHERS, PRIVATE VEHICLES

BAGUIO CITY: The City Legal Office (CLO) reported that most of the motor vehicles apprehended for violation of the Summer Capital's anti-smoke belching ordinance in the first five months were privately owned vehicles. CLO head Melchor Rabanes said that of the 71 motor vehicle license plates that were turned over to the office for safekeeping, 41 were from private vehicles, 13 were from public utility jeepneys, 12 were from taxis and 5 belonged to government vehicles. He clarified that the apprehended smoke belching government vehicles did not belong to the local government but were from other agencies. Based on the city's 2008 anti-smoke belching ordinance, the city legal office is the repository of the license plates that have been confiscated by the city's roadside inspection, testing and monitoring action team.

GABY B. KEITH



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ROBUST PERFORMANCE

PH METAL OUTPUT JUMPED IN 1ST QUARTER

Despite restrictive policies on mining, the value of the country's metallic production in the first quarter of the year registered a double-digit growth as global trade wars and political uncertainties push companies to invest particularly in gold.

The robust performance of mixed nickel-cobalt sulfide (MNCS) and gold drove the positive turnout of the industry, which yielded P27.47 billion during the period—up 11.57 percent from P24.62 billion a year ago.

The precious yellow metal continued to validate its domi-

nance over other metals, comprising 45 percent of the whole production pie with P12.22 billion, and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) sees its positive turnout to continue.

The Masbate gold project of Filminera Mining Corp. and Didipio Gold of OceanaGold Philippines were at the forefront of gold operations with a combined output and contribution of 2,835 kilos and P6.22 billion, respectively—or more than half of the country's gold production.

"In the local front, we still see gold dominating the production

scene," the MGB said in its quarterly review, noting that the passage of Republic Act No. 11256 or the "An Act to Strengthen the Country's Gross International Reserves (GIR)" would encourage even small-scale miners to once again sell their gold to the central bank.

The law, which was amended in May, exempts gold from small-scale mining activities from excise and income tax if they would sell their gold to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas based on prevailing global prices.

"At the end of the day, RA 11256 will not only boost the GIR

of the country but also increase the country's annual total metallic production value," MGB added.

A study conducted by S&P showed that political tensions among nations lifted interest in gold mining anew, which could further push prices up. Thus, gold is seen to lend the most glitter in terms of deal activity this year.

In contrast, nickel production slowed down following a string of suspensions implemented by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources due to alleged environmental violations.

—KARL R. OCAMPO INQ

After a tough year, Coca-Cola commits P1B project in PH

YEAR 2018 may have been tough for the market leader in softdrinks in the Philippines following the imposition of taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages, but that does not stop the American company from choosing the country as the site of its first major investment in a recycling facility in Southeast Asia.

“Like anything when the TRAIN (Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion) law was passed we had a tough 2018 ... we saw a change in consumers as they were adapting to everything going on because it was not just beverages ... we did some change in the consumers. However we do see longer term the resiliency of the Filipino consumer,” said Winn Everhart, president and general manager of Coca-Cola Philippines.

TRAIN slapped an excise tax of P6 per liter on drinks with caloric and non-caloric sweeteners and P12 per liter on beverages using high-fructose corn syrup.

Everhart and other officials of Coca-Cola bared the company will lead a P1-billion investment in a recycling facility for its polyethylene terephthalate (PET) plastic bottles set to be operational next year.

With a capacity of 16,000 metric tons (MT) of plastic, the facility will process about 15 percent of the 130,000 MT plastic footprint of the Philippines, now the third biggest source of marine plastic worldwide.

That capacity is equivalent to Coca-Cola’s plastic use for its



A chair made from recycled PET bottle (left photo), one of the products showcased at yesterday’s exhibit at the Blue Leaf Filipinas. Right photo shows (from left) McGeown; Everhart; Juan Lorenzo Tanada, CBPI director for Corporate and Regulatory Affairs and; Jonah De Lumen-Pernia, director for Public Affairs and Communications of Coca-Cola Philippines.

packaging but is scalable for expansion to accommodate further growth in demand and even competitors’ plastic wastes.

The recycling facility will collect, sort, clean, and wash post-consumer recyclable plastic bottles and turn them into new bottles.

Gareth McGeown, president and chief executive officer of Coca-Cola Beverages Philippines Inc., said the facility will break ground this year on a site that is within 100 kilometers radius from Metro Manila.

McGeown said the company is in talks with possible technology partners for the venture, with the possibility of not just

recycling the PET flakes into new bottles but as raw materials for fabric and shoes.

At present, 90 percent of Coca-Cola’s PET bottles are collected and segregated by junk shops for export to China or Malaysia which have the technology to crush and grind the PET bottles into resin chips or flakes.

Today, 50 percent of Coca-Cola’s softdrink products are in returnable glass containers, one of the highest proportions in its operations worldwide.

Coca-Cola hopes to make the facility self-sustaining shorter than the experience in its recycling plants in Mexico and

South Africa which were able to recycle 100-percent of their PET bottles in five to 10 years.

The P1-billion initiative is part of comprehensive blueprint of Coca-Cola’s World Without Waste initiative which aims to collect and recycle a bottle or can for each one they sell and to use at least 50 percent recycled content in their packaging by 2030.

Everhart said in the future, Coca-Cola there may be no need to use new resin.

The recycling facility initiative is also seen to give livelihood to the 150,000 people that collect used PET bottles for junkshops.



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Duterte to distribute land ownership certificates to farmers

By **GENALYN D. KABILING**

In keeping with his promise to ensure that more landless farmers become landowners, President Duterte is expected to visit General Santos on June 13 to distribute land ownership certificates to agrarian reform beneficiaries.

Around 13,000 people will benefit from the distribution of certificates of land ownership award in the area this week, according to Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo.

The government's agrarian reform program was discussed during the Cabinet meeting convened by the President in Malacañang Monday.

"On June 13, the President and the DAR Secretary will head to General Santos to distribute certificates of land ownership award that collectively cover 24,000 hectares of privately acquired lands to 13,000 agrarian reform beneficiaries," Panelo said after the Cabinet assembly.

He said Agrarian Reform Secretary John Castriciones discussed the implementing rules and regulations of Executive Order No. 75 on the distribution of government-owned agricultural lands to qualified beneficiaries.

The executive order, issued last February, directed all departments, bureaus, offices and instrumentalities of the government to identify lands, owned by the government devoted to or suitable for agriculture, for distribution to qualified beneficiaries, according to Panelo.

Under EO 75, the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) is directed to acquire government-owned agricultural lands "which are no longer actually directly and exclusively used or necessary for the purpose for which they have been reserved or acquired."

Government agencies must identify such lands and submit a list to the DAR that indicates the location, use, and legal basis of ownership.



Du30 to distribute 13,000 land titles

By Vito Barcelo

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte will visit General Santos in South Cotabato on Thursday to distribute 13,000 land titles to agrarian reform beneficiaries, Malacañang announced Tuesday.

Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo said certificates of land ownership award covering 24,000 hectares of privately-acquired lands would be distributed by the President to 13,000 beneficiaries, mostly farmers.

Panelo said the President and Agrarian Reform Secretary John Castriciones would head to General Santos on June 13 to distribute certificates of land ownership award that cover 24,000 hectares of privately acquired lands.

"DAR Secretary Castriciones discussed the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Executive Order 75 with the President during the Cabinet meeting last Monday night," he said.

EO 75, signed by Duterte last Feb. 15, directed all departments, bureaus, offices and instrumentalities of the government to identify lands, owned by the government devoted to or suitable for agriculture, for distribution to qualified beneficiaries.

Earlier, the President said that he would hasten the allocation of lands in the remaining three years of his term but would prioritize first the distribution of properties owned by the state.

Panelo said that President Duterte still had three more years and the President vowed to give everything to the people, especially lands owned by the government which were not being utilized.



IRR signed for executive order directing government land distribution

THE Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) and the Department of Justice (DoJ) have signed the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) for Executive Order No. 75, series of 2019, which instructs all government arm to identify government-owned lands (GOL) suitable for agriculture distribution.

In a statement Tuesday, DAR noted that the joint administrative order was

signed on May 31 by Secretary John R. Castricones and Justice Secretary Menardo I. Guevarra. DAR was also "named the lead agency that will provide central direction and coordination for the implementation of the executive order.

The IRR "shall govern the identification, validation, segregation, transfer and distribution of all GOLs, devoted to or suitable for agriculture and which are

no longer actually, directly and exclusively used or necessary for the purpose for which they have been reserved or acquired for the purpose of eventual distribution to qualified beneficiaries."

In a separate statement, the Palace said Tuesday that Mr. Castricones discussed the IRR of the EO, which was signed by President Rodrigo R. Duterte on Feb. 15, during the Cabinet meeting on

Monday. On June 13, Mr. Duterte and Mr. Castricones will head to General Santos City to distribute certificates of land ownership awards that cover a total of 24,000 hectares of privately acquired land to 13,000 agrarian reform beneficiaries.

Those eligible for receiving GOL under the IRR are Filipino farmers, landless farmworkers, and those who own less than three hectares of agricultural land; residents of the

barangay or the municipality where the land is located; at least 15 years old at the time of identification, screening and selection of beneficiaries; with the willingness and ability to cultivate the land for production.

Other agencies involved during the process of identification to distribution are the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Agriculture (DA).

After determining the total inventory of coverable GOLs, validation will be performed by DAR with the DENR and the DA. — **Vincent Mariel P. Galang**

FULL STORY



Read the full story by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or by typing the link bit.ly/IRR_Signed



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Bataan condemns killing over land

HERMOSA, Bataan: Congressional and local officials, the Catholic Church, and villagers on Monday condemned the killing of a young man and the wounding of two others over a disputed land here on Saturday afternoon.

Jonathan Villete, 26, died from gunshot wounds on the chest and hand, while his uncle, village councilman Elmer Bautista Sr., 54, and cousin Elmer Bautista Jr., 21, were wounded.

Col. Villamor Tullao, Bataan police director, said the shooting happened after an altercation between a group of residents and security guards who called for backup. Suspect Titanic Mistica, 60, arrived with security guards.

"Mistica shot the three; one died. We have already filed homicide at frustrated homicide cases against him," he added.

Tullao said the suspect, who was hospitalized for fractures after being beaten by villagers, was a communication officer of the River Forest Development Corp.

"I strongly condemn the kill-

ing of Jonathan," First District Rep. Geraldine Roman said while condoling with the family.

She said she was sad about what had happened. "We cannot deny the existence of a land dispute and conflict going on for decades. This has gone on too long. I am appealing to all concerned government agencies to make a decision and render justice to the CARP (Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program) farmers in Sumalo."

The disputed land in Barangay Sumalo, Hermosa is more than 200 hectares. It has been contested for decades by farmers and the River Forest Development Corp. under the Litton Estate.

Roman called on everyone to reject violence. "I seek justice for Jonathan and the farmers of Sumalo, like all residents of Hermosa and Bataan and as a Filipino," she said.

Hermosa Mayor Jopet Inton said he and the whole town and its village leaders condole with Villete's family.

ERNIE B. ESCONDE



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Women's role in ocean care stressed

By Elmer N. Manuel

In celebration of World Oceans Day recently, the United Nations (UN) cultural agency marked the event with an emphasis on the role of women in all aspects of interaction with our ocean despite the fact that their voices are often missing at the decision-making level.

UNESCO director general Audrey Azoulay said in a statement that the world should "ensure diversity and gender inclusiveness at all levels" to set a balanced course for humanity and foster innovative solutions for the ocean.

"We need to empower each and every citizen to take care of the ocean and enable all women to play transformative and ambitious roles in understanding, exploring, protecting and sustainably managing our ocean," Azoulay said.

She pointed out that this year's "special edition" of World Oceans Day links the themes of gender equality and ocean preservation.

Women engage in all aspects of ocean interaction, yet in many parts of the world, women's contribution, both towards ocean-based livelihoods like fishing, and conservation efforts, are invisible and, gender inequality persists "from the marine industry to the field of ocean science."

The UN says there is also very little data and research on these issues, and a concerted action towards gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is still needed in all ocean-related sectors to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 5.

Not only is the ocean an increasingly important battleground for achieving gender equality but building a more gender equal society also means empowering women and girls to be the actors of positive ocean change, according to Azoulay.





Salceda says DFA obliged to support climate change talks

ALBAY 2ND DISTRICT Rep. Joey S. Salceda has called out Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro L. Locsin Jr. for banning his department's officials from attending climate change conferences "requiring air travel" and pulling out financial support for other offices.

"Can I remind you that section 9 of the Climate Change Commission (CCC) [Act]... The provisions and functions of the CCC? So you cannot do away with it. You're violating the law," Mr. Salceda, chair of the House special committee on climate change, said in a briefing Tuesday at the Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City.

Section 9 (K) of Republic Act 9729 provides that the CCC shall coordinate with DFA in representing the country in climate change negotiations abroad.

"How do you interpret that provision of the law which should be superior to any of your statements," said Mr. Salceda.

Mr. Locsin announced the travel ban in a June 10 DFA statement following President Rodrigo R. Duterte's criticism of climate change efforts in the international community.

In the statement, he said other agencies and offices could send their representative provided that the travel budget will come from funding sources other than the DFA.

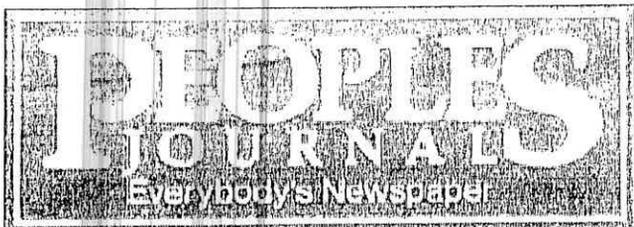
"This is incompatible with the legal obligations under the Philippine law," said Mr. Salceda, citing the General Appropriations Act of 2019 mandating DFA to "extend the necessary, technical, legal, and logistical support to the Climate Change Commission on the participation of the Philippine delegation in the climate negotiation processes..."

"Your budget was given to you because you are compelled to support this negotiation. There's no ifs and buts," said Mr. Salceda.

In response, Mr. Locsin said in a tweet: "To Joey Salceda, my House mentor: Please. I'm not stopping anybody outside DFA from traveling to TALK rather than ACT on Climate Change. DFA is committed to vote YES to the most radical proposals but not again to keep traveling to talk about it ad nauseam."—Vince Angelo C. Ferreras



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Step up participation in climate-change deals

ALBAY Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda has urged the government not to disengage but instead step up participation in climate change negotiations, both for human survival and for “urgent pragmatic considerations”— primarily economic — and access to funds, technology and capacity building concessions in the process.

Salceda, chairman of the House Committee on Climate Change, aired his appeal after the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Secretary Teddy Locsin said the Philippines will reject attendance in climate change talks abroad and will pursue discussions only in the internet, and that it “will simply vote ‘yes’ to all progressive suggestions to address climate change.”

Earlier, Salceda wrote President Duterte pleading for the Chief Executive to reconsider an imminent policy of non-participation in climate change negotiations. In his letter, he said he believes it is very important for the country to continue to engage in the deliberations, even if its pace is slow... “because the deliberations are now at ‘a critical pace of rule making’ on the methods of implementing the Paris Agreement.”

Presently, climate change negotiations now center on emission peaking allocations and developed countries are pushing to account for the carbon footprint of OFWs, tourism and exports which are driving forces of the Philippine economy.