

24 JUL 2019

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DAY : Wednesday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



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Cimatu umapela sa ASEAN forestry leaders

UPANG maging balanse at maipreserba ang forest resources sa rehiyon, hiniiling ni Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu sa top forestry officials ng Southeast Asia na gumawa ng paraan upang mapangalagaan ang pangangailangan ng mga tao na patuloy ang paglaki ng bilang .

"We need to strike a balance between meeting the demands of the people and stability of the environment," ayon sa mensahe ni Cimatu na binasa ni DENR Undersecretary for Policy, Planning and Internal Affairs Jonas Leones sa ginanap na 22nd meeting ng ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry na idinaos sa Makati City noong Hulyo 18, taong kasalukuyan.

Sabi pa ni Cimatu sa ASEAN forestry leaders, "You must transform into actions the strategic direction of sustainable forest management, com-

petitiveness for foreign products, forest rectification, forest law and enforcement in government, and other forestry concerns."

Ang ASOF ay multinational body na layuning tumalakay sa mga polisiya, gumawa at magpatupad ng regional cooperation activities para sa international at regional forestry.

Layon din nito na mapalakas ang international competitiveness ng ASEAN forestry products at maisaayos ang pagkakaroon ng pinagsamang posisyon sa international fora.

Ayon kay Cimatu, mahalaga ang kagubatan para sa global sustainable development goals, partikular na ang SDG 6-Clean Water and Sanitation, SDG 13-Climate Action at SDG 15-Life on Land.

Ang SDG ay ang pinagsama-samang 17 global goals na may kanya-kanyang hanagarin.

Ito ay binuo ng United Nations General Assembly noong 2015 at "target" ang katuparan nito sa taong 2030.

Samantala, sinabi naman ni DENR OIC Assistant Secretary for Staff Bureaus at kasalukuyan ding Biodiversity Management Bureau Director Ricardo Calderon na kahit na "ASEAN forestry continues to grow because of the integration and cooperation," it is "somehow overshadowed by the growing concern on biodiversity conservation."

Aniya, malaking bagay ang naitutulong ng mga kagubatan partikular na sa pagbibigay ng pangangailangan ng mga tao at ito rin ay isa sa tinatawag na "backbone" kung ang pag-uusapan ay ang ekonomiya ng ASEAN member-countries.

Binigyang-diin pa nito na ang deforestation at ang pagkawala ng biodiversity sa Southeast Asia ay hindi dapat ikahina ng ating loob bagkus ito pa ang gawing batayan para sa malaking pagbabago sa hinaharap.

SANTI CELARIO



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
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PAGPRESERBA SA KAGUBATAN HINILING NG DENR SA ASEAN FORESTRY LEADERS

HINILING ni Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu sa top forestry officials ng Southeast Asia na gumawa ng mga hakbang upang maging balanse at maipreserba ang forest resources sa rehiyon at ang pangangailangan ng mga tao na patuloy ang paglaki ng bilang.

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**BENEDICT
ABAYGAR, JR.**



CIMATU NAGAGALAK SA ART EXHIBIT TAMPOK ANG MANILA BAY REHAB

PINURI ni Secretary Roy A. Cimatu ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang pagsisikap ng Dynamic Art Group sa pag-organisa ng isang art exhibit bilang suporta sa patuloy na rehabilitasyon sa matinding polusyon sa Manila Bay.

Ang eksibit ay nagsimula noong ika-18 ng Hunyo at tataagal hanggang Hulyo 27 sa "The Gallery of Solaire Resort at Casino" Parañaque City, ang mga pinta ay nagtatampok sa makasaysayang Manila bay, mula noong mga araw ng kaluwalhatian nito hanggang sa lumabas ang desisyon ng gobyerno na ilagay ito sa rehabilitasyon dahil sa malubhang pagkasira ng kapaligiran.

"Through this exhibit, we are reminded about the glory of Manila Bay back during the days so that we may focus on the goal of sustaining the same thing for the next generations," sabi ni Cimatu.

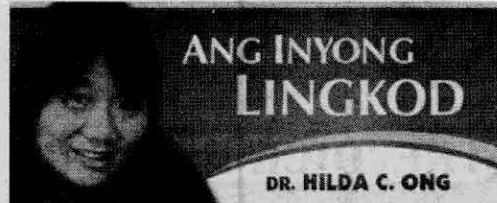
Ang mga pinta ay nilikha

ng mga artist: Vic Bachoco, Esther Garcia, Maxi Ramos, Jun Rocha, August Santiago, Fernando Sena, Fritz Silorio, Bing Siochi, Ely Tablizo, at Myk Velasco.

Sa pagbubukas ng eksibit, nagbigay ng mensahe si DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and LGU Concerns Benny D. Antiporda, diniri niya na "ang paglilinis ng Manila Bay ay naglalayong linisin ang kultura ng mamamayang Pilipino".

"It is the next generation who will suffer with what we are doing, and that, we will not permit," pahayag ni Antiporda.

Dagdag pa ni Antiporda, "When we started this project, people thought we were crazy, and yet we succeeded [with Boracay]. And now, Boracay is too small of a project compared with Manila Bay. Now, if we will succeed here in Manila Bay, Manila Bay will be too small of a project if we



DR. HILDA C. ONG

clean up the whole country."

Ang mga ipinapakita sa loob ng eksibit ay ang pinta ng Manila Bay Yacht Club na may magandang tanawin sa paligid, kung saan dinadayo ng mga turista at maniniyot ang sunset sa Manila Bay at isang larawan ni Kalihim Cimatu.

Ang rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay ay inilunsad noong Enero sa taong ito alinsunod sa direktiba ni Pangulong Rodrigo Roa Duterte.

Noong 2008, inilabas ng Korte Suprema ang isang writ of continuing mandamus na nag-uutos sa DENR at 12 iba pang ahensya na maibalik ang dating anyo ng tubig ng Manila Bay sa antas ng Class SB.

Kung ang antas ng tubig sa may coastal at karagatan ay nasa Class SB, maaaring gamitin ng publiko dahil ligtas na ito para sa mga nais maligo sa tabing dagat, lumangoy at skin diving.





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REHAB PLAN SA BAGUIO CITY 'DI GAYA SA BORACAY

BENGUET - HINDI duduplikahin ng Baguio City ang estilo ng rehabilitasyon sa Boracay Island.

Ito ang nilinaw ni Baguio City Mayor Benjamin Magalong kasunod ang mungkahing isailalim sa rehabilitasyon ang City of Pines.

Ayon sa dating police general, na hindi ito maihahalintulad sa rehabilitasyon sa Isla ng Boracay dahil ang sewage system at ang re-greening

ang kanyang pangunahing tututukan.

Binanggit din ng alkalde na nagkaroon sila ng pag-uusap nina Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu at Interior Secretary Eduardo Año upang ipaabot ng dalawa kay Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang posibleng rehabilitasyon sa Baguio.

Inamin din ni Magalong na mahihirapan ito na ipasara ang lungsod sa mga turista tulad sa Boracay dahil ang Baguio

City ang nagsisilbing daan ng mga turista na nagtutungo sa iba't ibang pasyalan sa Cordillera Administrative Region.

Ang pinakamahalingang tututukan ng alkalde ang pagkonekta sa lahat ng kabahayan at establisimiyento ng lungsod sa mga sewerage treatment plants upang maiwasan ang direktang pagtatapon ng mga dumi sa iba't ibang river systems o mga ilog sa lungsod ng Baguio.

PMRT



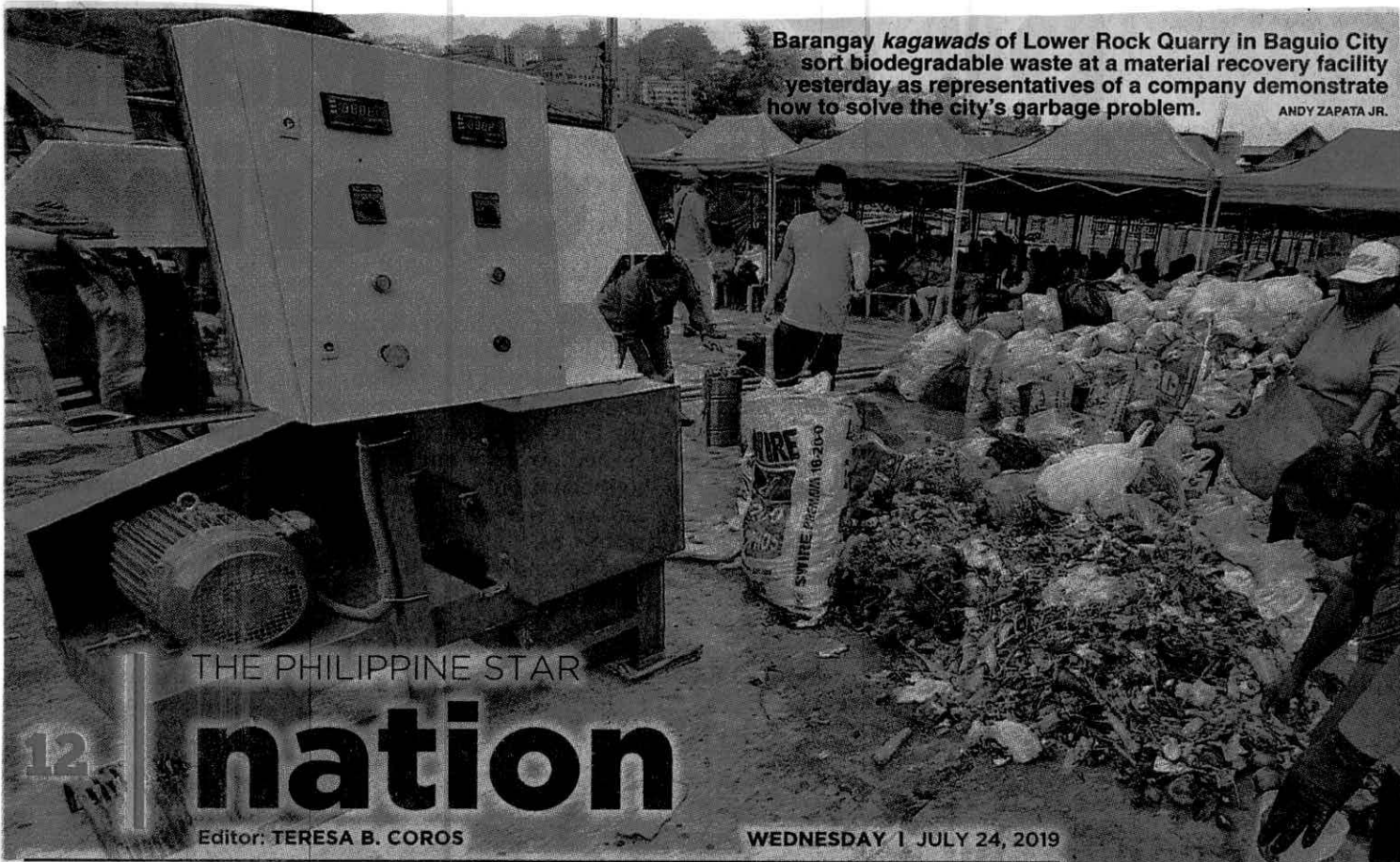
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Barangay kagawads of Lower Rock Quarry in Baguio City sort biodegradable waste at a material recovery facility yesterday as representatives of a company demonstrate how to solve the city's garbage problem.

ANDY ZAPATA JR.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

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Editor: TERESA B. COROS

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Belmonte backs Rody on reducing red tape, protecting environment

Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte yesterday committed to support President Duterte in his call to protect the environment and reduce red tape for businesses applying for permits.

"We support the challenge of President Duterte to local governments to release clearances and permits for businesses in three days," the mayor said in Filipino, responding to Duterte's call during his fourth State of the Nation Address on Monday.

"This is part of our 14-point agenda wherein we target to release business permits for those we call low-risk businesses in one to two days," she added.

For businesses that need a thorough review, Belmonte committed to release the permits in one week.

Aside from the faster processing of permits, Belmonte said the city would promote transparency by publishing the city's tax rates and making the assessment process transparent.

"Our businesses will understand exactly how we compute their fees and taxes. They will no longer fear hidden charges and arbitrary exactions," she added.

The mayor said the city would further improve its waste disposal system and establish materials recovery facilities in all barangays.

"We also commit to clear streets and sidewalks in a humane manner and without depriving the people of their homes and livelihood," she said.

— Janvic Mateo



FLOODED, AGAIN A resident on Boracay Island captures the flooding along the main road on Station 1 at the back of Ambassador in Paradise Resort and Hennan Prime Resort. Boracay Island and its environs experienced massive flooding in December 2017. Recently, Tropical Storm Falcon induced torrential monsoon rains, flooding the same areas that used to be inundated before it was closed for six months last year. Story on page A12, "Despite rehab, flooding continues in Boracay." CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Despite rehab, flooding continues in Boracay

By MA. STELLA F. ARNALDO
@akosistellaBM

Special to the BUSINESSMIRROR

THE Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (Tieza) promises some measure of relief from flooding to residents and tourists on Boracay Island by August this year.

Tieza Assistant Chief Operating Officer for Administration and Finance, lawyer Joy Bulautan, told the BUSINESSMIRROR the agency's drainage project on the island is "still ongoing. The original timetable was seven years but was compressed to three years. As of now, we are just one and a half years [into the project]. The earliest completion of the project will be in 2020."

Tieza's Architectural and Engineering Services Sector explained through Bulautan that the drainage project is "52-percent complet-

ed only. It will be fully completed in April 2020."

The agency added, "It is not yet fully interconnected to the main road drainage of DPWH [Department of Public Works and Highways] and there are no working pumps."

However, "by end of August, when the pumping station at Bulabog starts to operate, changes will be felt [on the island]."

Boracay Island, dubbed by many international travel publications as "one of the best beaches in the world", was closed for six months last year, in what the administration had described as intended to give way to rehabilitation plans. These plans included the cleaning of Bulabog Beach, which was contaminated by high levels of fecal coliform bacteria; clearing of the easement zone along the main white beach; widening of the main road and construction of a circumfer-

ential road; fast-tracking of Tieza's drainage project; reclaiming of the island's wetlands, among others.

What brought on government's investigation into the state of Boracay Island and its environs was actually massive flooding in December 2017. After a flurry of inspections by lawmakers and national government agencies, President Duterte finally ordered the island closed to tourists from April 26 to October 26 last year.

Government's rehabilitation program came under closer scrutiny, however, when Tropical Storm Falcon induced torrential monsoon rains on the island, flooding the same areas that used to be inundated before it was closed for six months last year. Photos of the island under water, taken by frustrated residents, quickly turned into memes and spread all over social media last week.

SEE "BORACAY," A3



Boracay. . . CONTINUED FROM A12

Residents noted the key areas that were flooded: the entire D'Mall including Laketown at its back on Station 2, in front of Aqua Resort along the Circumferential Road on Bulabog Beach, the Boracay-Tambisaan Jetty Port Road by Fairways and Bluewater Resort going to The Lind Boracay on Station 1, the main road from Ambassador in Paradise all the way to White House also on Station 1, as well as the road across Hue Resort along Station 3.

In his State of the Nation Address (Sona) on Monday, Duterte touted his administration's accomplishment on Boracay. "Equipped with political will, the government ordered the closure of Boracay Island for six months to prevent its further deterioration. We cleaned and rehabilitated the island and I allowed it to heal naturally. I am proud to say that it has been restored close to its original pristine state.... Kudos are also due to the PMS [Presidential Management Staff] for integrating the six-month Rehabilitation Plan, and the Neda [National Economic and Development Authority] for the recently-approved [Medium]-term Boracay Action Plan."

Duterte also warned local officials and tourism stakeholders against violating environmental laws. "I am giving due notice to the [local government units] and other stakeholders, *kayo po*, of tourist destinations to take extra steps in the enforcement of our laws and the protection of our environment."

An interagency task force chaired by Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, which recommended Boracay's closure, is also currently monitoring other island destinations like El Nido and Coron in Palawan, Panglao Island in Bohol, Siargao in Surigao del Norte, as well as Manila Bay and Baguio City for possible environmental and tourism violations. **(See, "Violations continue on Panglao," in the BUSINESSMIRROR, July 22, 2019.)**

"On January 27, 2019, we officially started the Manila Bay rehabilitation," said the President's Sona. "Though we have a long way to go, we are encouraged by the test results of the waters near Padre Faura. We will relocate informal settlers—I hope it can happen during my time—along the waterways and shut down establishments that continue to pollute and poison our waters."



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Angat's water level dips slightly despite rains

By **ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ**

The water level at Angat Dam has once again dipped slightly on Tuesday amid the prevalence of southwest monsoon or "habagat" over western Luzon.

Based on the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration's (PAGASA) monitoring as of Tuesday morning, Angat Dam's water level was at 161.46 meters, down by 10 centimeters from last Monday's 161.56 meters.

The seesaw state of Angat Dam was triggered by the insufficiency of rainfall over the Angat watershed even if it has been raining in the past few weeks in other parts of the country.

Meanwhile, the water level at La Mesa Dam has increased from 73.44 last Monday

meters to 73.72 meters on Tuesday.

According to PAGASA weather specialist Meno Mendoza, the weather bureau does not expect the formation of a low pressure area inside the country within the next two to three days.

But the habagat will continue to bring cloudy skies with isolated rain showers and thunderstorms over Metro Manila, Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon, Zambales, and Bataan.

The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers due to localized thunderstorms.

Mendoza said warm and humid mornings will persist but sudden heavy rains or thunderstorms are possible in the afternoon or evening that may cause flash floods or landslides in low-lying or mountainous areas.



COA: Buyer also liable in undervaluation of Ides O'Racca property by P40M

BY PETER TABINGO

THE Commission on Audit has affirmed the liability of the buyer of the government's Ides O'Racca property in Binondo, Manila that government auditors said was undervalued by P40.76 million when the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sold it in 2010 for P64,279,845.92.

Buyer Natalia R. Atienza, vice president of Rodil Enterprises Co., Inc. (RECI), was named liable together with former DENR secretary and now Buhay Party-list Rep. Jose "Lito" Atienza and Victor Balde, head of the Land Administration and Utilization Division (LAUD), Land Management Bureau-DENR.

Government auditors issued the notice of charge against the transaction on May 7, 2010 after the COA Technical Services Office determined that the fair market value of the 1,031.30 square meter lot and the O'Racca Building standing on it should have been P105,040,277.

Records showed Rodil Enterprises has been renting the building from the Philippine government since 1959.

The O'Racca Building is a four-storey structure built in 1935 on the corner of Fulgeras and MD Santos Streets in Binondo. It was one of the few buildings in Manila that survived World War 2.

Plans to sell the property were first hatched in 2004 under then DENR secretary Elisea Gozun, with an appraisal committee setting the value of the property at P58.83 million. However, the disposition did not push through.

On October 1, 2007, then Sec. Atienza created another appraisal committee that issued an appraisal report putting a P94.68 million tag price on the property. Atienza approved the report and authorized the Land Management Bureau to proceed with the disposition of the Ides O'Racca lot and building.

In a letter to the LMB director, Natalia Atienza requested for a review of the appraisal report, saying the value of the property could not have gone up drastically from the 2004 assessment of P58.83 million to P94.68 million after only three years.

She also cited a November 7, 2007 meeting at the Office of the DENR Secretary where there was suppos-

edly a consensus that the O'Racca Building appears to be a condemned structure and hence has zero value.

A second appraisal report conducted by Engineer Balde of the LAUD, LMB-DENR reduced the valuation to P64.28 million. This was forwarded by the LMCB to the City Assessor of Manila and the Regional Technical Director for Lands (DENR) but the appraisal committee did not convene again to verify the price.

Balde's report made its way to Sec. Atienza who issued a Second Endorsement dated January 17, 2008 approving the report.

On, January 8, 2009, the Office of the President granted the DENR secretary authority to sign the deed of sale on behalf of then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

In her appeal, Natalia Atienza said she should not have been held liable in the absence of evidence that she conspired with DENR officials in the preparation of the appraisal report that recommended a lower value.

She added that RECI was a buyer in good faith and merely acted on the documents presented by DENR officials. She added that the

firm complied with all conditions of the sale, including payment of all necessary taxes as well as back rentals on the property.

The COA-National Government Sector Director, however, countered that RECI cannot be considered a buyer in good faith since the valuation based on the appraisal report of Engr. Balde was infirm for failure to comply with the requirements of DENR Department Order No. 98-20.

Invoking the doctrine of unjust enrichment, the COA-NGS Director said the buyer cannot be allowed to benefit at the expense of the government.

COA Chairman Michael G. Aguinardo and Commissioners Jose A. Fabia and Roland C. Pondoc ruled that the request for exclusion from liability filed by Natalia Atienza is bereft of merit.

"The O'Racca property which was sold to petitioner at a very low price of P64,279,845.92 placed the government in a disadvantageous position. It is but proper that the petitioner shall refund the undue profit she gained from the anomalous sale of the O'Racca property," the COA Commission Proper said.



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DENR starts JICA-funded project for NV farmers

By Ben Moses M. Ebreo

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources will start a road concreting project to help villagers of Dupax del Sur town involved in agroforestry livelihood projects.

Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer Edgar Martin said the P18.3-million road project in Sitio

Dalayap, Barangay Carolotan in Dupax del Sur is an Agroforestry Support Facility that will be implemented under the Forest Management Program.

It is funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency, which is expected to be completed by March 2020.

The project involves the concreting of the Carolotan Access Road with the construction of a bridge structure.

It was requested by the Carolotan Agroforest Association, Inc. (CAF-DAI), a private organization that relies on agroforestry as an advocacy and a source of livelihood.

Forester Constante Espiritu, Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer, said the project was originally funded with P24 million, but the bidding came out only with the P18.3-million project cost.



MAGTANIM NG PUNO GAMIT ANG GCASH

SA pamamagitan ng isang teknolohiya, maaari ka nang makatulong sa pagtanim ng mga puno kahit nasa bahay ka lang o nasa trabaho o kahit nasaan ka man. At puwede ka pang maging isang milyonaryo.

Magagawa ito gamit ang isang makabagong feature ng GCash—ang nangungunang mobile wallet—kung saan ang bawat transaksyon ay isang paraan ng pagtulong upang mapalago ang kagubatan ng bansa.

Inilunsad noong nakalipas na buwan, tinatapatan ng "GCash Forest" ng pabuya para sa kapaligiran ang bawat paggastos at iba pang transaksyon sa app na ginagawa ng isang GCash user. Sa pakikipagtulungan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources, World Wildlife Fund, Biodiversity Finance Initiative, nakaya ng GCash na gawin ang app na isang virtual place para makapag-ambag ng pagbabago ang mga user sa tolong mundo.

Sa pamamagitan ng "GCash Forest," maaaring makatulong ang mga GCash user sa pagtanim ng mga puno sa Ipo watershed sa Norzagaray, Bulacan na bahagi ng isang watershed system na nagsusuplay ng tubig sa halos buong Metro Manila.

Padagdag nang pagdagdag ang tinatawag na "green energy points" ng isang GCash user sa tuloy-tuloy niyang paggamit ng app at makapipili siya ng kung anong klase ng puno at kung saang lugar niya ito gustong

itanim sa watershed. Bilang isang virtual donor, makatatanggap siya ng isang aktuwal na certificate of ownership na may serial number ng puno. Makatatanggap din siya ng mga update sa paglaki ng kanyang puno sa pamamagitan ng GCash app.

Ngayong linggo, nilakihan pa ng GCash ang premyo: mas maraming green energy points, mas malaki ang tyansang manalo ng P2 milyon. Katumbas ng isang entry para sa premyo ang 400 green energy points.*



Maging milyonaryo sa pagtanim ng puno

Maari ka nang maging milyonaryo habang tumutulong ka sa pagsagip ng ating kagubatan sa pamamagitan ng pagtaguyod sa pinakabagong promosyon ng GCash.

Ito ang paglikom ng 400 green energy points na katumbas ng isang entry na magbibigay ng pagkakataon sa bawat GCash subscribers na manalo ng dalawang milyong pisong cash.

Sa bagong feature ng popular na virtual wallet ay maaari ka nang magambag ng iyong tulong sa pagtanim ng mga puno sa Ipo watershed sa Norzagaray, Bulacan na bahagi ng isang watershed system na nagsusuplay ng tubig sa halos buong Metro Manila.

Sa programang ito na itinaguyod ng Department of Environment and Natural

Resources, World Wildlife Fund at Biodiversity Finance Initiative; ang bawat transaksyon ay isang paraan ng pagtulong upang mapalago ang kagubatan ng bansa habang dinadagdagan mo ang iyong Green Energy points.

Sa pamamaraan na ito, nakakatulong ka na sa pagsagip ng ating kagubatan nang hindi mo na kailangang iwanan ang iyong bahay o trabaho habang nagtanim ka ng puno sa paraan na ito ng GCash.

Bilang isang virtual donor, makatanggap ka ng certificate of ownership na may serial number ng puno sa bawat punong itinataguyod mo sa paggamit ng application ng GCash sa inyong mga cellphone.

Kaya't ano pa ang hinihintay niyo, ugaliing gamitin ang GCash sa inyong pang araw-araw na transaksyon.



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Magtanim ng puno gamit ang G-Cash

SA PAMAMAGITAN ng isang teknolohiya, maaari ka nang makatulong sa pagtanim ng mga puno kahit nasa bahay ka lang o nasa trabaho o kahit nasaan ka man. At puwede ka pang maging isang milyonaryo.

Magagawa ito gamit ang isang makabagong feature ng GCash – ang nangungunang mobile wallet – na ang bawat transaksyon ay isang paraan ng pagtulong upang mapalago ang kagubatan ng bansa.

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Cleanest community receives P18M

She added that the city's Task Force Bantay Dagat and the fishermen associations work hand in hand to stop illegal fishing in the city

By Jonas Reyes

ALAMINOS CITY, Pangasinan — A sum of P18 million was awarded to this city for being the first runner-up in the country's search for the outstanding coastal community.

The Malinis at Masaganang Karagatan

(MMK) award by the Department of Agriculture Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources was assessed based on five criteria: (1) No Illegal Fishing, (2) Observance of off-fishing season, (3) Declaration of marine protected areas, (4) Clean, coastal waters without any garbage or industrial effluence flowing to the sea, and (5) Effective mangrove protection and rehabilitation program.

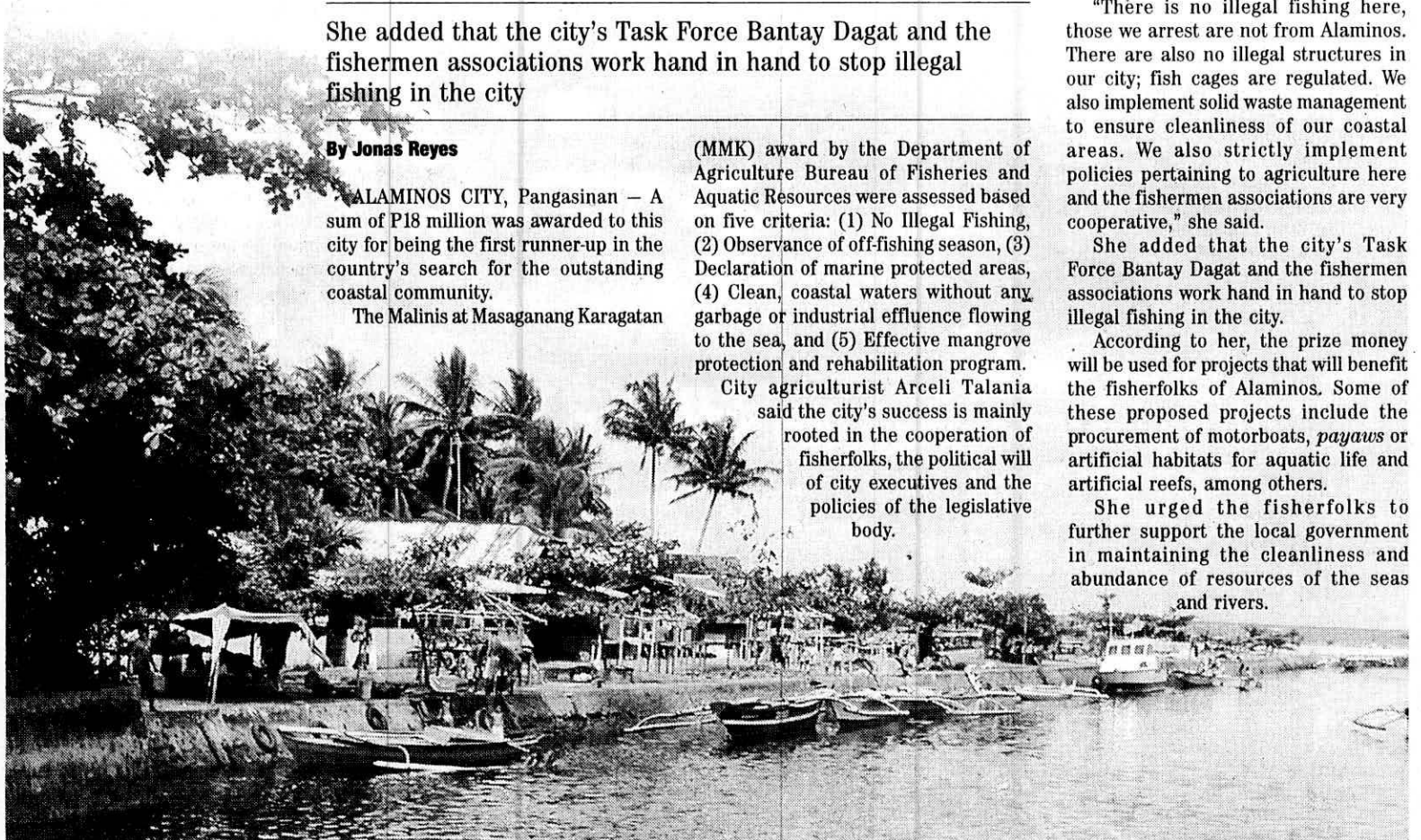
City agriculturist Arceli Talania said the city's success is mainly rooted in the cooperation of fisherfolks, the political will of city executives and the policies of the legislative body.

"There is no illegal fishing here, those we arrest are not from Alaminos. There are also no illegal structures in our city; fish cages are regulated. We also implement solid waste management to ensure cleanliness of our coastal areas. We also strictly implement policies pertaining to agriculture here and the fishermen associations are very cooperative," she said.

She added that the city's Task Force Bantay Dagat and the fishermen associations work hand in hand to stop illegal fishing in the city.

According to her, the prize money will be used for projects that will benefit the fisherfolks of Alaminos. Some of these proposed projects include the procurement of motorboats, *payaws* or artificial habitats for aquatic life and artificial reefs, among others.

She urged the fisherfolks to further support the local government in maintaining the cleanliness and abundance of resources of the seas and rivers.



THE Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources has awarded Alaminos City government for having the cleanest coastal areas. The city is referred to as the home of the "100 Islands."



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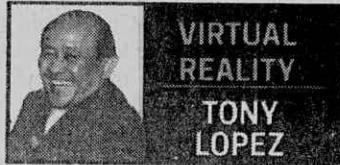
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The 5 Cs of Duterte's SONA



A COMFORTABLE life for everybody, all Filipinos. In three years.

That is the audacious promise of Rodrigo Roa Duterte in his 93-minute, 9,490-word State of the Nation Address (SONA) Monday, July 22, 2019, delivered before a joint session of Congress in his trademark Davao English of incomplete sentences and mispronounced words.

The President, who openly admits he is now a lameduck, in effect, wants to telescope in three years what his own NEDA wants to accomplish in 20 years.

"In 2040, we will all enjoy a stable and comfortable lifestyle, secure in the knowledge that we have enough for our daily needs and unexpected expenses, that we can plan and prepare for our own and our children's future. Our family lives together in a place of our own, and we have the freedom to go where we desire, protected and enabled by a clean, efficient, and fair government," proclaims NEDA at its website.

Still, Duterte warned "believe me, I will end my term fighting." That means the President will wield all the power and political will in his command to get things done over the next three years. Duterte is fond of employing generals who have the discipline of command and obedience ("If you tell them 'no corruption', then no corruption, unless the top is corrupt.")

To deliver a comfortable life for all, Duterte must rescue six million Filipinos from poverty, a tall order given that previous administrations from 1986 failed to dent gnawing poverty. Poverty incidence is to be reduced from 21.6 percent (or 21.8 million of the 101-million population) in 2015 to 14 percent (or 15.7 million of 112.8 million) in 2022.

To do that, the chief executive tackled

what I call the six Cs—crime, corruption, climate change or cleanup of the environment, capital (human and business capital), China, and congestion in Metro Manila or traffic.

"The illegal drugs problem persists," Duterte winced. The Marawi siege of May 2017, he related, was a case of illegal drugs aided by local radicalism. Tons of shabu worth millions were found. Drug money killed 175 and wounded 2,000 soldiers and policemen.

"The drugs (problem) will not be crushed unless we eliminate corruption that allows this social menace to survive," the President declared. He wants death penalty for illegal drugs and plunder (corruption involving at least P50 million).

"To deliver a comfortable life for all, Duterte must rescue six million Filipinos from poverty."

Why the persistent corruption? Said Duterte: "We cannot distinguish our need from our greed, our principles from our prejudices, the real from the fake, and the truth from a lie. (For) many of us, what matters above all is the 'self'... selfishness [at] its worst for no purpose other than personal aggrandizement."

In the President's 8888 hotline, the most complained about are: the LTO, SSS, BIR, LRA, and Pag-IBIG, "the top five agencies that need drastically to improve their service." Expect firings in these agencies.

The anti-corruption campaign also covers the courts, ironically the weakest link in the administration of justice.

The 63 Customs officials facing corruption charges are no longer allowed

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The 5 Cs...

From M

at the bureau. Instead, they will report daily to Congress and help in the paper work. That is not saying though that the culprits will move from one house of thieves to another.

For all government agencies, Duterte's order is "simplify." Clearances and permits from LGUs must be out in three days, preferably one day, as Manila has promised. Davao City already issues business permits in just one hour. "Slap the idiot. Make a scene," Duterte advises victims of bureaucrats.

For national government agencies, permits must be released within 30 days, says Department of the Interior and Lo-

cal Government Secretary Eduardo Año, a retired general.

Año is the new de facto traffic czar. By September this year, the LGUs or mayors and governors must have retrieved all public roads being used for private ends. That means roads converted into parking spaces by barangays must be roads, not parking lots. Gated private subdivisions in traffic hubs must be opened for vehicular traffic. Traffic congestion in Metro Manila, the President estimates, costs P3.5 billion in economic losses, daily.

On climate change, the President wants a Department of Disaster Resilience (DDR) to "focus on natural hazards and climate change." Boracay has been restored to its pristine origin."

Squatters will be removed and relocated from Manila Bay. Buildings sitting on waterways "I am going to dismantle or just burn them down." Sources of renewable energy will be fast-tracked.

On human capital, Duterte gushed that 27 million are enrolled in basic education, kinder to high school. Another 823,000 who are out of school have non-formal education. For health of body, there will be a National Academy of Sports for High School, maybe to train future Pacquiao and Lydias de Vega. Malasakit Centers will be established, a pet measure of Sen. Bong Go, upgraded from a campaign gimmick.

A Department of Overseas Filipinos will be established, a bill authored by Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, also author of

the proposed DDR.

For business capital, the Department of Trade and Industry has given away P3 billion loans to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

Big Business will get bigger perks. Corporate income tax is to be reduced, from 30 percent (the highest in ASEAN) to 20 percent. However, factories in more than 300 export zones will lose tax perks (valued at P300 billion a year). PEZA's preferential 5 percent gross income earned (GIE) will now be time-bound and performance-based.

One good thing, Duterte has no cronies. "I have no rich friends," he declared.

Finally, Duterte will not fight China. "I will fish," China President Xi Jing-

ping told Duterte in a recent summit. "I allowed (them)," Duterte revealed in his SONA. "Confrontation will lead to violence," the President explained. China's guided missiles can reach the Philippines in seven minutes.

"We are not in control in the property (the West Philippine Sea)," Duterte admitted to Congress. "China also claims the property and he is in possession."

Duterte assured: "Let me assure you, that national honor and territorial integrity shall not—shall be foremost in our mind, and when we may take the next steps in this smoldering controversy over the lines of arbitral ruling, the West Philippine Sea is ours."

biznewsasia@gmail.com



China not in possession of sea but in position, says Esperon

By the Inquirer Staff
@Team_Inquirer

National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr. on Tuesday denied that China is "in possession" of the West Philippine Sea, as President Duterte claimed in his State of the Nation address to a joint session of Congress on Monday.

West Philippine Sea is the local name of the waters within the Philippines' 370-kilometer exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the South China Sea, nearly all of which China claims.

Esperon, a former military chief of staff, said China was just "in position," as it had established a presence in parts of the South China Sea claimed by its smaller neighbors in the region.

Besides the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia, Taiwan and Vietnam also have competing claims in the South China Sea.

'Positional advantage'

"I think the President did not say that they are 'in possession' but they are 'in position,'" Esperon told reporters.

He said China's militarization in the South China Sea from 2012 to 2016 enabled it to take "positional advantage" over its rivals for territory in the strate-

gic waterway.

"Admittedly, China has built islands, artificial islands, in the West Philippine Sea and in the South China Sea starting from 2012 to 2016 and up to now. But the construction of islands there were completed as of 2016, so they are in position in such islands," Esperon said.

"They have the positional advantage right now and they have the equipment to reinforce their position, so what is our answer there? Our response is to also strengthen our position," he said.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana agreed with Esperon, noting that President Duterte could be just referring to Panatag Shoal, internationally known as Scarborough Shoal, when he said China was "in possession" of the West Philippine Sea.

"They are in position on their islands, but they are not in possession of the West Philippine Sea because we are also claiming it," Lorenzana said.

No, 'in possession'

Presidential spokesperson Salvador Panelo, however, said what the President said was that China was "in possession" of the West Philippine Sea and that as far as he was concerned, China owned those waters.



Hermogenes Esperon Jr.

"Maybe it's the pronunciation. Possession. And his position is, 'as far as I'm concerned, they own that,'" Panelo told reporters.

According to a Palace transcript of the 2019 State of the Nation, Mr. Duterte said: "China also claims the property and he is in possession. That is the problem. They are in possession and claiming all the resources there as an owner."

Panelo said China's military presence in the South China Sea showed that it was in possession of the heavily disputed waterway.

Supreme Court Senior Associate Justice Antonio Carpio, who has done an extensive study of the territorial dispute between the Philippines and China in the South China Sea, al-



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China not in possession of sea but in position, Says Espuron

so challenged Mr. Duterte's claim that China was in possession of the West Philippine Sea.

"China is in possession of seven features in the Spratlys plus Scarborough Shoal. In addition, during the Duterte administration, China seized Sandy Cay from the Philippines. The total area of these geologic features, including their territorial seas [if any], is less than 7 percent of the West Philippine Sea," Carpio said in a television interview on Tuesday.

Freedom of navigation

Carpio, part of the legal team that successfully argued the Philippines' challenge to China's sweeping claim in the UN-backed Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, said the regular freedom of navigation operations and naval drills of the United States, United Kingdom, France, Australia, Japan and Canada in the South China Sea also "demonstrate that China is not in possession of the West Philippine Sea."

But Panelo insisted that China was in possession of the West Philippine Sea.

"When you're in possession, do you only possess one portion? If you have military installations there, in other words you are showing that you can guard

the entire area. It means they are in possession," he said.

Carpio, in his television interview, said the Senate could either ratify or reject Mr. Duterte's supposed verbal agreement with Chinese President Xi Jinping allowing the Chinese to fish in the West Philippine Sea and the Filipinos to fish at Panatag Shoal, a traditional fishing ground in those waters that belonged to no particular country but that China seized in 2012.

"The Senate has to act now and either ratify or repudiate that fishing agreement. If you allow China to fish, that is a treaty or international agreement and that requires concurrence of the Senate," Carpio said.

Fair agreement

The Senate owes it to the public to find out if the President struck a "fair agreement" with Xi, Carpio said, stressing that foreign nations may be allowed by agreement to fish in one another's EEZ but only if there is a "surplus."

"If the Chinese are allowed to fish in the West Philippine Sea, they will take all the fish because they have a huge fishing fleet, the largest in the world," Carpio said, adding that China has about 200,000 large

motorized fishing vessels.

"They can scoop the fish there in less than a year. And the fish will be gone, it would be depleted. And we cannot compete with China because we have small bancas, wooden boats," he said.

"How did he know that?" Panelo countered. "If his point is that fish will run out, how did he know that we will run out of fish there? Don't fish reproduce?"

The absence of an "official resistance" from the Duterte administration would have a long-lasting impact on the Philippines' footing in asserting its sovereignty and sovereign rights in the West Philippine Sea, Jay Batongbacal, director of the University of the Philippines' Institute for Maritime Affairs and Law of the Sea, said on Tuesday.

Critics' point

"He still does not understand that the point of critics is not to go to war, but rather come up with a better and stronger negotiating strategy and position in dealing with China, instead of simply acquiescing to everything that China wants," Batongbacal said. —REPORTS FROM DARRYL JOHN ESGUERRA, JULIE M. AURELIO, DONA Z. PAZZIBUGAN, CHRISTIA MARIE RAMOS AND JHESSET O. ENANO INQ



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
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He may have lost his senatorial reelection bid last May, but Joseph Victor Estrada should be all smiles now after hearing President Rodrigo Duterte speak about a future that was anchored on Ejercito's very recent lawmaking past during his fourth and most recent State of the Nation Address (SoNA).

Saying he will end his presidency fighting, President Rodrigo Duterte reiterated that three of his administration's main thrusts to alleviate the plight of the poor – education, health care and housing – will be among the focus of the last three of his six-year term.

**“
If you
invest on
infrastructure,
we will be able
to spread the
development
to the
countryside.
We will
be able to
decongest
Metro Manila.**

All these were JV's advocacies during the six years he served as a senator.

Ejercito said he felt elated by the President's continued support to his landmark laws – the Universal Health Care Law and the creation of the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Developments – which he said will drive the President's programs on these three thrusts.

A citizenry that is somehow assured of its health concerns and is guaranteed of movement to work, school and everywhere the

people would like to go was how Ejercito envisioned the masses to be.

He spent his last weeks and months in the Senate working on these bills. They became landmark laws that validated their importance to President's Duterte's legislative agenda, but they also took precious time from Ejercito in ensuring himself of a Senate return.

Ejercito, who placed 11th in a field of 12 in the 2013 senatorial elections, was outside of the winners' circle in the previous polls. Political observers blame his brother Jinggoy Estrada's entry into the mix.

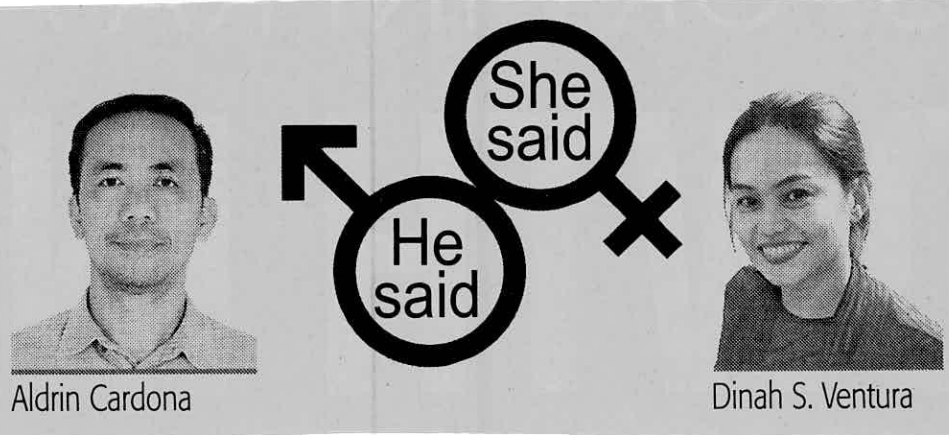
The Ejercito family was wiped out of the polls, with JV as its biggest victim. Jinggoy was no longer as hot as he was before. Their father, Joseph Estrada, was booted out of Manila City Hall and denied a third term as mayor.

But JV is not hurting. He said the pain is not one to be nursed, especially after he received a validation from no less than Mr. Duterte.

The President said he would hinge the delivery of these three priority services to the masses through his "Build, Build, Build" program, which JV supported. Mr. Duterte wants his program to spread outside of Metro Manila.

"To do this, I ordered Sec. (Carlos) Dominguez (Department of Finance), Sec. (Arthur) Tugade (Department of Transportation) to link our land, sea and air. Make Davao the last, but connect our land, sea and air."

"I will end my term fighting. But we in government,



Aldrin Cardona

Dinah S. Ventura

JV and Rody's address

talk too much and do little," the President said. "We are long in rhetoric, but short in accomplishments. I am here to rectify my errors, too."

The Chief Executive said he would not end his six-year term without seeing the masses enjoying the results of his programs.

"I want them to enjoy our labor. Give them what they need in hospitalization, education and relocation or housing," the President said.

Ejercito knows where the President is coming from. JV was a mayor once; he's been there, too.

"If you invest on infrastructure, we will be able to spread the development to the countryside. We will be able to decongest Metro Manila. We will also give a chance to other areas or provinces to develop by investing on infra," Ejercito said.

**“
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"(During budget deliberations) I defended a lot of the agencies, the departments, DoH (Health), DoTr (Transportation), DILG (Local Government), housing, PCSO (Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office). I took up their causes," he said.

"For housing, we have a backlog of 1.2 million. Government has to work to meet that. It will balloon if we wait several years more," JV added. "We have to do something drastic."

JV is confident his advocacies were not stalled even when he is no longer in the Senate.

The government, he said, would push the programs he championed as a lawmaker.

Reminded that three years are short to slacken in making another shot at a senatorial post, JV seems still hopeful of making a rebound.

But he was more concerned about following the President's SoNA on Monday. He kept looking back at the past weeks that closed. He didn't show care about his political future. Maybe for now.



Not all talk

Somebody once gave me a framed message that goes, "Dream big. Set goals. Take action." It sits at a place of honor on my desk at home, where I can always see it – a reminder and a push on days when I feel like giving up.

**“
Other past Presidents had said something in a similar vein, but the continued spread of corruption throughout the years just goes to show that they were all talk.**

I am wondering what someone like President Rodrigo Duterte uses to give himself that much-needed boost on days when he probably just wants to up and leave, most likely cursing like a sailor, and be rid of all the burdens he has to carry for three more years.

I was listening back to his speech yesterday – the much awaited State of the Nation Address (SoNA), his fourth since 2016 and the first for the second half of his term – and

could not help but notice a tone of discouragement when he spoke of corruption.

He said, "Corruption continues and emasculates the courage we need to sustain our moral recovery initiatives."

Well, it takes a combination of guts and humility to admit the presence of something that so many others had tried to keep under wraps or pretend is less serious than it truly is.

And one cannot solve a problem that one does not admit exists.

Out of all the SoNA speeches I have heard from different Presidents, I must say Duterte has been the only one who tackled the distasteful subject head on. He spoke about it for some minutes, admitting its shadowy clutches on almost everything in government, showing his disgust and disappointment and vowing to keep cleaning up the system. He did not gloss over it or make it appear as if things are A-OK when people on the ground know that they are not.

I know the SoNA 2019 tackled many other serious issues, including the West Philippine Sea (another

uncomfortable topic that he went on and tackled anyway), but I thought it was a stroke of genius to report about the state of corruption in our beloved nation and urge Congress to pass the laws needed to curb it, if not cut it at the roots.

Duterte mentioned "unscrupulous persons manning our ports and scalawags in uniform," as well as red tape in many agencies that he said revealed the presence of corruption.

He once again reiterated his intent to remove the corrupt, saying, "I have fired or caused the resignation of more than a hundred officials and appointees of government without regard to relationship, friendship and alliance. There is no sacred cow, as the saying goes, in my administration."

Other past Presidents had said something in a similar vein, but the continued spread of corruption throughout the years just goes to show that they were all talk.

Either that, or they had no plan – no goals set – to keep the most basic and probably most gargantuan promise any President could ever make.

You see, corruption is the disease that affects everything and affects us all.

It is the virus that had led to millions more of Filipinos who have yet to be lifted from poverty; to agricultural lands and other lands that were either misused, abused or disused; to natural resources that were desecrated or destroyed, leading to worsened conditions during calamities or shortages in water and food; to our own people losing opportunities or leaving for greener pastures and risking their own safety and their family structure in the process.

**“
I thought it was a stroke of genius to report about the state of corruption in our beloved nation and urge Congress to pass the laws needed to curb it.**

Almost all of the things we complain about today – the traffic in Metro Manila, the water shortage, rice shortage, difficulty in engaging in your own business, the garbage problem – stem from a system ridden with corruption.

The President talked about how some of the agencies notorious for this rot managed to collect billions of pesos more than before, then said something like, "Imagine the

benefits such funds would have given the people had it not been dispersed among a few pockets."

That is a sentiment that most Filipinos often say but feel helpless about solving. To hear the Chief Executive rant about it, too, and moreover challenge all leaders in the hall to do their part or else – well, that was just so reassuring.

It made it somehow easier – as a nation still beset with many challenges – to "dream big" once more because someone has "set goals" and apparently still is determined to "take action."



Duterte pleads Land Use Act

By Kristina Maralit

President Rodrigo Duterte renewed his appeal to Congress for the passage of a measure aimed at attracting more investors to the country by promoting and

enforcing sustainable practices in protecting the country's natural environment.

Mr. Duterte, during his fourth State of the Nation Address (SoNA) last Monday, asked both the House of Representatives and

the Senate to "urgently pass" the National Land Use Act (NLUA) "within this year."

"Please! So that we can proceed with the new... Well, we can meet the demands of the

Turn to page A4

Duterte pleads Land Use Act

The NLUA, once enacted, would greatly help the country manage its resources and provide further safeguards to biodiversity and clearer guidelines for infrastructure development

From page 1

new investors coming in. Our lands are our problem," he said.

"A science-based national land use plan would serve as basis for the LGU (local government units) in crafting respective development plans and help disperse economic activities to the countryside," he added.

This was not the first time the President called on both houses to pass the proposed measure.

He asked Congress to pass the NLUA in two previous SoNA — in 2017 and 2018.

The NLUA has been sitting in

Congress for over two decades, even after it was already certified as urgent by former President Benigno Aquino III in 2013 and then by Mr. Duterte.

Passage of the measure is deemed critical by the Chief Executive as it will establish a national land use plan that will classify property according to use: protection (for conservation), production (for agriculture and fisheries), settlements development (for residential purposes) and infrastructure development (for transportation, communication, water resources and social infrastructure).

According to the President, the NLUA, once enacted, would greatly help the country manage its resources and provide further safeguards to biodiversity and clearer guidelines for infrastructure development.

The NLUA would also help the national government map agricultural lands which can be cultivated for the country's food security, determine highly hazardous areas as the Philippines is susceptible to natural disasters and provide better safeguards for communities, especially in the countryside where land use regulation is required the most.

The lower house approved its version of the NLUA back in May 2017. The upper chamber, meanwhile, has five filed counterpart versions in the environment and natural resources committee.



Duterte says in 'catch 22' as clock ticks on security of tenure measure now awaiting his signature

PRESIDENT Rodrigo R. Duterte remains in a quandary over a measure now awaiting his signature that imposes tighter controls on labor contracting, with a few days left before it lapses into law on Saturday sans any Executive action.

"*Pinag-aralan namin mismo* (We have been studying it)... I have to confer with a lot of people affected. You know... this is a two to tango... it would affect employers and of course it would also greatly favor the workers," Mr. Duterte told reporters at the House of Representatives on Monday night after delivering his fourth State of the Nation Address (SONA) midway into his six-year term.

"It's a catch-22 for me... I can veto it... I can sign it or allow it to lapse into law."

Labor Secretary Silvestre H. Bello III told reporters on Tuesday that he was not surprised that Mr. Duterte left the measure out of his SONA.

"Even before that, I was told by the president... that it's under study... The intention of the president is to provide workers their constitutionally guaranteed right to security of tenure... *ang gusto ng presidente ay iplantasa ng mabuti* (what the president wants is to iron out any kinks in the measure) so no one will question the validity of the law and its purpose," he said.

Sought for comment, University of the Philippines professor Rene E. Ofreneo in a mobile phone message on Tuesday said Mr. Duterte has been performing a "balancing act" on this issue, with "industry associations opposed" while labor "unions see SOT (security of tenure) bill still weak."

The proposed law, "An Act Strengthening Workers' Right To Security of Tenure", bans the practice of hiring workers for five-months stints in order to circumvent the requirement that they be automatically granted regular status on the sixth month of employment. It also provides that workers performing jobs directly related

to the principal business of or are under the direct control and supervision of a contracting party "shall be deemed regular employees of the contractee... retroactive to the date they were first deployed to said contractee..."

There are four types of employment status allowed under the measure: probationary, regular, project and seasonal. Project-based and seasonal workers "have the rights of regular employees for the duration of the project (e.g. construction) or season (e.g. agriculture or where there are periods of increased demand or inherent

Tenure, SI/5

Tenure, from SI/1

industry fluctuations)... termination of which has been determined and made known to the employee at the time of engagement."

Mr. Duterte vowed to do away with labor contracting during the campaign for the 2016 presidential elections, but has since tempered that promise, acknowledging that this employment practice is allowed by law with certain restrictions.

In a July 16 joint press statement, 13 local and foreign business chambers asked "the president to veto the security of tenure bill" since it "is redundant as there are previously approved laws that already protect workers from 'endo' (end of contract scheme), it impinges on management prerogative anchored on the constitution... it excludes

contract workers hired by government agencies" and "could have a negative impact to the Philippine economy and to the workers whom the bill aims to protect."

But in its reaction to the SONA, the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines — the country's biggest labor group — said in a press statement on Tuesday that "the proposed Security of Tenure law, while it does not end all forms of contractualization, is a good start to address the abuses of labor-only contracting and will lessen our social and economic inequality."

"The President should not be shaken by scaremongering of the economic managers, employers and the foreign chambers." — with Gillian M. Cortez

Duterte likely to certify death bill urgent – Palace

BY CATHERINE S. VALENTE

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte is likely to certify as urgent the bill seeking to reinstate the death penalty, his spokesman said on Tuesday.

Palace spokesman Salvador Panelo said Duterte wanted to reinstate capital punishment for heinous crimes related to drugs and corruption because he thinks it would mitigate the country's problems.

The Chief Executive urged Congress to pass the death penalty bill in his State of the Nation Address (SONA) on Monday.

The President's former top aide, Sen. Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go, filed his version of the bill.

"Ang feeling ni Presidente 'yan ang pinakamabigat na problema natin (The President felt that these are our biggest problems). One is corruption. Number two is *'yung sa droga* (drugs). *Kaya siguro mas gusto niya 'yun* (That's why he wants it), hoping that it will mitigate the upsurge of the drug menace, as well as the activities of the plunderers," he added.

Panelo, who is also Duterte's chief legal counsel, said the President might prefer hanging to lethal

injection as the mode of execution.

The death penalty bill has faced strong opposition from senators of the 17th Congress. The House of Representatives, however, passed its version of the measure.

With Duterte's candidates dominating the recent midterm elections, the administration could find it easier to pass bills with more support from the Senate.

The death penalty was abolished in the Philippines in 2006.

Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año on Tuesday backed the President's call to reimpose death penalty for heinous crimes.

"With the death penalty, lots of changes can be expected," he said.

Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Oscar Albayalde agreed that bringing back death penalty could be a "game changer" in their campaign against illegal drugs.

"The PNP fully supports the legislative agenda of the national

government for effective legislation that will add more teeth to the crusade against crime, drugs and corruption, particularly by imposing capital punishment for drug-related heinous crime and plunder, among others," Albayalde said in a news briefing on Tuesday.

Albayalde, however, said only big-time drug personalities should be sentenced to death, not those peddling drugs on the streets.

"*Ang importante dito* (what is important is) we convict those people who are guilty," he added.

House support

Members of the House of Representatives vowed to work twice as hard to pass the measures pushed by the President.

"We will work double time to act on the President's priority bills, especially those aimed at improving the lives of our people," majority leader Martin Romualdez said on Tuesday.

"Under the leadership of Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano, we will work on long-term solutions aimed at addressing the nation's serious ills like... poverty, illegal drugs, peace and order concerns, lack of infrastructures and corruption," he said.

Marinduque Rep. Lord Allan Velasco, the next speaker under the term-sharing deal suggested by Duterte, proposed that the Legislative Executive Development Advisory Council be convened.

"There must be an agreement among the Executive, the Senate, and the House of Representatives on which bills in the Common Legislative Agenda will be prioritized so these can be enacted into laws at the soonest possible time," Velasco said.

For 1-Pacman party-list Rep. Michael Romero, the anti-corruption campaign should include the public in calling out erring officials of the administration.

"By enjoining the public to rebel against corrupt officials and graft-ridden agencies, President Duterte underscored the importance of our people's cooperation in cleansing the bureaucracy," Romero said.

Deputy Speaker Luis Raymond Villafuerte said the House should prioritize the restoration of the death penalty; the creation of the Department for Overseas Filipino Workers, Department of Water Resources and the Department of Disaster Resilience; and the passage of the magna carta for villages.

WITH DARWIN PESCO
AND GLEE JALEA



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ISINULONG mismo ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang pagtataas ng sahod ng mga pampublikong guro, nars at iba pang sakop ng Salary Standardization Law o SSL.

Sakop ng SSL ang lahat ng empleyado at opisyal ng ehekutibo, lehislatibo at hukuman.

Lahat naman ng government-owned and controlled corporation at local government unit ay papayagang magtaas depende sa kakayahan ng mga ito.

Ang hindi lang kasali rito ay ang nakaupong Pangulo, Pangalawang Pangulo, senador, kongresman, nasa ilalim ng job orders, nakakontrata ang serbisyo, consultant at may kontrata sa serbisyonang walang employer-employee na relasyon.

Bukod sa panukala ni Pang. Digong, nauna nang nagpanukala si Sen. Bong Go para rito sa Senate Bill 200 bilang bahagi ng mga panukalang unang kanyang inihain sa kanyang mga unang araw sa Senadol.

SILIPIN NATIN

Heto ang nilalaman ng SSL ngayon simula noong Enero 2018.

Para sa mga mahal na mahal nating public school titser, nahahanay ang pinakamababa nilang posisyon sa Salary Grade 11 mula sa Titser 1 na may sahod na P20,179 hanggang P20,754 at habang mas mataas ang Salary Grade, tumataas din ang sahod.

Mula kay Teacher 1 hanggang kay Teacher 3, nasa P2,000 ang pagtaas habang lumundag naman ang sahod ng Master Teacher 1 sa mahigit P38,000-P40,000; Master Teacher 2 – mahigit P42,000-P45,000; at Master Teacher 3 – mahigit P47,000-P51,000.

Ang Head Teacher 1 naman ay mahigit sa P26,000-P27,000; Head Teacher 2 – mahigit P29,000-P30,000; at Head Teacher 3 – mahigit P31,000-P33,000.

Si Principal 1, may mahigit siyang P42,000-P45,000; Principal 2 – mahigit P47,000-P51,000; Principal 3 – mahigit P52,000-P47,000; Principal 4 at District Supervisor – mahigit P58,000-P65,000; at Education Supervisor – mahigit P73,000-P83,000.



GOOD NEWS SA MGA TRABAHANTE NG GOBYERNO

Ang Nurse 1 naman ay may sahod na mahigit sa P26,000-P27,000 habang ang Dentist 1 ay may mahigit sa P31,000-P33,000.

Matataas na rin ang sahod ng ating mga guro kaya naman nagsisilundagan na ang mga private school teacher at mga private nurse sa public school at public clinic o hospital.

MARAMING PANG BENEPISYO

Bukod sa mga sahod nila, napakarami ring benepisyo ang mga ito.

Nariryan ang mga 13th month pay, libreng pag-aaral ng mga anak mula kinder hanggang kolehiyo, malaking diskwento sa bayarin sa mga ospital, libong bayad sa pagsali nila sa mga halalan, bigay ng mga local government unit na insentibo, pabenepisyo sa Government Service Insurance System at iba pa.

Kaya naman, mismong si Education Secretary Leonor Briones ay nauunawaan ang pahayag ng Pangulo na kung may dagdag-sahod man para sa mga titser, kahit papaano ay makatutulong na ayuda sa lahat ng 830,000 public school teacher sa buong bansa sa ilalim ng Department of Education.

Aniya, kung dodoblehin ang lahat ng sahod ng mga guro, napakalaking halaga ang uubusin nito taon-taon at aabot sa P150 bilyon lahat.

Halimbawang may P10,000 at hindi doble ang dagdag-sahod, papantay na ang sahod ni Titser 1 sa may pinakamababang sahod na pulis na P30,000 sa isang buwan.

Bagama't nauunawaan natin ang nais na dobleng sahod gaya ng kahalilingan ng mga militante, hind kaya maganda na tanggapin pansamantala ang ganitong dagdag-sahod?

At lalong maganda kung makarating tayo sa puntong kaya na ng gobyerno na ibigay ang dobleng dagdag-sahod sa lahat.

MARAMI PANG PROGRAMA

Labis na pinabayaan

ng nagdaang mga administrasyon ang napakaraming kailangang imprastruktura gaya ng mga school building, tulay, kalsada, airport, pier at iba pa na labis na kailangan din ng buong bansa at hindi lang ng mga titser para sa pababago tungo sa pag-unlad.

Kung mayroon mang nagawa at napasimulan ng nagdaang mga administrasyon, kalahati ng pondo ng mga ito ang nilamon ng mga korap at mandarambong.

Pati nga sa DepEd ay may mga pandarambong din at alam nina Sec. Briones na bilyones ang halaga ng mga korapsyon at pandarambong sa paggawa lamang ng mga school building at pagbili ng mga lupang tinatayuan ng mga iskul na ito.

Ang isang nasaksihan mismo ng ating Uzi na anyo mismo ng korapsyon sa DepEd ay ang paggawa ng arko ng gate ng isang elementary school sa isang lungsod ng Metro Manila.

Anak ng tokwa, ipinaraan sa isang kongresman ang proyekto at nagkahalaga ito ng mahigit P1 milyon.

Nang kwentahin ng isang LGU ang presyo, nasa aP150,000 lang pala lahat.

Suspeta ng ating Uzi, magkano ang kay kongresman at magkano ang kay principal?

MAKATIIS AT UMUNAWA

Para sa atin, labis nating ikinagagalak na higit na nakararami ang nakauunawa ng sitwasyon ng ating pampublikong paaaralan, lalo na ang kalagayan ng mga guro natin.

Pray lang tayo ng pray na balang araw, makababawi rin tayo sa pinagsama-samang sahod, benepisyo at pribilehiyong ating tinatanggap sa ngayon.

Anomang reaksyon o reklamo ay maaaring iparating sa 0922840-3333 o i-email sa banti-porda@yahoo.com.



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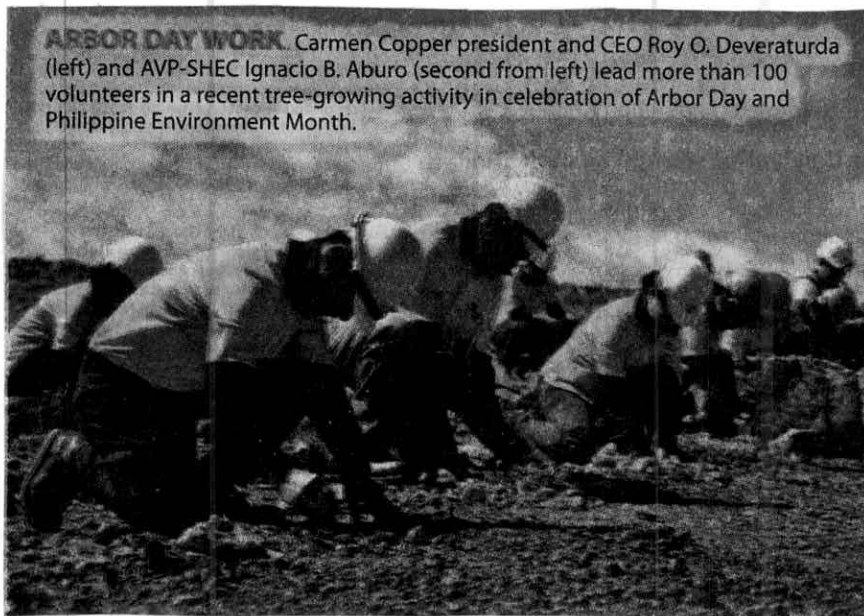
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ARBOR DAY WORK. Carmen Copper president and CEO Roy O. Deveraturda (left) and AVP-SHEC Ignacio B. Aburo (second from left) lead more than 100 volunteers in a recent tree-growing activity in celebration of Arbor Day and Philippine Environment Month.



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Dapitan gets 'Grab' app on garbage collection

DAPITAN CITY, Zamboanga del Norte:

Calling it the "Grab" for garbage, two brothers here partnered with the local government to use their "Hakoot" mobile application that provides a platform for garbage collectors and the public.

Claiming to be the first in the country, Hakoot developer Efen Jamolod Jr. — a Dapitanon working as software architect in Linköping, Sweden — said he and his brother Jesrome, a software engineer in Cebu City, developed two applications for the system, one for garbage collectors and the other for residents and establishments.

"Through their cellphones, residents and establishments can, in real-time, inform garbage collection management the volume and kind of garbage they want to dispose of," Efen said.

Meanwhile, he said the city's solid waste management receives inputs that will enable it to efficiently manage the routes of their garbage trucks, effectively dispatch garbage trucks and crew, and *decide whether there is a need to send garbage trucks for another round.*

Efen said Hakoot enables residents and establishments to monitor through their cell-

phones the location and direction of garbage trucks. An existing ordinance provides that garbage should be taken out to the streets only when garbage collectors arrive.

"Hakoot enables residents to know when to take out their garbage, unlike the present set up wherein residents and establishments have to watch out the whole day for the garbage truck that sometimes doesn't come," he said.

Efen stressed that the maximum effectiveness of Hakoot would still depend on solid waste management infrastructure — enough garbage trucks and collectors, the establishment of Material Recovery Facilities and the main residual containment facility.

Alvi Agolong, City General Service Office chief, acknowledged the challenge on the part of the city, noting that it still lacks essential equipment and facilities.

"We have the residual containment facility, but we still have to prod each *barangay* (village) leadership to establish their own material recovery facilities. Worse, we don't have garbage trucks, we just borrow two dump trucks from the Engineering Office," Agolong said.

The problem with borrowing trucks is that

it can only be used for a single round on its route every day," and it has to be sent back for engineering works," Agolong said.

Dapitan has about 5 tons of garbage daily, which can be taken care of with three to four garbage trucks and about 32 collectors and drivers.

At present, Agolong admitted that they could hardly collect the city's garbage, "particularly if the schedule is disrupted when the aging dump trucks bogged down or if trucks are already full before its routes are completely covered."

Efen said the mobile application was designed out of the frustration of residents, who "have no one else to go [to] but the social media. We were troubled, annoyed with the rants of our fellow Dapitanons on uncollected garbage, that's why I called my brother [and told] him we have to do something."

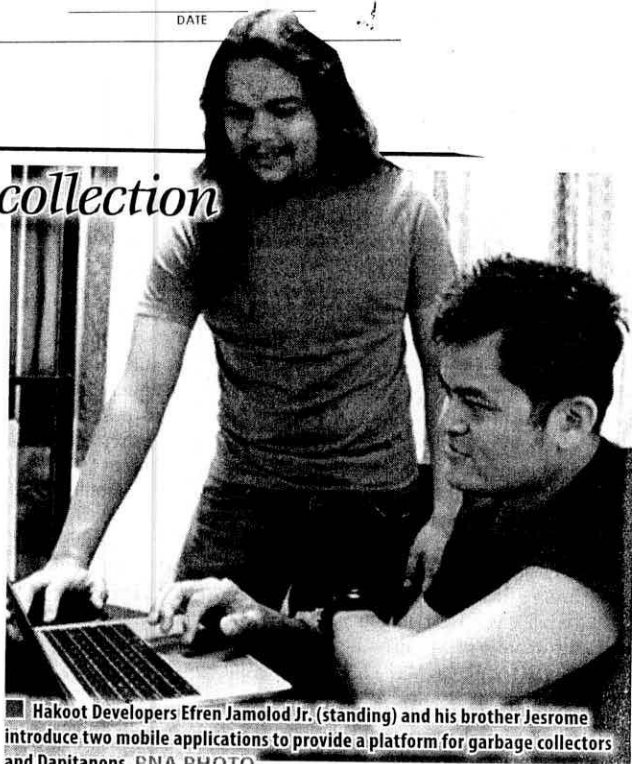
"Thus the birth of Hakoot. But we will continue on improving the software through the feedback of those in solid waste management and the residents and establish-

ments. Hakoot has to be tailored fit for the needs of the city," Efen said.

The Jamolods and the city government have already agreed to use Hakoot in principle, and a memorandum of agreement will be signed this week with Mayor Rosalina

Jalosjos, who just ordered the immediate purchase of two new garbage trucks and another two next year.

Asked why the two-letter "o" in Hakoot, the developers smilingly answered, "That's how we Bisaya pronounce it." **PNA**



Hakoot Developers Efen Jamolod Jr. (standing) and his brother Jesrome introduce two mobile applications to provide a platform for garbage collectors and Dapitanons. PNA PHOTO

Chinese environment officials visit Marcventures Mining

KEY environment officials from China's Lianyungang (LYG) province visited the Marcventures' headquarters in Makati City. The officials were in Manila to observe how local businesses operate, particularly the key players in the mining industry.

Marcventures' Holdings Chairman Isidro Alcantara Jr. highlighted the contribution of mining to host communities and to the national economy, and how it advocates sustainable development. He also emphasized that the Philippines is the fifth most mineral-rich country in the world for gold, nickel, copper, and chromite with massive untapped mineral resources making it a viable opportunity for foreign investors.

The LYG delegation, led by Yu HongYan, vice chairman of Central

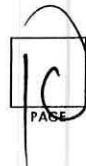


In photo are (from left) Reuben Alcantara, VP for Marketing and Business Development MMDC; Zhang Jie, Philua Shipping Inc. executive; Li DaQiang, head of Bureau of Ecology and Environment, Lianyun District, LYG; Rolly Santos, SVP for Finance, MMDC; Isidro Alcantara Jr., president, Marcventures Holdings Inc.; Yu HongYan, vice chairman of Central Committee of the Communist Party Lianyun District, LYG; Zhou ChunTai, head of Environmental Assessment Office, Lianyun District, LYG; Cheng Yong, director, LianDao Island, Lianyun District, LYG; and Gerry Lam, president, EZM Mining Enterprises.

Committee of the Communist Party -Lianyun District, expressed their gratitude to MMDC for facilitating an infor-

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visit, keeping in mind the possibility of future partnerships and collaboration between the two countries.



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